**iCAP Working Group**

March 2025 Meeting

**Date:** March 25, 2025

**Time:** 11am-12pm CST

**Location:** [Teams](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NzgxY2ZhN2YtODViZS00YWI3LWI3NTYtODAwOGEwMTkxMjdj%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2244467e6f-462c-4ea2-823f-7800de5434e3%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22ca2b7a78-925c-40fd-b816-bc12c8ac6d55%22%7d)

**Attendees:** Jamie Singson, Sandy Yoo, Carl Bernacchi, Jennifer Fraterrigo, Morgan White, Jack Liong, Brad Klein, Rob Roman, Miriam Keep

1. **Follow-up actions**
   1. Morgan, Jen, and Miriam plan meeting with Cheryl to talk about key objectives from the Landscape Master Plan
   2. Explore options to involve Community and Government Relations at Illinois, and/or Government Relations at the System level in advocacy for allowing greywater use
   3. Sandy to share information on greywater project at UIC
   4. Follow up on opportunities to use sustainable endowment fund for landscape improvements
   5. Revise “implement plan” objectives so that they speak to objectives the plans aim to achieve
   6. Explore options to work with campus real estate on sustainable land management requirements for lessees
   7. Decide whether/how to include an objective related to water conservation
2. **Review of Land and Water Objectives**
   1. **Advocate with state authorities to allow the use greywater in campus facilities**
      1. Morgan explains this came up with the Siebel Center for Design, but there were value engineering issues so we did not request permission to use grey water, which requires variance from state code.
      2. Sandy: We did install the tank outside the building, but we did not install equipment within the building.
      3. Morgan: Our new code compliance team has been advocating for this. Katie Sperl wrote a letter in support of this, with support of some of the Land and Water team. Katie says this will require state-wide advocacy.
      4. Jen: Katie explained there are some variances that have been filed, but have not been approved.
      5. Jen: The iCAP team had wanted to start installing greywater infrastructure, but we thought we need to start with advocating for policy change.
      6. Jamie: Would it be strategic to include Bob Flider in these efforts?
         1. Morgan: We are generally supposed to get his guidance any time we reach out to an external entity. Probably would be good to include Government Relations at the System level. Would also be helpful to know what other universities in the System are doing. Know that we have to be careful about taking an official stance.
      7. Sandy: Recommend contacting Elizabeth Ortner regarding water quality testing and concerns about maintaining tanks. Want to know if UIC has implemented the system I think they have, to see if there are good real life examples we can point to. (In follow up, this project was not approved.)
      8. Jen: There are other uses beyond within buildings, which are lower hanging fruit we can address if we have a stronger position.
   2. **Implement the 2022 Campus Landscape Master Plan**
      1. The previous objective was to develop the plan, now the objective is to implement it.
      2. Jen suggested there is value in writing the objectives to explain what the plans are trying to accomplish instead of just implementing the plan. This makes it understandable for people who aren’t already familiar with the plans. This plan includes goals related to native and pollinator plantings, using more permeable surfaces, and increasing tree canopy cover. It will be easier to understand for students if we state those goals explicitly. Morgan agrees.
         1. The same is true for the Rainwater Management Plan
      3. Morgan: We have included maintaining Bee Campus and Tree Campus certifications. F&S does this and probably would not have a justification for doing so if it is not in the iCAP. Even though this is just maintain the existing certifications, does this belong in the iCAP?
         1. Sandy: I think it belongs if we explain the benefits of certification. The certification itself is not the objective, but it serves to meet objectives.
         2. Morgan: certification is mostly about awareness. We meet and have an event and a report.
         3. Morgan: important to not just add trees, also need people to take care of the trees.
         4. Jamie: What about military access area? This seems like a good location to do a demonstration.
            1. Morgan: that area is a geothermal bore field now, so it is not a great place for trees.
         5. Morgan: The iCAP trio could look at the plan with Cheryl and think about key objectives to include. One thing I have been thinking about is how to increase funding in Sustainable Endowment Fund and how could we use that funding to meet these goals.
         6. Morgan: The Campus Landscape Master Plan does not have cost estimates. We were able to get funding to get specific cost estimates for the main quads. Also getting more specific recommendations. How will colleges react if they are required to follow the campus landscape masterplan for new projects?
