

## Thursday, 10 Dec 2020

## Workshop Objectives

Explore current barriers and perceptions around green infrastructure (GI) public engagement Define opportunities around more effective public and community engagement Share municipal best practices for GI engagement and outreach Identify avenues for future collaboration, knowledge sharing, and research

# General Principles of Engagement and Outreach

Outreach efforts refer to programs or initiatives intended to increase awareness of the opportunities of green infrastructure systems and the problems that motivate their installation. Engagement efforts refer to programs or initiatives that involve the public or specific groups of

stakeholders in Green Infrastructure Implementation efforts.

Bements of outreach and engagement should be included in all municipal GI programs. Engagement and outreach efforts are essential for widespread, successful GI implementation

## Goals of Engagement and Outreach Programs

Increase public awareness and support for existing GI systems

Expand public understanding of the services provided by GI and the mechanisms by which it operates Foster political support for GI by increasing its perceived importance among citizens, legislators, and other stakeholders

Mobilize collective action and assess community impacts

Foster feelings of community accountability and

Reduce risks posed by inadvertent actions of citizens who may not understand GI systems, such as removing or damaging plants, clogging inlets, and dumping waste.

## Key Discussion Points

Engagement requires a culture of respect, which genuinely values and actively seeks to benefit from the experience and knowledge of all contributors.

Developing a shared vision of GI is essential to accelerating GI implementation efforts

Fostering feelings of mutual and personal responsibility for GI can help motivate public involvement Municipalities should identify negotiables and non-negotiables in GI design and site selection before engaging with local partners

Arc of Gl Engagement: 1. Public Education, 2. Public Support, 3. Public Action (engage brings people rom skeptic to believer to advocate to active participant)

Engagement efforts should anticipate conflicts and prioritize conflict resolution

Deliberative dialogue should not happen without pathways to incorporate recommendations into policies and actions

# Future Directions and Priorities

#### Common Challenges for GI Engagement and Outreach Programs

Communicating the full array of GI benefits and considerations can complicate communication efforts but may also expand buy-in and participation.

Otizens may have unrealistically positive or negative preconceptions about GI that dominate public discourse and engagement efforts.

Building private sector capacity can be difficult without clear and reliable regulatory guidance. Engaging those who are not already engaged by related environmental issues may be challenging. Receiving and responding to public feedback on technical issues can be challenging and laborious.

#### Priorities for Further Attention

GI best practices and priorities can change quickly, requiring continuous education efforts with volunteers and stakeholders.

Developing networks of organizations involved in GI outreach and engagement will help disseminate new ideas and establish engagement and outreach best practices.

A database of GI engagement tools, resources, and case studies would help municipalities choose and design programs that are best suited to their needs and context.

#### **Opportunities for Partnerships**

Engagement with First Nations and Indigenous peoples is essential; offering opportunities for improved GI outcomes and avenues for additional cooperation and knowledge sharing. Effective engagement efforts may require actors with experience outside of municipal engineering and planning departments who specialize in knowledge mobilization, community engagement.

Look to others for existing best practices (including institutions such as the Pacific Water Research Centre, the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange, and regional networks such as the Stormwater Interagency Liaison Group for Metro Vancouver municipalities.)

Business partnerships are essential to creating a cohesive environmental service delivery model. Firms involved in land development are a particularly important private sector stakeholder

#### Strategies for Effective G Engagement and Outreach

Make it local; focus on the GI goals most important to the communit water quality, groundwater recharge, heat island reductions).

Focus messaging on mutual and personal responsibility. Ensure multilingual messaging is ava-6(u)3(v0 660003935ari92 0 612 72 re181e[[Ens(BTF1 11.04 Tf1 0 0 1 21941 52.83

# Index of Public Engagement and Outreach Programs

o Downspout disconnection incentives along with educational programs for its usefulness

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## Workshop Agenda

- 08:30 Land acknowledgement, welcome and introductions Zafar Adeel, PWRC
- 08:45 Engagement and outreach cafe #1 (small group discussions on perspectives, barriers, and gaps around public engagement and outreach) Alan Shapiro, BCIT
- 09:45 Framing Public Engagement: Shauna Sylvester, SFU Centre for Dialogue
- 10:05 Case Study 1. Julie McManus, City of Vancouver GI Engagement Coordinator
- 10:25 **M**
- 10:40 Case Study 2. Ken Melamed, Former Mayor, Whistler
- 10:55 Case Study 3. Eric Meliton, Partners in Project Green, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority
- 11:10 Engagement and outreach cafe #2 (small group discussions on tools and best practices around public engagement and outreach) Alan Shapiro, BCIT
- 12:20 Opportunities and next steps Zafar Adeel, PWRC and Alan Shapiro, BCIT
- 12:30 Workshop adjourned