# **Swales and Rain Gardens**





Seminars for land-savvy developers



[nev-ü-non] Nevue Ngan Associates





# Swales and Rain Gardens: Overview

**Kevin Robert Perry** 

Nevue Ngan Associates

# Which city has the most annual rainfall ?

- A. Chicago, IL 36 inches
- B. Philadelphia, PA 42 inches
- C. Malmo, Sweden 29 inches
- D. Portland, OR

37 inches









### Integrating Rain with Urban Design



















## The "Toolbox" for Landscape Strategies



**Vegetated Swales** 



Stormwater Curb Extensions



**Stormwater Planters** 



**Rain Gardens** 

# Sustainable Stormwater Guiding Principles

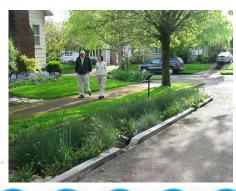
1. Manage stormwater runoff both at the source and at the surface.

2. Use plants and soil to slow, filter, cleanse, and infiltrate runoff.

 Design facilities that are simple, low-cost, and aesthetically enhance the community.



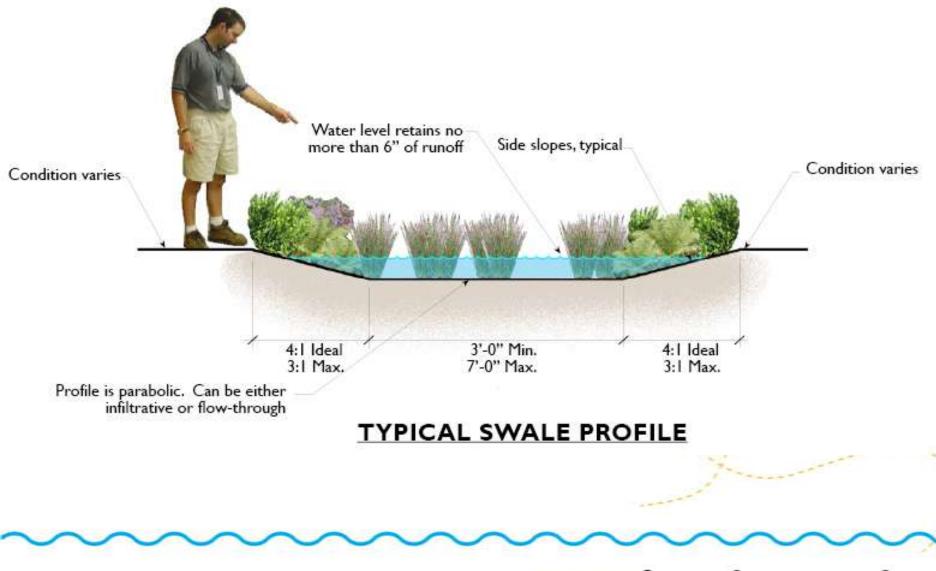




### **Vegetated Swales**

Vegetated swales are shallow landscaped areas designed to capture, convey, and potentially infiltrate stormwater runoff as it moves downstream.

## **Vegetated Swales**



# **Vegetated Swales**



#### **Good Places for Vegetated Swales:**

- New residential and commercial streets
- Arterial streets and boulevards
- Within street medians on new streets
- Within the interior and along the edges of parking lots
- Within building perimeter landscaping

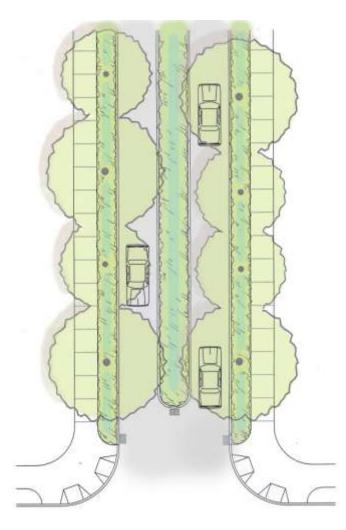
#### Why Choose Vegetated Swales:

- Widely-accepted stormwater strategy
- Simple to construct
- Relatively low-cost to implement

#### **Potential Constraints:**

- Need long, continuous spaces which can be difficult to find in retrofit conditions
- Difficult to incorporate other streetscape elements within swales (lighting, signage, etc.)
- More difficult to provide good
   pedestrian circulation through swales
- Often designed to be "too deep" and, as a result, are not aesthetically pleasing

