
Financing Green Infrastructure Efforts

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National Center for Smart Growth
University of Maryland

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Green Infrastructure

What is green infrastructure?

- An ecological framework for environmental, social, and economic health - in short our natural life support system*
- A very effective planning framework for maximizing our environmental, social, and economic **return on investment**
- A very effective framework for developing funding and financing strategies

*Green Infrastructure: linking landscapes and Communities; M.A. Benedict, E.T. McMahon

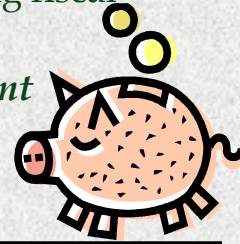


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Green Infrastructure Financing

Three related themes:

- **Funding:** acquiring financial resources
- **Financing:** an *allocation process* that includes acquiring, investing, and managing fiscal resources
- **Goal:** increase *return on investment*



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Financing Truths

- *It is cheaper to protect than to restore*
- Taking action today is cheaper than taking action tomorrow
 - There is not, has never been, and never will be enough grants - public or private - to fund natural resources protection and restoration, including green infrastructure



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Green Infrastructure Financing

Effective financing strategies:

- Community-based, incorporating all stakeholder groups
- Integrated, combining a variety of sources, instruments, and institutions



- Mirror the resource, incorporating multiple landowners, land uses and landscapes



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Revenue Generators

- Grants, loans, technical assistance programs
- Sustainable, dedicated revenue streams

Cost Reducers

- Effective, *enforced* regulations
- Market-based programs
- *Coordination with other community programs and priorities*



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Effective use of public funding and technical assistance programs

Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust

- *USDA and EPA grants*
- *Highway mitigation dollars*
- *Donor campaigns*
- *Voluntary programs*
- *Partnership*



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Sustainable, dedicated funding



Tax and fee-based sources

- *Real Estate and Sales taxes*
- *Land Use tax*
- *Tax Increment Financing*
- *Impact fees*
- *Stormwater utilities*



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Sustainable, dedicated funding

Lenexa, Kansas – Rain to Recreation

- *Sales tax*
- *Stormwater utility*
- *New development charge*
- *Stream setback ordinances*
- *Existing public programs*



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Effective, enforced rules and regulations:

- *Zoning*
- *Subdivision ordinances*
- *Forest conservation laws*
- *Buffer set-back requirements*
- *Comprehensive planning*
- *Septic Regulations*



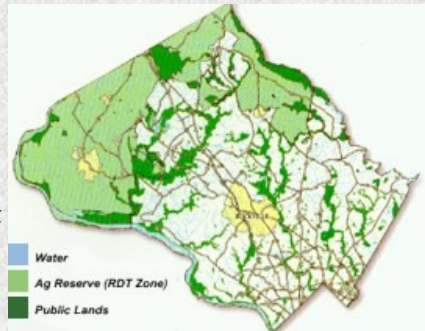
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Components of a Financing Strategy

Market-based programs

Regulatory Markets

- Federal/State
 - Clean Air Act
 - Clean Water Act
 - Endangered Species Act
- Local
 - zoning ordinances
 - comprehensive planning



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Market-based programs

Voluntary Markets

- Incentive programs
- Tourism-based programs
- Private sector greening
- Land Preservation programs
- Other voluntary programs



Top photo from www.gcbi.org/system/files/rn_grdn3.jpg
Lower photo from www.lbenr.org/napiedmont.org



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Market-based programs

Voluntary Land Programs

- Easements
- Limited development sales
- Bargain Sales
- Tradeland programs



Photo by Richard Lykes from www.rccava.org.



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Components of a Financing Strategy

Coordination with other community priorities and programs

- Reduces costs
- Creates alliances
- Increases political will



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Green Infrastructure Resources

Web-based Tools

- EFC Network Tools
 - EFC Funding Matrices - www.efc.umd.edu/links.html
 - Plan2Fund - efc.boisestate.edu/efc/Tools/Plan2Fund/tabid/104/Default.aspx
- Other Tools
 - EPA - www.epa.gov/healthywatersheds
 - www.epa.gov/npdes/greeninfrastructure
 - Green Toolbox - greenvalues.cnt.org/



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Green Infrastructure Resources

Additional Resources

- Green Infrastructure Center - www.gicinc.org
- Trust for Public Land - www.tpl.org
- The Conservation Fund - www.greeninfrastructure.net/gi_case_studies
- Low Impact Development Center - www.lowimpactdevelopment.org
- Water Environment Federation - www.wef.org/ScienceTechnologyResources/AccessWaterKnowledge/StormwaterGreenInfra/



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Successful Financing Strategies

Summary

- Community based
- Integrated
- Mirror the resource



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For Further Information

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