



Chicago Floating Vegetable Gardens

Location: Goose Island, Chicago

Client: Urban Rivers

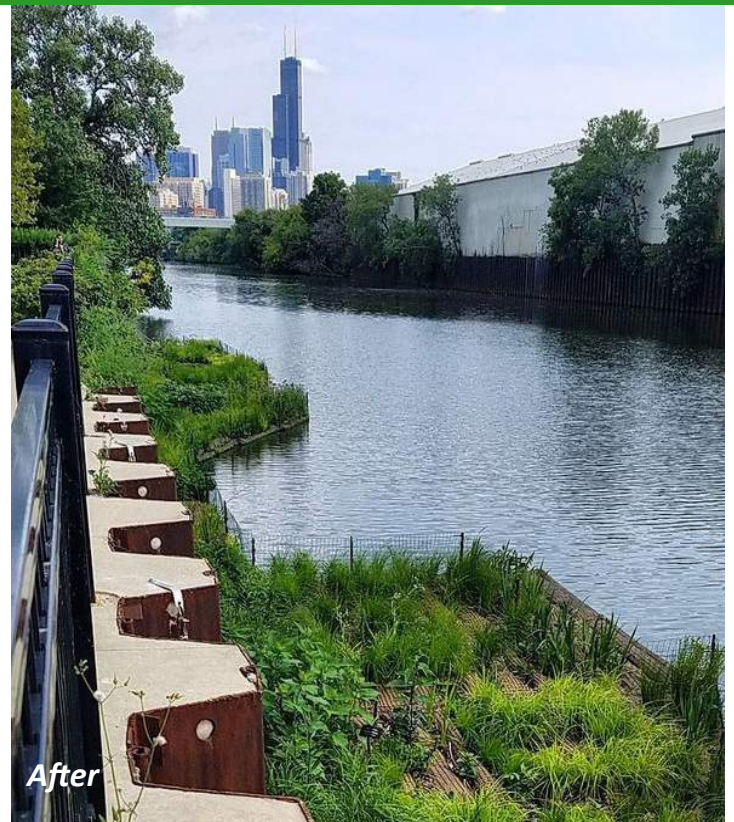
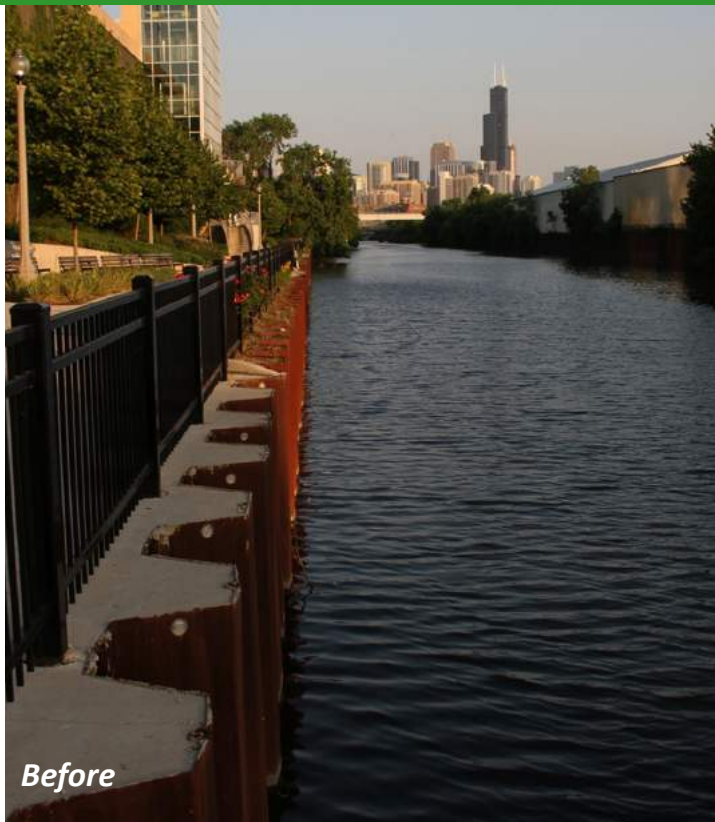
Objective: Habitat Creation

Project in collaboration with:



Challenge:

In 2011, the Chicago River was listed as one of America's most endangered rivers. With water pollution being addressed through various projects and interventions over the years, the water quality has been gradually improving. However, most of the river banks have hard edges, providing virtually no opportunity for realising green river spaces. Also aquatic wildlife and vegetation was largely absent. The main goal of this project was therefore to provide habitat and to create an attractive green space for residents and visitors.



Solution:

A 1500 ft² floating garden was installed on the east side of Goose Island in June 2017, with a mile-long park being envisioned by 2020. Urban Rivers is a non-profit grassroots initiative, that has been involved in the project and the fundraising from the beginning. Its primary goals are to improve the river’s water quality, beautify the urban landscape, create wildlife habitat in challenging spaces, teach the local community about their urban waterways and to test the feasibility of growing edible plants on the floating islands. A kayak route passes the floating islands, and a kayak park is one of the future possibilities that is being envisioned by Urban Rivers and other initiatives.

Because of the successful Kickstarter campaign by Urban River, the community involvement on the project was high and more than 50 volunteers turned up to help plant the islands.



Visitors kayaking along the islands



Volunteers helping to plant the islands

Another important goal of this project is to experiment with growing edible plants on the floating islands, thereby adopting the principles of aquaponics, where nutrients in the water feed the plants. The islands are planted with more than 1500 specimens of 40 native species, including various vegetables and herbs. Urban Rivers has coined the term “Riverponics” to describe this type of growing system. The harvested crops will be extensively tested to trace pollutant and toxins and to determine the feasibility of transforming the gardens into a floating vegetable production site.



“We are in the midst of creating a mile-long park in the Chicago River--an urban wildlife sanctuary that will be most accessible via Kayak. Biomatrix has been a trusted and invested partner of ours for years now--since our early conversations. They’ve had the expertise in-house to support us from concept, to design, to installation and support. In addition, their hardware is exceptional--it’s easy to work with and our gardens are thriving. We sincerely look forward to continuing to work with them.” - Josh Yellin, Urban Rivers



**BIOMATRIX
WATER**

CONTACT US · WEBSITE: www.biomatrixwater.com · PHONE: (+44) 01309 678 100 · EMAIL: solutions@biomatrixwater.com