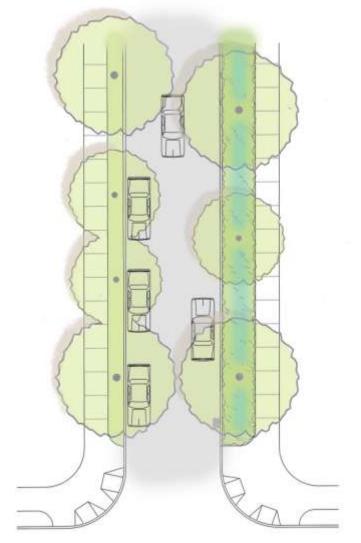
### Vegetated Swales – Residential Streets





**Center Median Swales** 

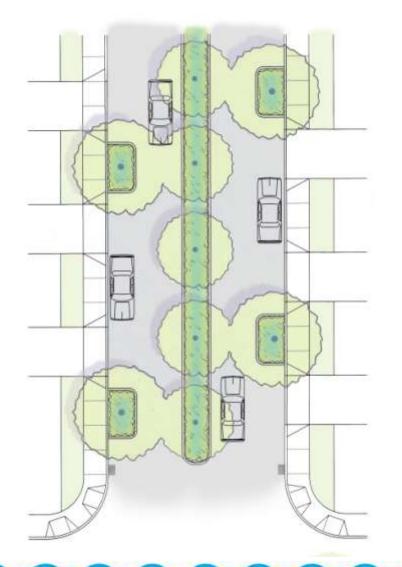
### Vegetated Swales – Residential Streets





Side Swales

### Vegetated Swales – Residential Streets





Center Median Swale with Curb Extensions

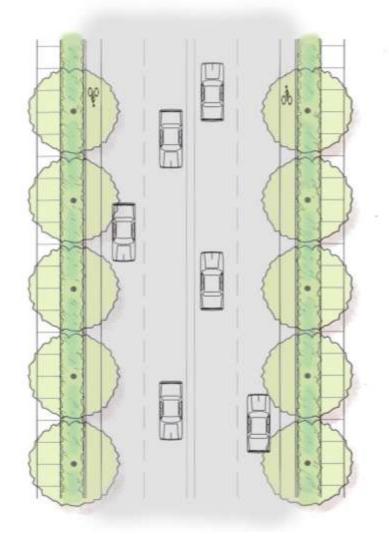
### Vegetated Swales – Commercial Streets





"Curbless" Side Swales

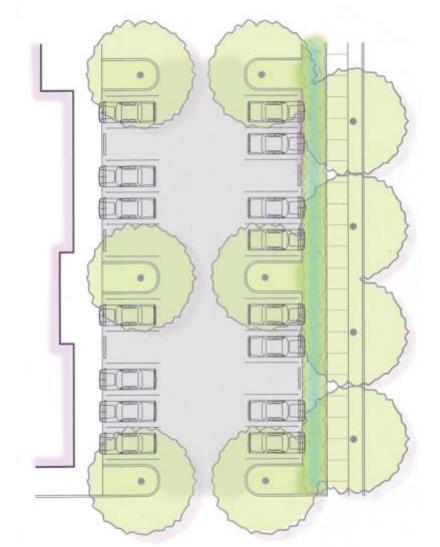
#### Vegetated Swales – Arterial Streets





