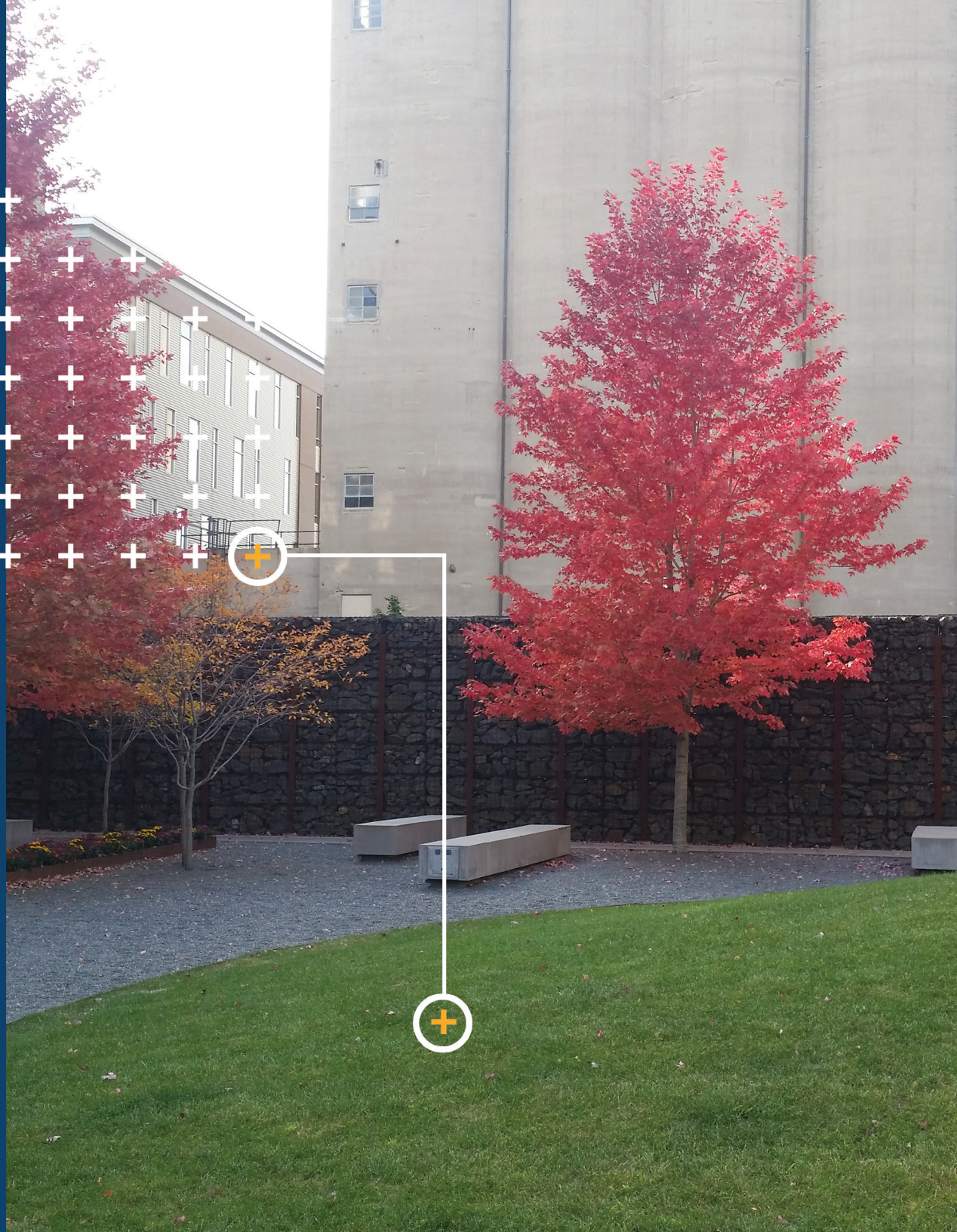


CASE STUDY

MMSD Pursues Ambitious Green Infrastructure Goals





Goal

Serving 1.1 million residents across 28 communities, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) is working toward a goal to use green infrastructure (GI) to capture the first half-inch of rainwater across the service area (740 million gallons with every rain event) by 2035.

