

CITY COUNCIL
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Council Chamber • Second Floor - City Hall
121 North LaSalle Street, Chicago IL 60602
Phone: (312) 744 - 6800

SUSAN SADLOWSKI GARZA
ALDERWOMAN, 10TH WARD

10500 S. Ewing Ave, Floor 1
Chicago, Illinois 60617
Phone : (773) 768-8138
Fax : (773) 768-8176



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February 5, 2019

Mr. Alex Hoxsie
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
231 S La Salle Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60604

RE: Dredged Material Management Plan

Dear Mr. Hoxsie,

I would like to extend my thanks and support to the Army Corps' decision to conduct a full Environmental Impacts Statement rather than a more limited Environmental Assessment as part of this project. The southeast side of Chicago has been burdened with environmental impacts due to the history of heavy industry for many decades and any new project needs to take into account the aggregate effect of this pollution on our community.

As part of this review it appears that the U.S. Army Corps is going to include a review of expanding the current dredged materials site at Iroquois Landing at the confluence of the Calumet River and Lake Michigan. Previously this site was considered to be very near the end of a useful life span, so the addition of maintaining the current site is concerning. The residents of the East Side and South Chicago neighborhoods adjacent to the current site have for years been looking forward to the closure of this facility and the property being transferred to the Chicago Park District for expansion of Calumet Park. Any lifespan extension at the current facility will delay the transfer of the property, as well as limit the Chicago Park District's ability to contour and landscape the property upon taking possession. I would hope that the U.S. Army Corps will take seriously the input from the Friends of the Parks as well as the Chicago Park District in any plans to extend the lifespan of this site.

The close proximity of the current disposal facility to Calumet Park also increases the risks that dredged material stored at this location will be transported by the strong winds off of Lake Michigan into Calumet Park and the adjacent community if a vertical extension is adopted. I urge the Army Corps to carefully consider how vertical extension of this site will effect the surrounding neighborhood carefully and evaluate any dust suppression plans as vertical expansion will inevitably increase fugitive dust from the facility.

I would like to once again, as I have previously, strongly urge the U.S. Army Corps to consider the legacy of pollution on the Southeast Side and Northwest Indiana and the cumulative impact

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any additional facility or expansion of the current facility has on our designated environmental justice community. Consideration should be given to a site further from the dense population of the immediate neighborhood. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) currently has a facility located in Alsip, Illinois adjacent to the Cal Sag Channel that would allow dredged materials to be transported at low cost by barge outside of the dense urban environment. Including this MWRD facility as a possible site would help remove the dredged material from the environmental justice community areas adjacent to the Calumet River and across the state line in Indiana.

The U.S. Army Corps has previously ruled out cleaning up sediment to allow for possible beneficial reuse due to cost. However, the long term impact on any community that houses a dredged material facility is difficult to calculate. The 10th Ward is home to several landfills that permanently depress land values and hinder economic development, landfills that will be unusable for any higher purpose for hundreds of years. The Army Corps should consider this long term cost against the costs of remediating material for beneficial reuse.

Finally, the Army Corps should consider more robust measures to prevent sediment from entering into the Calumet River. There are currently many sections of severely degraded seawall as well as rocky and unimproved shoreline that convey sediment into the river. A plan to provide green infrastructure to prevent sediment from entering the river and repairing damaged and degraded seawall may help prevent the need for dredging and allow for a smaller site to be used for any containing sediment that cannot be remediated.

Sincerely,



Susan Sadlowski-Garza
Alderman, 10th Ward