Side Swales

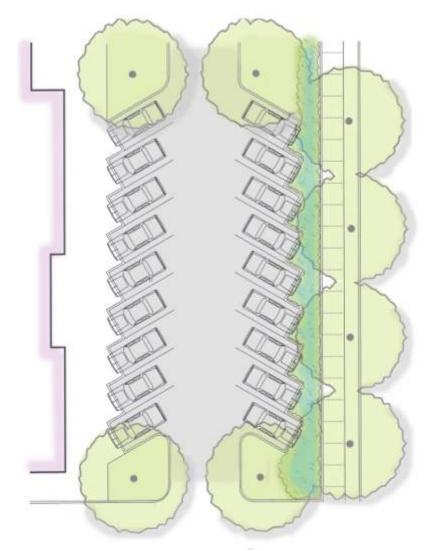
### Vegetated Swales – Parking Lots

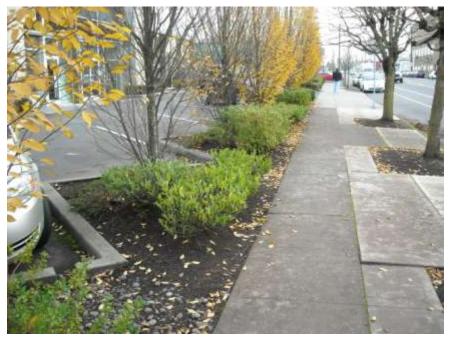




#### Side Swales – Head-in Parking

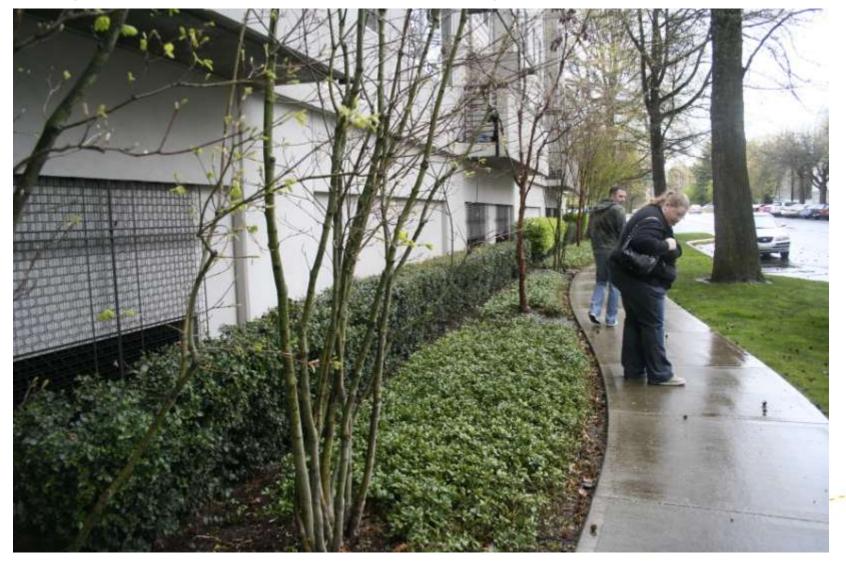
### Vegetated Swales – Parking Lots





#### Side Swales – Angled Parking

### Vegetated Swales – Buildings



# Vegetated Swales – Buildings

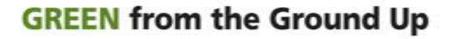


### Vegetated Swales – Buildings

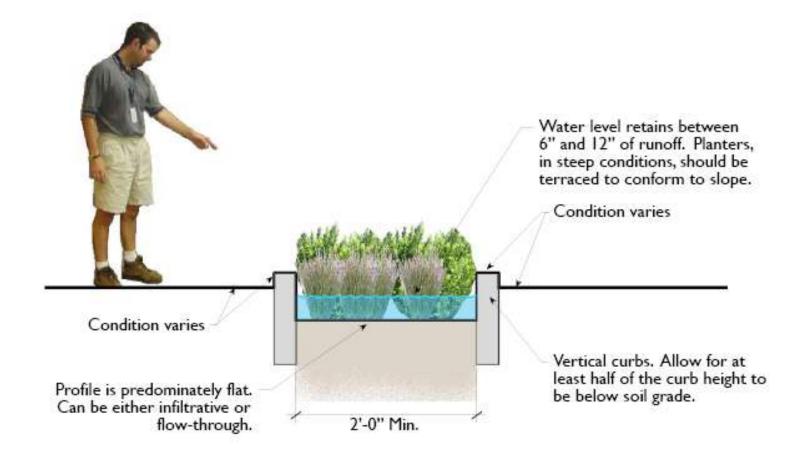


#### **Stormwater Planters**

Infiltration and flow-through planters are contained landscape areas designed to capture and retain stormwater runoff.