Challenge

MMSD has implemented a multi-tiered plan to replace aging infrastructure and build out new GI solutions, but managing projects of many types and sizes proved challenging.

Solution

e-Builder provided a central hub for communications, document management, and project oversight.

Ongoing Benefits

Because it's so flexible, the e-Builder system allows MMSD to manage small contracts at a needed level of detail.

A regional government agency and long time e-Builder customer, the [Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District \(MMSD\)](#) provides water reclamation and flood management services to 1.1 million residents across 28 communities in and around the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. MMSD is a national leader in green infrastructure (GI), flood management, and wastewater treatment. In 2010, MMSD executive director Kevin Shafer unveiled an impressive goal: to use GI to capture the first half inch of rainfall across the service area—equal to about 740 million gallons of stormwater with every rain event—by the year 2035. This strategy to manage water where it falls reduces flood and system backup risks and helps to mitigate climate change impacts.

MMSD recognizes the value of integrating sustainability into their capital investment program. A more sustainable network reduces the amount of wastewater that must be conveyed and treated and allows for more effective management of the treatment system's finite capacity. This ultimately results in improved performance and better environmental stewardship for the region.





Meeting the Challenge

Making the 2035 vision a reality presents challenges for an area whose sewer system is a century old or more in some places. Committed to the project, MMSD's leadership is expanding upon existing sustainability programs and introducing new ones.

Green Infrastructure Partnership Program (GIPP)

GIPP focuses on providing incentive funding for private or public property owners, paying for up to 50 percent of costs for GI. Each year, MMSD awards about \$3 million in funding for 17-21 projects. GIPP project owners agree to promote the GI elements of their work, helping to spread the word about GIPP and the advantages of sustainable construction. Additionally, project owners provide the MMSD with a 10- to 20-year conservation easement on the GI built with MMSD funds.

Green Solutions

Green Solutions distributes funding to 19 participating municipalities within MMSD's service area. Each municipality receives a portion of the funding based on its population concentration and assessment value. Communities decide what GI projects they want to do with the funding and submit work plans to MMSD. Accepted projects include stormwater trees, permeable pavement, bioswales, and native landscaping. Many municipalities incorporate these features into their capital projects.

Green Schools Program

MMSD's Green Schools program funds an organization to work with public schools within their service area. With help from the organization, schools develop a conceptual plan to incorporate GI into their schoolyard. Once approved, the project is turned over to the school to be put out to bid for construction. Funding for construction typically comes through Green Solutions or GIPP.

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Partnership with Corvias

The latest of MMSD's sustainability efforts is a public-private partnership with Corvias, a consulting firm that specializes in public-private infrastructure partnerships, including GI projects. MMSD will work to identify problem areas such as non-compliant sewersheds or areas of high inflow to the Deep Tunnel, areas of high pollutant loadings, and large amounts of impervious surface. In these priority areas, Corvias will approach the property owner and determine if a GI project is viable on the land. If the property owner agrees, Corvias's team, made up of local engineering and planning firms, will develop plans, bid, and build the project. Corvias takes a conservation easement in favor of MMSD and only receives payment per gallon of GI-based storage delivered.

