RainReady Oak Park
2017 - 2019

Marcella Bondie Keenan | Center for Neighborhood Technology

Hierarchy for Stormwater Management

rain ready

AVOID IT
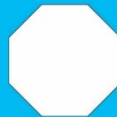Avoid stormwater runoff by protecting open space

SINK IT
Catch and sink runoff by adding porous paving, trees, and rain gardens to urban areas

HOLD IT
Hold runoff temporarily through detention basins in parks, golf courses, reservoirs, etc.

SEND IT
Send runoff to treatment facilities using pipes, tunnels, and ditches

CNT

Community Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Benefit / Practice	Reduces Stormwater Runoff				Increases Available Water Supply	Increases Groundwater Recharge	Reduces Salt Use	Reduces Energy Use	Improves Air Quality	Reduces Atmospheric CO_2	Reduces Urban Heat Island	Improves Community Livability					Improves Habitat	Cultivates Public Education Opportunities
	Reduces Water Treatment Needs	Improves Water Quality	Reduces Grey Infrastructure Needs	Reduces Flooding								Improves Aesthetics	Increases Recreational Opportunity	Reduces Noise Pollution	Improves Community Cohesion	Urban Agriculture		
Green Roofs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Yes
Tree Planting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Maybe	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Bioretention & Infiltration	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Yes
Permeable Pavement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Water Harvesting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	No	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Legend: ● Yes   ◗ Maybe   ○ No

Source: The Value of Green Infrastructure: A Guide (CNT)

RainReady Oak Park Program

Home Assessment → Report + Landscape Design → Construction Support → Evaluation

Program Design

Program Objectives

- Reduce runoff to sewer system
- Reduce residential drainage problems

Eligible Measures

- Rain gardens + Bioswales
- Depaving + Permeable pavement
- Cisterns + Dry wells
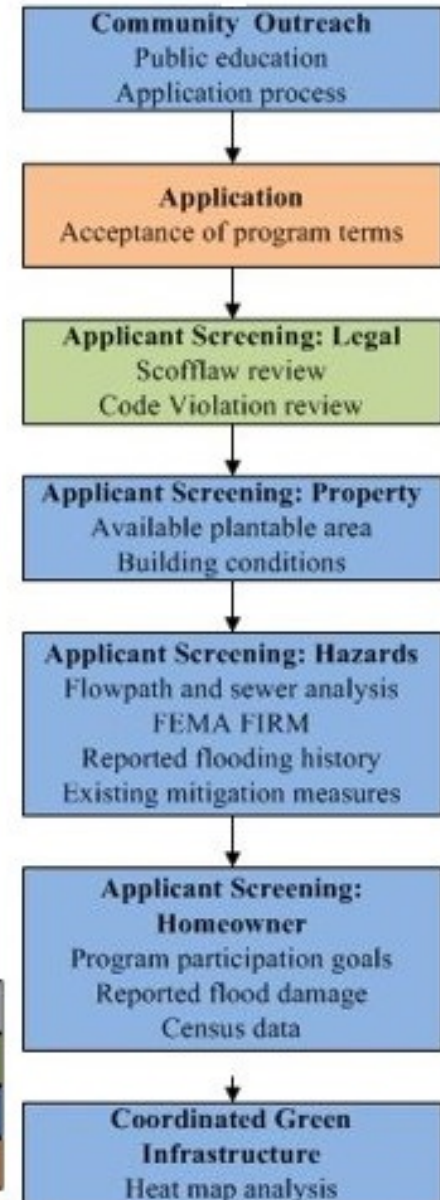- Other approved green infrastructure

Program Financing

- 50% match up to $1,300

Participant Selection

- Scofflaw review
- Applicant prioritization

Outreach + Education

The 2019 program opened with a lengthy waitlist, as a result of the previous year's outreach. In order to minimize program wait times, minimal promotion was conducted in 2019.

In lieu of general outreach, CNT contacted waitlisted applicants via phone calls and direct emails. Interested applicants were invited to an application review meeting. During this phone call, applicants discussed their RainReady goals and constraints, learned about the benefits and limitations of green infrastructure, and were reminded of the program requirements. Applicants who confirmed an intent to meet program requirements were enrolled in the program.

All applicants were also provided with on-demand resources such the My RainReady diagnostic tool, fact sheets, and videos.