         7. Brad: Think it is reasonable for new projects, if new work needs to be done it should abide by the master plan. But if we pile too many requirements on, it could become a deterrent to new projects.
         8. Jack: I agree, but wonder about where the funding for that part of the project would come from.
         9. Sandy: Instead of increase number of trees, would nice to talk about specific areas, and how. Does the campus landscape master plan identify areas/ways to do that? Right now facilities standards call for replacing trees with a like tree when they are removed. Is there an opportunity to increase that?
         10. Brad: There is concern that only certain colleges will be able to afford capital projects, they will be the only ones implementing the landscape master plan.
         11. Jamie: Would be good to talk to Derek Peterson. He works with donors who want to give smaller gifts for trees/sustainability.
             1. Sandy: Moms and Dads association could be good to work with too.
             2. Morgan: I think we should talk about seeking an Advancement fund for landscapes, instead of just seeking funding. I read that there is a Sustainable Endowment fund, don’t know much about it.
             3. Sandy: There is Chester endowment fund for the arts, I wonder if that could count because it is for the beautification of campus.
             4. Morgan: that has supported some smaller projects
   3. **Implement the Rainwater Management Plan**
      1. Morgan: We are changing this to the rainwater management program instead of plan. It is not really a plan because a plan would include stakeholder conversations, an idea of funding, and identifying responsibilities. What we asked the consulting firm to do is give us a vision of what is best to do, which would be incredibly expensive and often not feasible.
      2. Sandy: Did Farnsworth identify priority areas to focus on?
         1. Morgan: We have analysis of the amount of rainwater runoff in different areas, with a goal for how much rainwater should run off. It’s not clear where the goal comes from. Also includes recommendations for green infrastructure required to meet the goal.
      3. Morgan: “Implement Rainwater Management Plan” cannot be an objective due to these challenges. Updating facilities standards to restrict amount of rainwater runoff is a good place to start.
         1. Prepare Integrated Pest Management Policy for lands maintained by the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics and Division of Campus Recreation
            1. This one already has some momentum, is in progress.
   4. **Increase sustainable land management on South Farms through use of cover crops and prairie strips**
      1. Jen: Already in conversation with Crop Sciences that perennials will be planted in some areas are marginal for crop production. Animal Sciences is taking a wait and see approach to see what happens in Crop Sciences.
      2. Morgan: Is it possible to get a metric like area covered?
         1. Jen: We were getting some different/ inconsistent numbers about cover crops planted.
      3. Carl: There are challenges with land being used in very specific ways for research, which would not be suitable for cover crops. There are over 10,000 acres of farmland owned by the university. Expanding conservation practices would have a big impact. Morrow Plots are a representation of what we did wrong in the Midwest with row crop agriculture. Should we try to transition Morrow Plots, in center of campus, to more sustainable agronomic practices?
      4. Jen: We did speak with some staff who oversee leasing of university lands to try to push for implementation of sustainable practices on leased lands, but there is some hesitation, university does not want to risk relationship with lessees. Carmen Urgarte was interested in looking into sustainable practices by lessees, but she was not ultimately able to do that. It would be a good student project to look into this more.
      5. Morgan: I don’t think we can put it in the iCAP at this stage.
      6. Carl: Think at a minimum we should require leases to hold to certain standards.
      7. Using land on South Farms that is not able to be used for crops is low-hanging fruit we can use for demonstration.
      8. We can pursue working with real estate office on management of lands leased by university if there is an appetite for that, but not sure what reaction will be.
   5. **Water conservation – should be included as objective?**
      1. Rob: Agree this is important to include, but not sure what it would look like.
      2. Jen: Water is used for many different purposes, hard to know where to target or how.
      3. Morgan: 2010 and 2015 iCAP included specific measures to reduce water, like low flow fixtures. Including a water conservation target would require identifying specific strategies for reduction at a later point.
3. **Green Globes event**
   1. Will be held on April 17, 5:30-7:30pm. Student-facing event that will include a formal awards ceremony for student accomplishments in sustainability, followed by a reception where students will have the opportunity to interact with iCAP teams and learn about iCAP 2025 objectives. Students can also provide feedback about the kinds of iCAP-related programming they would like to see. All from the iWG are invited!