

Tier 3: Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan

8. Develop an implementation agenda

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.

Maintenance and Monitoring

So far, all the projects have been installed on public property and the Department of Public Works has been trained to maintain these systems. As time goes on and more private property owners install green infrastructure systems, these property owners will be held responsible for maintaining their systems. The Township will provide training session for these individuals and each project will have a maintenance plan.

An annual inspection will be conducted of each green infrastructure project to ensure it is functioning as designed and maintenance is being conducted on a regular basis. NJDEP provides guidance on maintenance and monitoring of green infrastructure practices. Go to:

https://www.njstormwater.org/maintenance_guidance.htm

Responsible Parties

Thus far, the municipality has been solely responsible for installing and maintaining green infrastructure practices. For each project that is built on non-public property, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be entered to ensure that each participate understand their role in the implementation. This will include disposal of soil and maintenance of the system.

Timeframe

The timeframe for installation of green infrastructure depends on available resources (labor and funding). The town has committed to installing four to six projects per year but this could increase dramatically if an influx of funding become available.