Photo credits: CNT, 2018

Outreach + Education

Online Flood Education

My RainReady

- Parcel-specific data
- Guided flood risk questionnaire
- Flood protection tips for homeowners
- Customized recommendations report based on questionnaire answers
- Freely available to all
- Web: myrainready.cnt.org
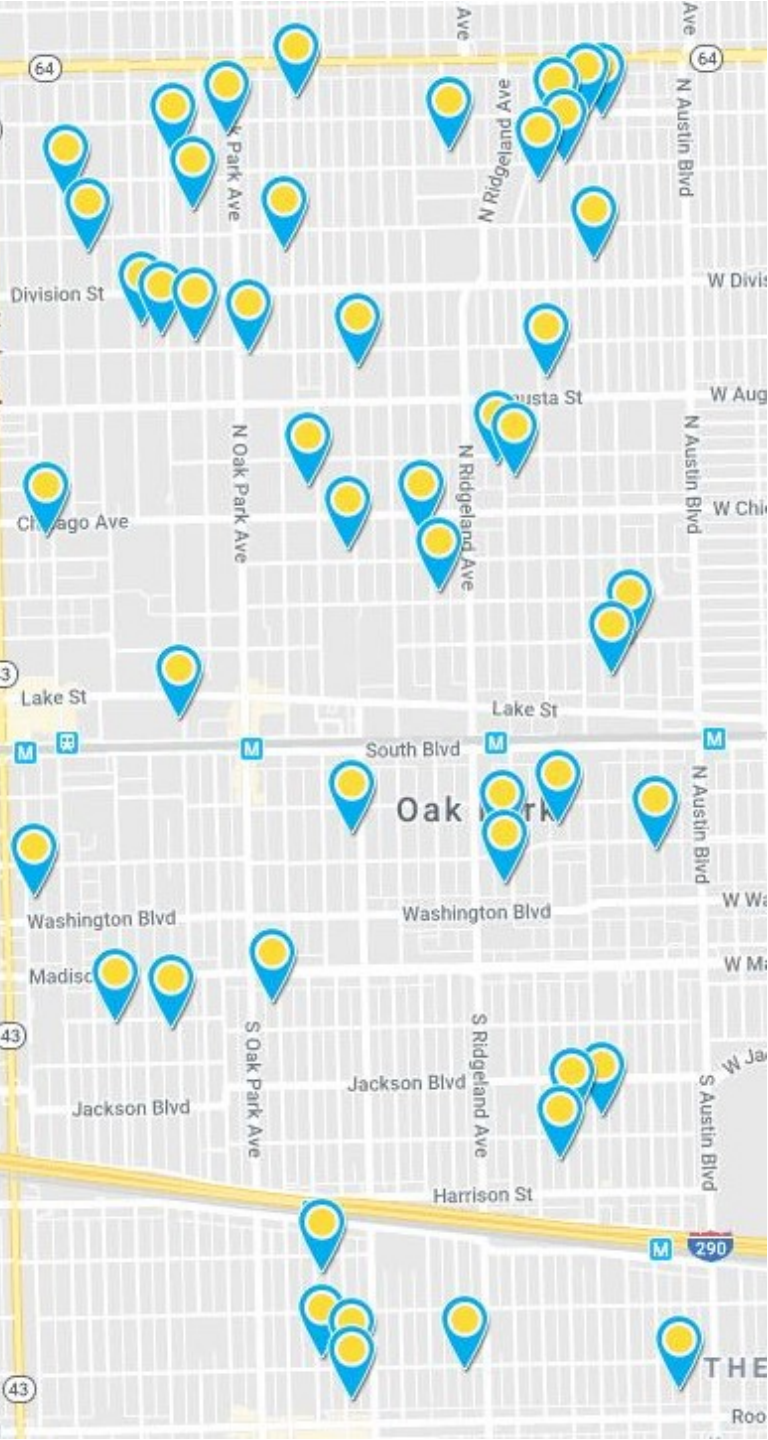
Program Results: 2017 - 2019

Outreach + Education

- 2 Community Meetings (2016; 2018); approx. 50 attendees
- Tabling at Oak Park Earth Fest (2018; 2019)
- Village newsletter & social media; CNT newsletter & social media
- Media mentions: Chicago Tribune; Around Oak Park
- Individual outreach to 175 applicants

Program Enrollment

- 221 Completed applications
- 69 Completed home assessments

Completed Installations

- 36 Rain Gardens or Bioswales
- 4 Dry Wells
- 6 Depavings

Stormwater Management

Estimated **724,000 gallons of rain**

diverted from Oak Park's sewer system

rain ready

Investment

LEVERAGE ACHIEVED

1 : 3.25

Average Project Cost: $4,021

Average Grant: $1,238

Total Private Investment: $156,830

rain
ready

169-s.f. rain garden

Before

After

Photo Credit: Serhii Chrucky for Red Stem Native Landscapes

2,600-gal. dry well + yard drain

Before

Construction

After

350-s.f. rain garden + bioswale

Before

After

951-s.f. side yard + front yard rain gardens

Before

After

CNT

rain
ready

Participant Feedback: 2019

7/10 Extremely or Very Satisfied with Program

6/10 Not likely to make improvements without Program

Most effective outreach:

Village newsletter, RainReady website

94% Extremely or Very Satisfied with Landscaping Performance

0% Reported Flooding after construction

rain ready

Recommendations

- Re-initiate resident outreach activities, including promotion through the Village newsletter and social media.

- Conduct contractor outreach + create a public database of landscape installers interested in bidding on RainReady Oak Park work.

- Begin application review and enrollment invitation for waitlisted applicants as early as possible during the program year. Do not wait until the close of the annual application deadline.

- Continue to conduct scofflaw review on a rolling basis, after the invited applicant submits all grant agreement documents.

- Conduct outreach to program participants to re-enroll who received an assessment but did not complete an eligible project before the close of annual deadline. Establish earlier milestone deadlines for projects initiated during a previous year.

- Continue enhanced application review activities, including contacting applicants for a verbal review of grant requirements and interview with RainReady assessor.

- Update grant reimbursement forms to include a photo of completed work.

THANK YOU

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For more information, please visit
https://www.cnt.org/projects/rainready-oak-park

About CNT

Innovations laboratory for urban sustainability

Our goal is to advance urban sustainability and shared prosperity through initiatives in water, transportation, and climate. We are a "think and do tank" that offers programs, policy, and research.

CNT