#### **Stormwater Planters**



#### TYPICAL PLANTER PROFILE

# **Stormwater Planters**



#### **Good Places for Stormwater Planters:**

- Commercial streets and parking lots
   where space is often constricted
- Adjacent to buildings where space is tight
- Areas of steep topography

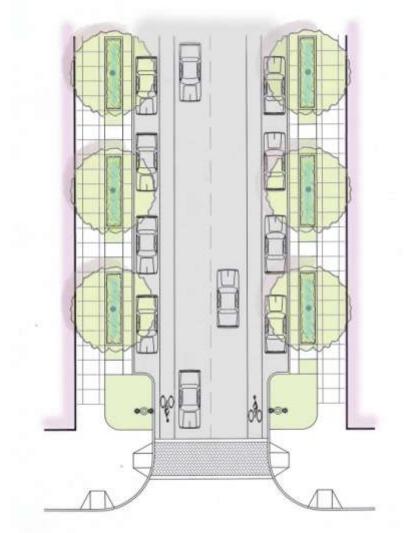
#### Why Choose Stormwater Planters:

- Are best landscape solution for ultraurban conditions
- Can be used with or without on-street parking depending on available space
- Can fit between other streetscape elements (trees, utilities, signage, etc.) and are highly versatile in shape and size
- Can provide both volume and flow stormwater benefits

#### **Potential Constraints:**

- Are generally more expensive than swales due to increased hardscape infrastructure
- Are only contextually appropriate in high density urban settings

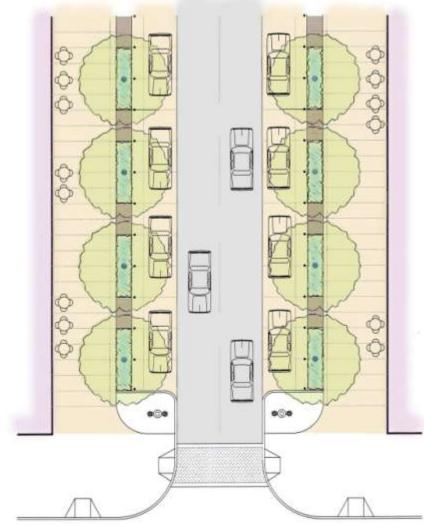
### Stormwater Planters – Commercial Streets





#### Street Planters – With Parking

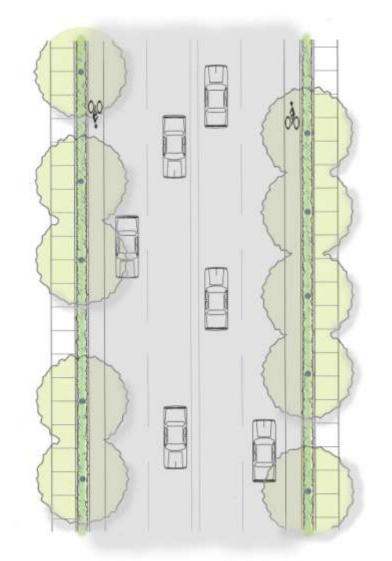
### Stormwater Planters – Commercial Streets





#### Street Planters – With Bridges

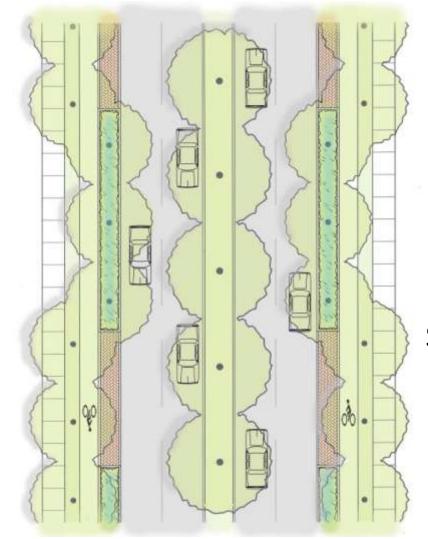
### Stormwater Planters – Arterial Streets





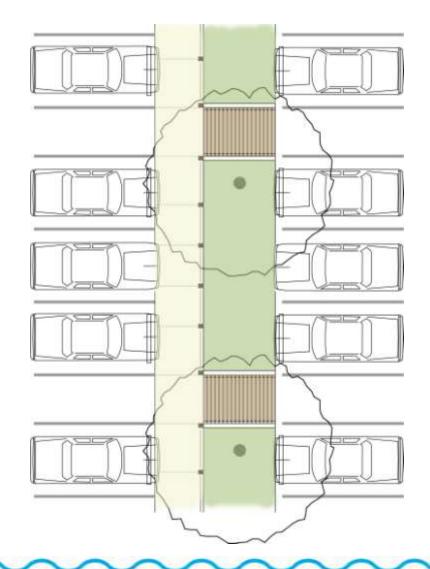
Street Planters – "Green Gutter"

