

Auditing Your Codes

Identifying Opportunities and Roadblocks for
Good Water Management

Overview

- »» Use of Planning Tools that Support Stormwater Mitigation

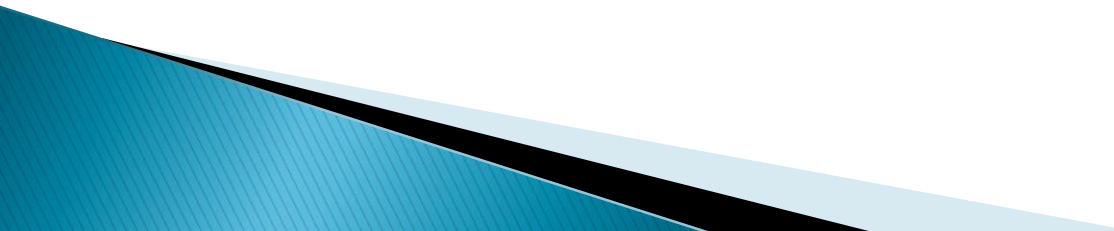
The Role of Local Government

- ▶ Action at the local level is what impacts water resources
 - Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Codes
 - Regulations
 - Enforcement

Effective Wet Growth Tools for Planning Codes

- ▶ Overlay Districts
 - ▶ Optimize Natural Barriers
 - ▶ Neutral Stormwater Impact
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Effective Strategies

- ▶ Low Impact Development Incentives
 - Density bonuses
 - Expedited approval processes
 - Reduced sewer charges
 - ▶ Subdivision Ordinances
 - ▶ Tree Preservation Ordinances
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Steps for Success

- ▶ To be effective, measures must be well-adapted to a community
 - Los Angeles as compared to small town?

The Basics

- ▶ Justify!
- ▶ KISS – Keep It Simple ...
 - Native vegetation loss?
 - Landscaping and tree standards
 - Too much impervious surface?
 - Reduce parking requirements for developments and subdivision standards
 - Stormwater surface runoff?
 - Modify clearing and grading ordinances and standards

Steps in the Process

- »» A Four-Step Process from the Center for Watershed Protection

Step 1: What are the policies and practices that impact water?

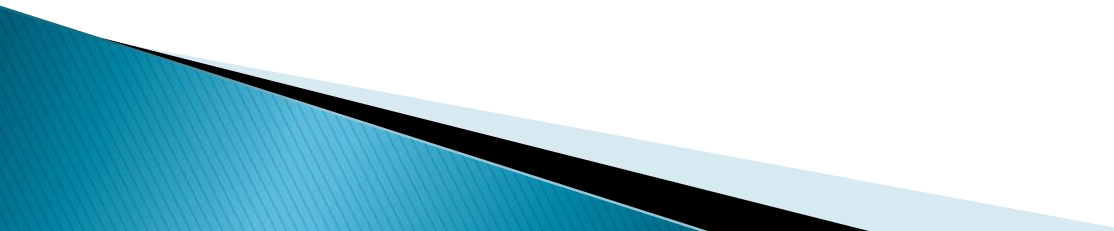
- ▶ Can be complicated!
 - What other agencies might have some authority over development rules?
 - Federal
 - Regional
 - State
 - Locate rules
 - Comprehensive Plan
 - Zoning and Land Development Codes
 - Subdivision Ordinances
 - Local Water and Sewer Districts

Step 2: Check local codes against model codes and ideas from other communities

- ▶ Score your local codes
 - The Center for Watershed Protection Code and Ordinances worksheet:
http://www.cwp.org/documents/cat_view/81-audits.html
 - USEPA Water Quality Scorecard:
http://www.epa.gov/dced/water_scorecard.htm
- ▶ There is NO one-size-fits-all
 - Because a plan works well in some locations does not guarantee it will succeed in another community

Step 3: Consider which development policies and practices might be changed

REALITY BITES!

- ▶ Takes considerable effort
 - ▶ Which rules and regulations has the greater potential to yield real improvement?
 - ▶ Prioritize!!!
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Step 4: Start a local roundtable process

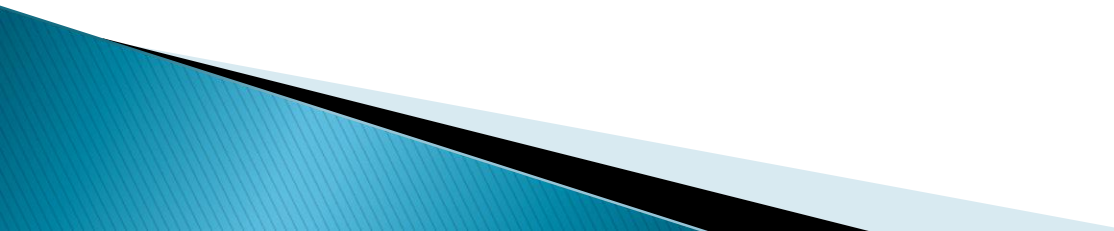
Establish strong local buy-in

- ▶ Identify stakeholders to bring to the discussion
 - Elected officials
 - Members of the development and environmental community
 - Citizen groups
- ▶ Address stakeholder concerns
 - ie: Anticipate questions as they relate to economic and social concerns raised by the development.
 - FACT: *LIDs have positive economic and social results, being both less expensive in some instances than other options for infrastructure and often providing aesthetic features*

