COMMUNITY SCOPING WORKSHEET

Investigating concerns about or objections to green infrastructure can help you understand why a community may be hesitant to implement green infrastructure. A dialogue about these issues can give you critical information regarding the community's experience with green infrastructure.

Community Planning

1. Has a comprehensive plan been adopted for the community?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   If yes, how are the community's natural resources addressed in the comprehensive plan? _____

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   If yes, is there specific attention to the community's water resources in the comprehensive plan?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   If yes, is green infrastructure implementation listed as a key element for implementation?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

2. Has your community taken part in the development of a watershed restoration or other similar plan?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

3. Does the community's hazard mitigation plan identify green infrastructure as a mitigation activity?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Natural Assets

1. What are the natural resources of your community?
   ☐ Rivers
   ☐ Streams
   ☐ Lakes
   ☐ Public or private property with water frontage
   ☐ Other important natural areas

2. Are those natural resources incorporated into the community's culture, such as for events?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   If yes, how? _____

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3. Are there impaired resources, vacant lots or sites (e.g., degraded wetlands/shorelines, contaminated sites, flood-prone areas) that would be good targets for remediation or restoration?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

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If yes, would green infrastructure be suitable for these sites (e.g., stormwater infiltration may NOT be feasible on a brownfield redevelopment)?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, these can often be good sites to demonstrate new ideas and practices.

4. Is there public access to local rivers, lakes and natural areas?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, where and what type? _____

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Hazards

1. Is your community challenged with any of the following flooding issues?
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☐ Other_____

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☐ Yes   ☐ No

3. Does your community experience beach or swimming area closures after storms due to high bacteria levels?
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If yes, are the sources (or potential sources) of bacteria documented or understood?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

4. If streams or rivers are within your community's boundaries, are they on the state's 303(d) list of impaired and threatened waters[7]?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

5. Does your community have issues with bluff or ravine erosion?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

Community Identity and Character

1. Is being "green" attractive to new people moving into your community?
☐ Yes　☐ No

2. Does your community have any environmental, sustainability or nature-based designations?
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3. Is your community a sister city to a city with water issues?
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If yes, what is their focus? _____

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Stormwater Regulations

1. Does the community have a stormwater utility?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

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☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, does the stormwater utility incentivize green infrastructure through the reduction of ERUs and the corresponding tax rate?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

2. Is the stormwater ordinance up-to-date in accordance with state law?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

3. Does the stormwater ordinance include green infrastructure practices as approved methods to address stormwater runoff in new development and redevelopment projects?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

4. What amount of development (e.g., half an acre of new or redeveloped impervious surface, any site plan, an acre or more of new development) triggers the requirement for a developer to submit a stormwater management plan?

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When a stormwater development plan is required, are reviewers knowledgeable about green infrastructure?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

Is green infrastructure encouraged in the review process?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

5. Is your municipality required to have coverage under a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit?
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6. Does your community have total maximum daily load (TMDL) allocation requirements that it must meet?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

Current Green Infrastructure Usage

1. Have residents installed rain gardens or rain barrels?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

2. Have any neighborhood associations or other organizations initiated green infrastructure projects such as rain gardens or stormwater tree programs?
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If yes, please describe_____

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3. Are there community gardens?
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4. Are there formal or informal efforts to ensure maintenance of subdivision ponds or other private green infrastructure features?
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5. Has your community implemented a downspout or foundation drain disconnection program?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, is this encouraged by the local government, or simply allowed?

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If yes, who would respond to questions or provide technical information on drain disconnection?

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6. Does your community have an issue with inflow and infiltration?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Menomonee Valley Redevelopment and Community Park, native plantings, Milwaukee

Understanding Your Community

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7. Are there restrictions on the application and use of lawn fertilizers and/or pesticides?
☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Are streams and rivers protected by regulated buffers?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how large a setback is required?

_____

If yes, what type of vegetation is required/allowed?

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9. Is there awareness of coal tar sealant pollution?
☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Have any developers who have worked in your community used green infrastructure?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, with what success?

_____

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11. Do you have subdivisions/neighborhoods that incorporate conservation, low-impact development, sustainability features or green infrastructure practices?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

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12. Which of the following green infrastructure practices have been implemented in your community?
☐ Bioretention areas, such as plantings in parking lot islands
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☐ Rain gardens
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☐ Bioswales
☐ Native plantings
☐ Wetland and floodplain preservation and restoration
☐ Conservation and protection of open lands, natural areas and green spaces
☐ Permeable and porous pavements and paved surfaces
☐ Urban tree canopy protection and restoration

Which installations have been described as successful?

_____

_____

_____

Which have been described as failed? _____

_____

_____

_____

Was there community support for the projects?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, was significant outreach needed to secure community buy-in for any of the projects?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

Was the community opposed to the project at the beginning or at any points in the process?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, how was the opposition addressed? _____

_____

_____

13. Is there a green infrastructure initiative or project that the community incorporated into its identity?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

_____

_____

_____

Knowing your community's identity is critical to ensure that changes to local regulations will incorporate and build upon the preferences and priorities of the community.

14. Is there a government entity spearheading the acceptance and/or adoption of green infrastructure (e.g., a sewerage district, mayor's office, etc.)?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

_____

_____

_____

Community Acceptance

1. What community groups or associations would be natural allies for green infrastructure?
These could include a park friends group, a garden club, a Wild Ones chapter, a conservation committee, a school that has the environment or sustainability as an organizing theme, river or bay keepers, a Rotary Club, bicycling advocacy group or village beautification committee.

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If yes, please describe_____

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☐ Permeable and porous pavements and paved surfaces
☐ Urban tree canopy protection and restoration

Which installations have been described as successful?

_____

_____

_____

2. Are there neighborhood associations with a strong environmental ethic and commitment to sustainability?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

_____

3. Which companies or businesses (e.g., garden centers or landscaping contractors) within your community have a strong environmental ethic and commitment to sustainability?

_____

_____

_____

4. Are there individuals who are advocates for green infrastructure and green practices in your community?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

List individuals and what types of practices they support:_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Are there individuals who are opposed to green infrastructure and other environmental initiatives?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, what is the basis of their concern or objection?

_____

_____

_____

6. Do you have code and ordinance changes reviewed by an attorney?
☐ Yes, always
☐ Sometimes
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

If yes, is this an impediment to making change?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

7. What is your community's attitude or approach towards changing regulations?

☐ Positive, willing/able to take on

☐ Neutral, not proactive, but few objections when routine change is made

☐ Challenging, changes likely to receive intense scrutiny or to lead to objections.

_____

_____

_____