

Clean Water Success Stories: How to Build Community- Utility Partnerships through Green Stormwater Infrastructure



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Building bridges between utilities and communities

- Give residents “hands-on” public involvement and education opportunities to fully understand the “Why?” of Green Stormwater Infrastructure, such as small living room / café meetings, tours, or community events
- Grants, matching funds, or rebates are a way to identify “champions” and leaders from the community; build on success by working to increase their neighbors’ participation – word of mouth is the best way to promote your GSI programs
- Understand other neighborhood concerns; align GSI programs with what people want

Stewardship Partners collaborates with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) on RainWise rain garden rebate

Stewardship Partners works to connect homeowners to the SPU rebate through education/outreach; goal = **12,000 Rain Gardens around Puget Sound by 2016**

Stewardship Partners encourages “clusters” of rain garden homeowners on one block to maximize the impact.

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) offers up to 100% rebate on residential rain gardens to hold and store rain water on site.

Five Ballard neighborhood homes had rain gardens or cisterns installed = **180,000 gallons per year** directed to beautiful garden features



“Industrial Strength” Natural Drainage: a win-win for business and residents



- Partnership between Markey Machinery, Georgetown Community Council, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), and SvR Design
- Community raised funding for project through Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Matching Fund, Neighborhood Street Funds (SDOT)

- Additional funding raised from Puget Soundkeeper Alliance (our local Waterkeeper) through Clean Water Act settlements that resulting from industrial stormwater violations on the nearby Duwamish River.
- In these cases, the industrial business agrees to a settlement in lieu of a penalty, the community organization writes a proposal to PSA for their mitigation projects.



The project culminated on April 17, 2010 "Earth Day - Duwamish Alive" work day. 50 volunteers, many neighbors and local businesses, worked at the site. Hosted the official ribbon-cutting with Seattle City Councilmember Richard Conlin

South Orcas Greenstreet: local CSO control demonstration site



- The Georgetown community received Clean Water Act settlement funds from Puget Soundkeeper Alliance
- Six swales prevent **over 300,000 gallons/year** from reaching CSO system and educate the community about polluted runoff

- Voluntary project: Partnership between Georgetown Community, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and SvR Design; used a Street Improvement Permit process



South Orcas Greenstreet



- Homeowners are responsible for maintenance since it's a voluntary project
- King County Master Gardener program and Stewardship Partners to develop manual and teach basic plant care; organize twice-yearly work parties



South Southern Greenstreet: LID for traffic-calming and runoff control



Voluntary project (in progress): A partnership with South Park community and King County Roads; using a Special Use Permit



- King County Wastewater provided a competitive grant program to fund innovative projects from the community, creating examples to see how different models work.
- The project will slow traffic, reduce stormwater flows and educate the public about polluted runoff affects on Duwamish River

...Food for Thought...

- Rain water is an asset and a resource in our built environment, and should be redesigned back into functioning streetscapes
- Likewise, public involvement can be an integral asset to your clean water programs -- not just fulfill the requirement to get buy-in -- but to go beyond and locate Champions for neighborhood retrofits, people who now understand how their utilities work, who want to improve function, beauty, and civic pride in their neighborhoods.
 - The best way to promote your project is word-of-mouth between neighbors
- Seek out leaders in business, education, neighborhoods, who have good ideas and community support
 - Work with leaders in creative ways to develop programs or other initiatives to engage communities towards maximizing your clean water goals
- GSI can be aligned with other neighborhood retrofit projects such as traffic calming, walk/bike lanes, and open space as “complete streets”
 - What other concerns does the community have?

Questions or Comments?



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