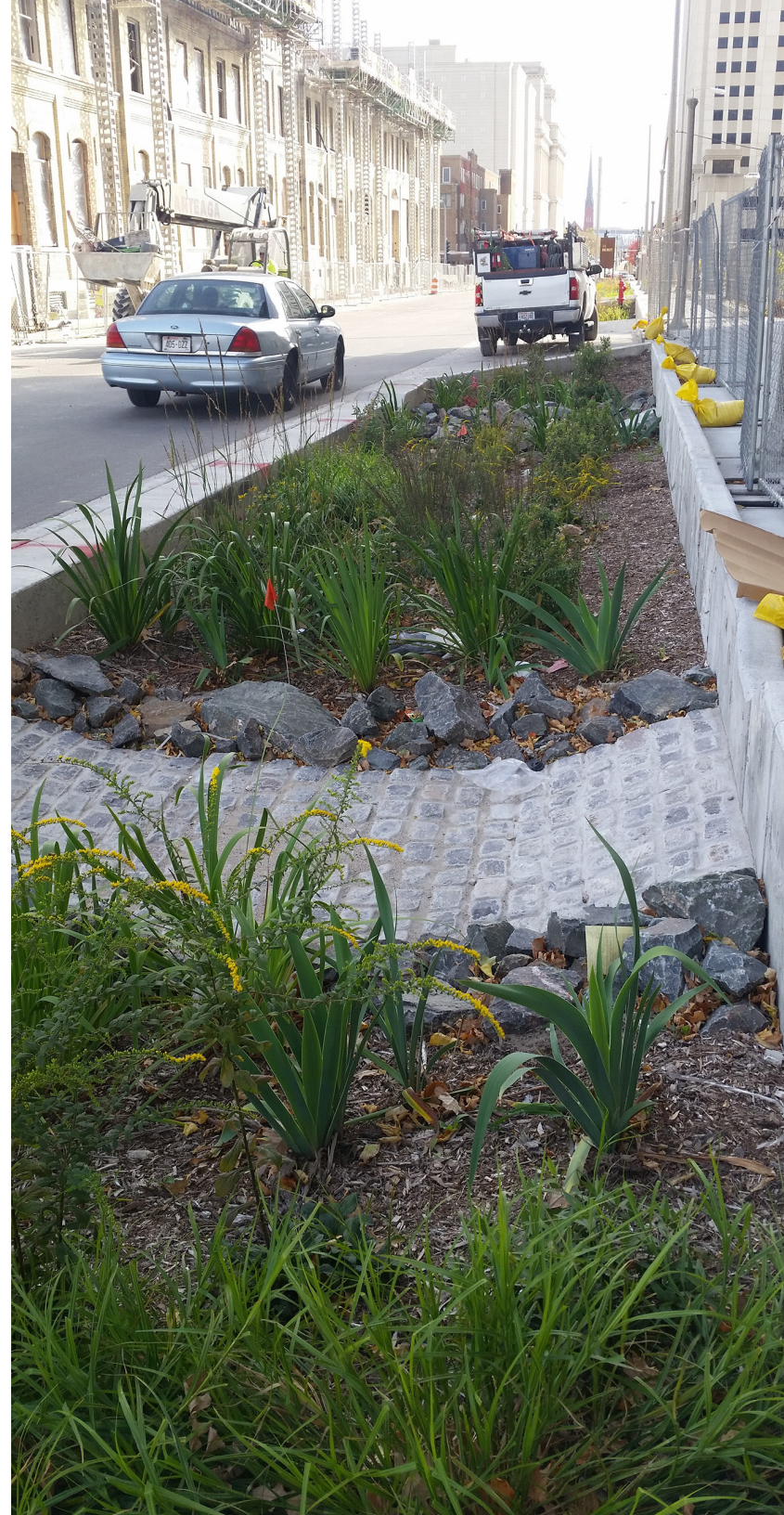
Fresh Coast Resource Center and Residential Outreach

MMSD does grassroots residential outreach programs through the Fresh Coast Resource Center. These efforts focus on educating government workers, residents, and business owners about GI: what it is, why it's important, and how they can be part of the solution. The center hosts workshops about rain barrels, partners with external nonprofits for developer workshops, and inspires community members to work toward sustainable water solutions.

Moving Toward the Goal

As MMSD progresses toward its sustainability goals, streamlining project management is an important component of success. Currently, the organization uses e-Builder to manage thirteen GI projects. "Once we were introduced to e-Builder, we decided to go all in," says Breanne Plier, manager of sustainability at MMSD. "The district only managed our capital funded projects through our previous software. Now, with e-Builder, we're able to manage some of the smaller projects as well. That's helpful for us because if we want to share documents, they're all in one central place."

