Does Chicago’s ward system still make sense as a civic organizing device? What if we governed ourselves based on resource management, rather than political management? Wasteland aligns Chicago’s political boundaries with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District’s intercepting sewer basins in order to encourage development. Seven basins replace the 50 ward system, each one led by a new elected official. Wasteland aligns Chicago’s political boundaries with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District’s intercepting sewer basins in order to encourage development. Seven basins replace the 50 ward system, each one led by a new elected official. In turn, wastewater reclamation plants anchor each basin and repurpose waste to generate new economic development. This new model for 21st-century biosolid-driven urbanism hybridizes development through new manufactured landscapes in areas of the region where job loss, pollution, and industrial decay persist in the wake of 19th- and 20th-century industrial activity.

Chicago’s 9th Ward, where Pullman and the Calumet Wastewater Reclamation Plant sit side by side, is poised for redevelopment and an exciting test site for this strategy.

Team:
Conor O'Shea, Founder and Principal
Chris Bennett, Architectural Advisor
Aneesha Dharwadker, Editorial Advisor
Michael O’Shea, Community Outreach Advisor

Rich soils are used as the basis for new urbanization strategies, with an emphasis on job creation and community engagement, including:
- redeveloping brownfields
- generating agroforestry economies
- linking fragmented habitats
- generating topography for a new tourism economy
- fertilizing depleted croplands
- sustaining and expanding community gardens
9th Ward Wasteland
Hinterlands Urbanism and Landscape
hinterlands-ul.net

- Parks: 2
- EL stops: 0
- Bike paths: 1
- Bus lines: 7

- Grocers: 5
- Restaurants: 4
- Culture: 2
- Shops: 2

10 minute walk