### Stormwater Planters – Arterial Streets



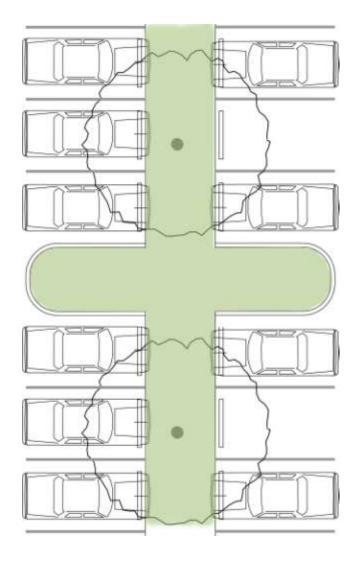


Street Planters – With Bike Lane





**Center Median** 





**Center Median** 





#### **Planter Island**

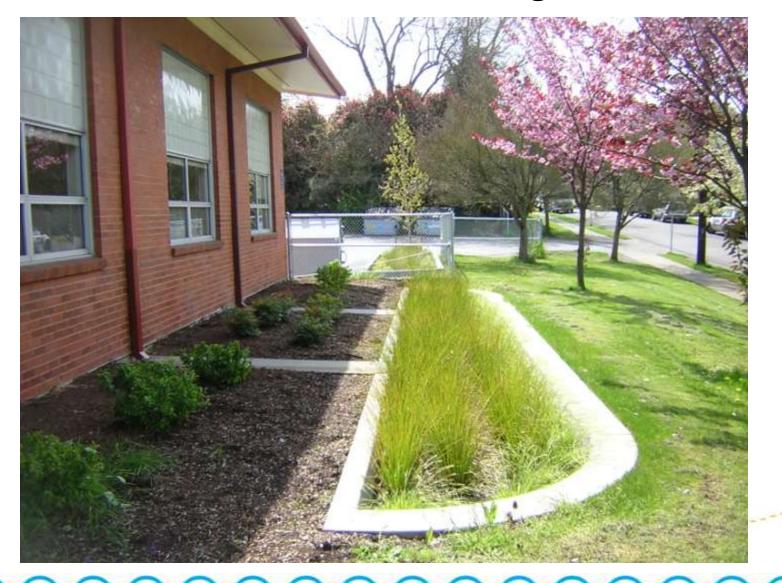


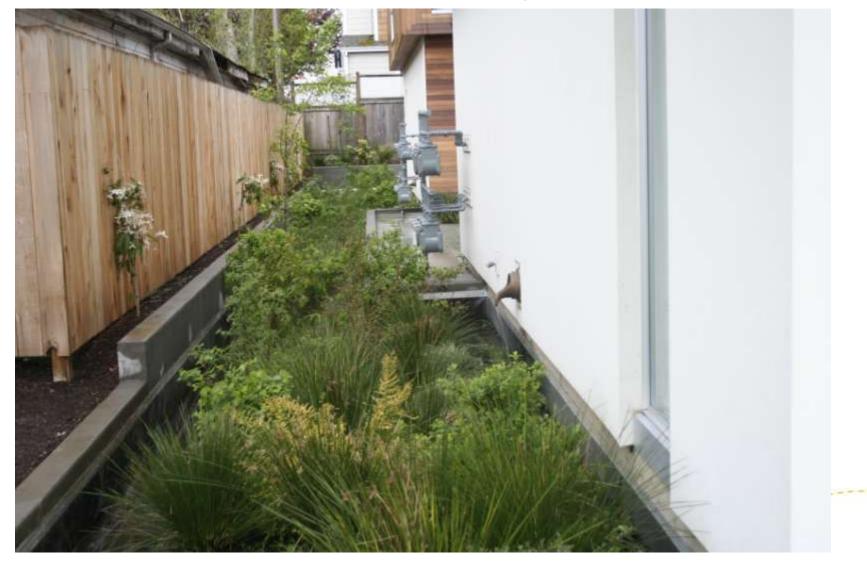


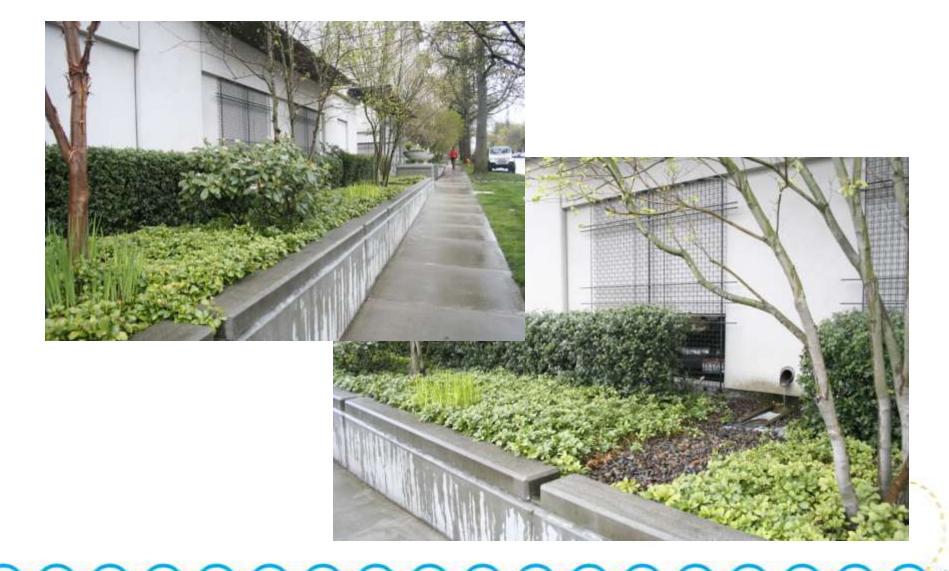
Narrow Green Gutter











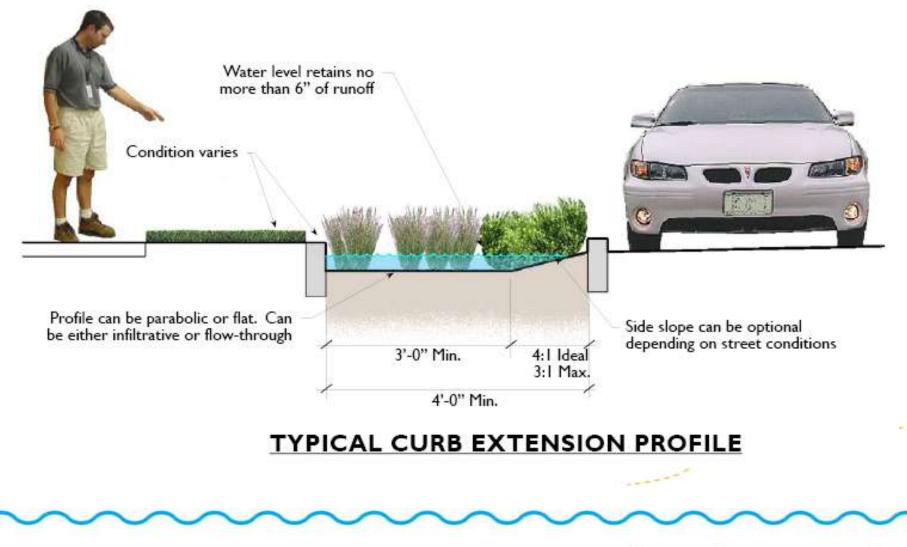




## **Stormwater Curb Extensions**

Stormwater curb extensions are landscape areas within the parking zone of a street that capture stormwater and allow it to interact with plants and soil.

## Stormwater Curb Extensions



## Stormwater Curb Extensions



#### **Good Places for Curb Extensions:**

- Parking zones along commercial streets
- Low-density residential settings where on-street parking is under-used

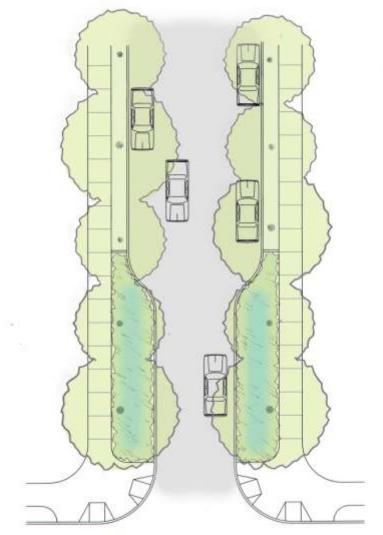
#### Why Choose Curb Extensions:

- Can significantly "green" a street with minimal investment
- Can be inexpensive to build depending on the local land use context
- Can be flexible in both shape and size to conform to site conditions
- Can narrow portions of a street and provide traffic calming benefits

#### **Potential Constraints:**

- Generally requires the removal of on-street parking
- Can sometimes conflict with bike travel if adequate space is not allowed between edge of curb extension and a street's travel lane

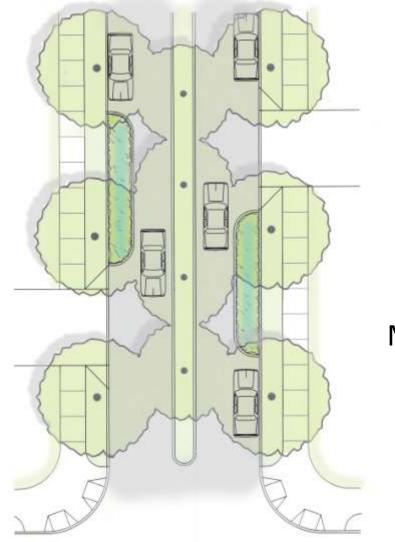
## Curb Extensions – Residential Streets





At Intersections

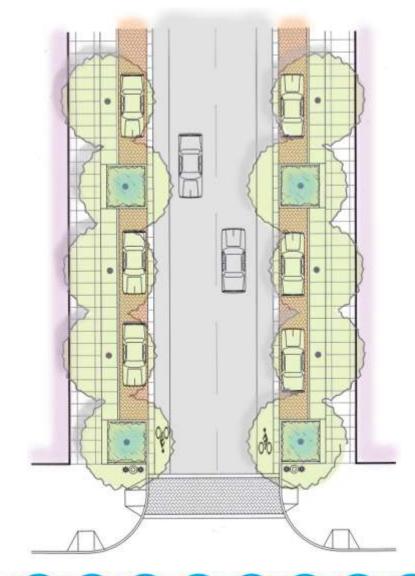
### Curb Extensions – Residential Streets





Mid-Block With Landscape Median

### Curb Extensions – Commercial Streets





Mid-Block With Pervious Paving

### Curb Extensions – Commercial Streets





**Angled Parking** 

#### **Curb Extensions – Arterial Streets**





Mid-Block

#### **Curb Extensions – Arterial Streets**

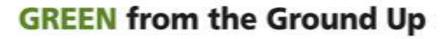




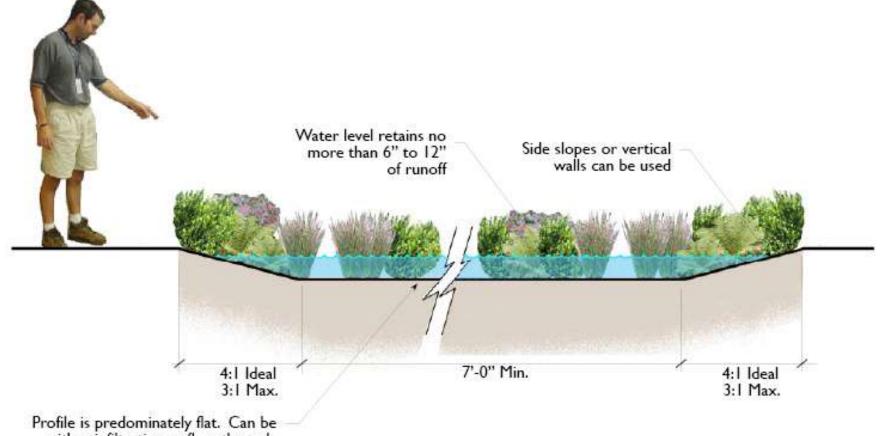
Large Curb Extensions

## **Rain Gardens**

Rain gardens are shallow landscape areas that can collect, slow, filter and absorb large volumes of water, delaying discharge into the watershed system.



### **Rain Gardens**



either infiltrative or flow-through.