Planning Tools

- » Standards, Incentives,
Outreach

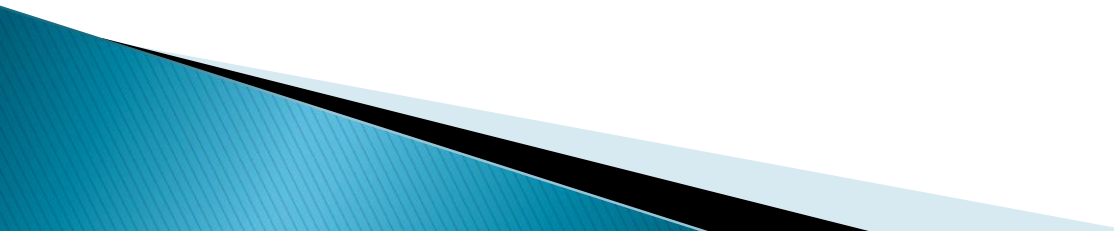
Residential Streets and Parking Lots

- ▶ Design
 - ▶ Street layout
 - ▶ Street ROWs
 - ▶ Cul-de-sacs
 - ▶ Vegetated open channels
 - ▶ Parking
- 

Lot Development

- ▶ Low-Impact Development
 - ▶ Open space development
 - ▶ Setbacks and frontage requirements
 - ▶ Flexible Design Standards
 - ▶ Alternative and shared driveways
 - ▶ Community Open Space
 - ▶ Rooftop run-off
 - ▶ Require native species of trees and plants
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Incentives

- ▶ Density bonuses
 - ▶ Buffer alteration
 - ▶ Reduced property taxes
 - ▶ Stormwater credits
 - ▶ By-right open space development
 - ▶ Code waivers
 - ▶ Transfer of Development Rights
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Public Education

- ▶ Willingness-to-pay



Barriers to Water Management

- »» What's in your codes and plans?

Spot the LID Barrier

Landscape and plantings

- Landscaping should be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.
- In particular, parking areas shall be well-screened by berms, plantings or other screening methods to minimize their visual impact.

What do you think will happen when you put a berm along the edge of a parking lot?

Greener Language

Landscape and plantings

- Landscaping should be **designed** in keeping with **LID stormwater management principles**, and shall **compliment** the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.
- In particular, **landscaped edges and islands** for parking areas shall be **provided which function as stormwater management features** and incorporate ~~well-screened by berms, plantings or~~ **and** other screening methods to minimize their visual impact **of the parking area**.

Spot the LID Barrier (again)

§154.0401(c-d) All edges of parking areas shall be landscaped with a 5-foot landscaping buffer. Surface parking lots with more than two rows of parking shall include 5-foot-wide landscaping islands between rows. Canopied trees of low water consumption shall be placed within this landscaped strip. One tree of a minimum 24-inch box or 15-gallon size shall be required per 2,000 SF of parking area.

Spot the LID Barrier (another example!)

Landscaping Requirements. Section 17-11-0302 of the Chicago Landscape Ordinance requires a minimum seven-foot landscaped setback to provide screening along the perimeter of off-street parking lots and other vehicular use areas greater than 1,200 square feet facing the public way. Landscape setbacks and other peripheral green areas are usually defined by a barrier curb. No drainage may be directed onto the public way.

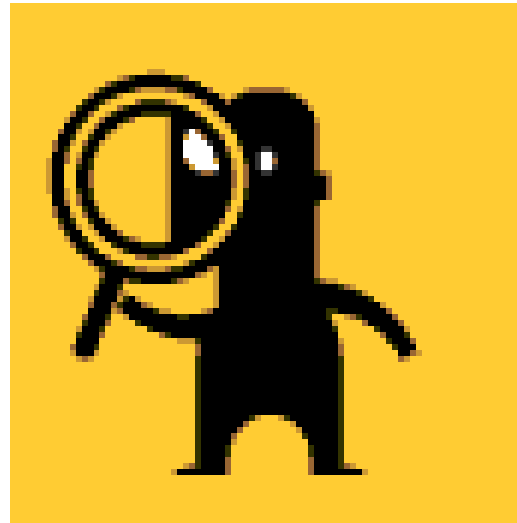
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Sound the Alarm!

- ▶ Language in your plans that references the following words needs to be audited

- ROOF
- CURB
- EDGE
- TREE



Acknowledgements

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Questions?

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<http://louisville.edu/cepm>

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