



NAIOP Chicago Comments on Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO) Proposed by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD)

Background: The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (“**MWRD**”) functions as the owner/operator of all major waterways and sanitary systems within Cook County, including 23 pumping stations and the largest wastewater treatment plant in the world, the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant. In 2007, MWRD began the development of the Watershed Management Ordinance (“**WMO**”) with the goal of establishing uniform storm water management regulations for Cook County. The components that would be regulated under the WMO include drainage and detention, floodplain management, wetland protection, stream habitat and riparian environment protection, soil erosion, sediment control, and water quality. A draft of the WMO was published in September 2009 and a study on the economic impact of the WMO is anticipated to be concluded shortly.

NAIOP Chicago’s Concerns: NAIOP Chicago is working with member companies to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed ordinance and to open a direct dialogue with the MWRD to ensure that the concerns of NAIOP’s members are being taken into consideration. These concerns include:

- The creation of stringent new regulations for storm water detention and floodplain management similar to those in Lake and DuPage County;
- The establishment of regulatory authority over all non-U. S. Army Corps of Engineers-regulated wetlands, with effectively no minimum acreage threshold;
- The introduction of a new 110% compensatory storage volume requirement which adds to site design challenges and the required receipt of FEMA approval for all floodplain impacts;
- The possible increase to construction costs and long-term maintenance responsibilities due to new water quality and erosion control requirements; and
- The possible significant reduction in buildable area given the Ordinance’s increase in detention volume requirements by 60% to 185%, (depending on the type of development).

Visit the [MWRD website](#) for additional information about the draft WMO, comments from municipalities and private entities in addition to contact information at the MWRD.

Please contact [NAIOP Chicago](#) to share any questions or concerns.