MMSD's outreach projects often have large budgets with many small contracts—for example, a \$10 million budget with 60–100 small contracts contained in that. One of the neighborhood outreach programs might be a \$60,000 contract with no major construction, yet MMSD can set up the project in e-Builder with specific line items, making it easy to track what is in the contract and how budget can be allotted. "It's just as important to manage those small contracts at a fairly granular level of detail," says Rick Niederstadt, support manager for capital programs. "Because the e-Builder system is so flexible, we can manage large and small projects in the same way."



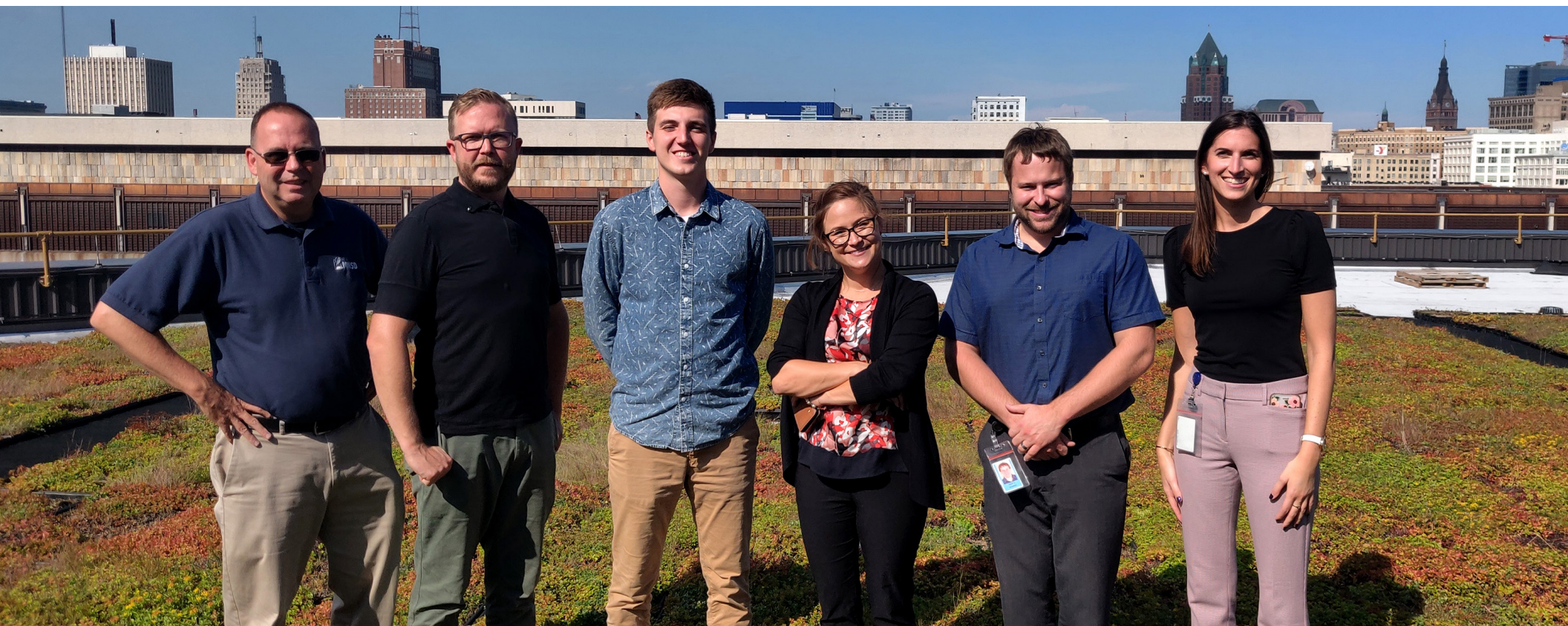
Having dozens of small contracts also means many different vendors are involved. Using e-Builder, MMSD project managers can grant limited access to each vendor, allowing them to upload and download documents and view only what they need to see.

At the end of 2020, MMSD had achieved 32.2 million gallons of rainfall capture and aligned programs and priorities to move toward their goal of 740 million gallons by 2035. “We care about protecting the environment and are concerned about the effects of climate change,” says Breanne Plier. “GI is part of the solution to those challenges, and we’ll continue to move forward toward our vision.”

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