

BUILDING GREEN: ATLANTA'S GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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Through strong leadership, a commitment to sustainability, and collaborative partnerships, the City of Atlanta is implementing an approach to green infrastructure to address both combined sewer overflows and surface water management. In February of 2013, Atlanta adopted one of the most far-reaching stormwater management ordinances in the country, laying the groundwork for a robust green infrastructure program for both private development as well as capital public projects. Without a direct source of funding from a stormwater utility fee, Atlanta has implemented this program through an extensive coordination approach which relies on multiple city departments, non-profit organizations, and the private development community. Early phases focused on establishing baselines and goals, producing guidance material to simplify compliance, and training and outreach efforts for the development community and city staff to help ensure consistency. To date, the City has permitted nearly 3,000 construction projects that utilize green infrastructure, equating to the removal of approximately 650 million gallons of polluted runoff from our streams and combined sewer infrastructure annually. To leverage the success of the stormwater ordinance, the City created the Green Infrastructure Task Force composed of municipal departments and non-profit organizations to fully integrate green infrastructure into City processes and community development. The Task Force recently released a Strategic Action Plan to formalize this approach and create the organizational infrastructure needed to accomplish this task. In addition, the City has completed the installation of the world's largest permeable paver roadway retrofit project to help alleviate flooding in neighborhoods served by the City's combined sewer infrastructure. This presentation serves to summarize these efforts as well as the lessons learned of implementing green infrastructure on a city-wide scale.

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