

Dept. of Administration: Milwaukee Green Initiative Tour highlights project partnerships

Posted on Wednesday, Jun 1, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Milwaukee, Wis. - On Thursday, May 26, Wisconsin Department of Administration Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Secretary Preston Cole highlighted green initiatives during an outreach visit to tour neighborhood projects at Milwaukee's Urban Ecology Center and La Escuela Fratney. Green initiatives at both stops have been supported with grant funding from DOA's Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (WCMP).

Blumenfeld and Cole, joined by representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy, kicked off the day with a tour of the Urban Ecology Center's facility at Riverside Park that culminated in a roundtable with Center leadership and other stakeholders, including local legislators.

"Climate change poses a common challenge to all of us, and it is a shared responsibility to meet that challenge," Secretary-designee Blumenfeld said. "That is why Thursday's visits were so heartening: they provided a template for how we can connect the dots and engage our communities in the critical work of building a future that is green and clean. These partnerships represent precisely the kind of innovation and cooperation that will be needed in the months and years ahead."

The tour of the Urban Ecology Center was followed by a visit to [La Escuela Fratney](#), a citywide dual language elementary school in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood that serves approximately 450 students from K3 through Grade 5. Fratney is one of multiple sites in Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) that have created "green

schoolyards” featuring permeable surfaces, bioswales, trees, and outdoor learning spaces, among other elements. These green schoolyards can help curb the amount of stormwater runoff into local sewers and waterways while affording students new opportunities for outdoor learning and recreation.

Project partners for redeveloping Fratney’s schoolyard included Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, the Milwaukee Public Schools Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Milwaukee nonprofit Reflo. Grant funds from DOA’s Wisconsin Coastal Management Program supported the development as well. The Fratney site alone can capture approximately 30,000 gallons of stormwater per rain event, according to [Reflo](#).

Joined by school leaders, MPS officials, and local project partners, Blumenfeld and Cole toured the Fratney schoolyard and learned more about the MPS green schoolyard program and the projects that have already been completed or are in development.

The visits follow on the heels of Governor Tony Evers’ landmark [Clean Energy Plan](#). The plan – the first of its kind for Wisconsin – charts a path to carbon-free electricity by 2050, promotes energy independence, and outlines strategies to lower energy bills for Wisconsinites and create green jobs in our economy.