

Tier 2: Green Infrastructure Action Plan

Example of a “investment/funding strategy for green infrastructure projects.”

The Township has created a green infrastructure committee that meets twice a month to discuss opportunities for projects and coordinate implementation of projects. While much of the implementation thus far has been a function of the availability of the Department of Public Works. The goal is to install five to ten projects per year and possibly increase this number as funding becomes available. While projects can be designed throughout the year, many are install in the spring, summer and fall. These are exciting times for our Township who is hoping to be on the forefront of the green infrastructure movement.

Funding Sources

The first source of funding will be provided by the Township from the capital improvement fund and tree fund. The Township is committed to implementing green infrastructure throughout the municipality. The Township is currently partnering with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program on a township-wide green infrastructure initiative. The RCE Water Resources Program is designing green infrastructure projects (4 to 6 per year) and overseeing their implementation. Additionally, the RCE Water Resources Program has trained the Department of Public Works to install and maintain rain gardens. They have already installed rain gardens at the municipal library and park. Rain gardens are also to be installed at three other locations in the Township.

The second source of funding will be provided by volunteers as part of their effort to participate in the Township’s green infrastructure initiative. For example, a Boy Scout helped with the Township Library Rain Garden as part of his Eagle Scout project. The scout organized a group of volunteers (mostly other scouts and their parents) to help construct the rain garden. The scout also conducted fund raising to generate money to purchase plants for the rain garden. There are other community groups that are interested in participating in the green infrastructure initiative that can provide labor and funding for supplies.

The third source of funding would be through local, state and federal grant programs. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection provides some grant funding for stormwater management projects. Other groups like the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, US Environmental Protection Agency, Sustainable Jersey, and ANJEC (Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions) have also provided grant funding for stormwater management projects in the past. Private foundations could be another source of funding for designing and building green infrastructure projects.

The final possible source of funding is the New Jersey Water Bank (formerly known as the Environmental Infrastructure Trust) Financing Program. This program provides low interest loans for water projects. The Township could seek funding from the New Jersey Water Bank for green infrastructure projects.

Incentive Programs

So far, the Township has been focusing on implementing green infrastructure projects on municipally owned property. As the green infrastructure initiative moves forward, there will be opportunities to provide incentive programs for homeowners and businesses to participate in the effort. The RCE Water Resources Program has successfully offered a rain garden rebate program in several New Jersey locations. As funding become available, this program can be offered to residents and businesses in the Township.

As stormwater utilities become a reality in New Jersey, there may also be opportunities to offer incentives to homeowners and businesses to install green infrastructure. Many stormwater utilities provide a reduced utility fee to property owners that have installed green infrastructure. Some stormwater utilities programs also provide direct funding to property owners to install green infrastructure.