#### TYPICAL RAIN GARDEN PROFILE

## **Rain Gardens**



#### **Good Places for Rain Gardens**

- Underutilized space adjacent to parking lots and streets
- Single family residential lots
- Left over spaces created by angled street intersections
- Large landscaped areas next to buildings

#### Why Choose Rain Gardens:

- Can often significantly "green" a space that would otherwise be leftover asphalt area
- Can often be simple opportunities to disconnect roof downspouts next to homes
- Can provide the greatest stormwater flow and volume benefit if large in size
- Offer versatility in shape

#### **Potential Constraints:**

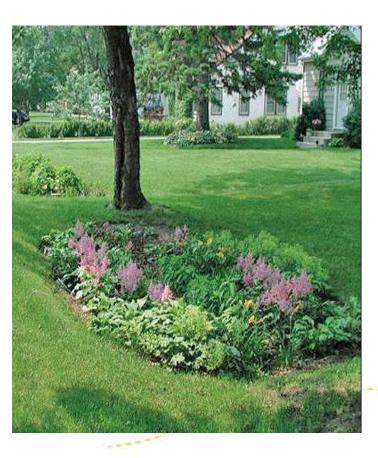
- More maintenance may be required if large in size
- May not be able to manage all of a site's runoff if a rain garden is small in size

#### Rain Gardens – Residential Streets













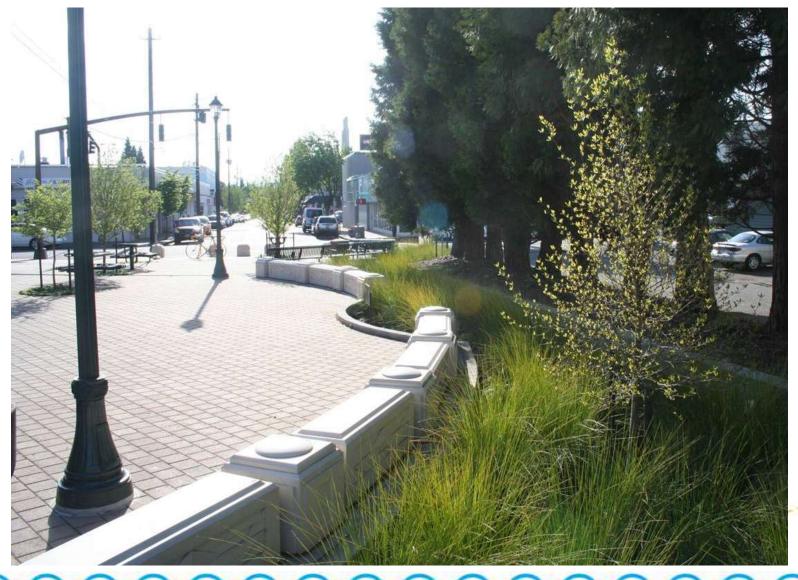
### Rain Gardens – Commercial Streets



## Rain Gardens – Commercial Streets



#### Rain Gardens – Commercial Streets











## Rain Gardens – Buildings



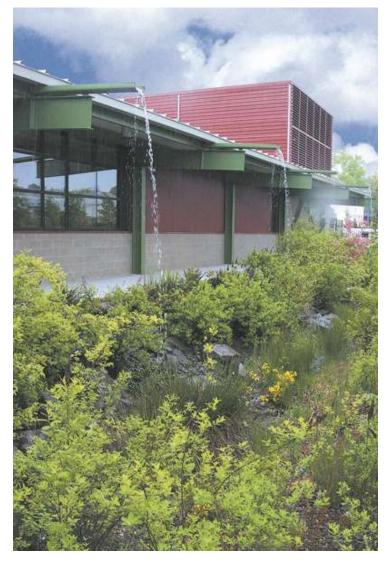
#### Rain Gardens – Buildings



## Rain Gardens – Buildings



## Stormwater Conveyance from Buildings









# In still conditions, how fast do rain drops fall?

A. 7-18 miles per hour

B. 5-7 miles per hour

C. 18-30 miles per hour





## The Civil Engineer's Perspective



## Paul Dedyo, PE, LEED AP



**KKPFF** Consulting Engineers



## **Overview of Presentation**



- Applicability
- •Sizing & Design
- •Regulatory Permitting (UICs)
- Construction

## **Common Considerations**

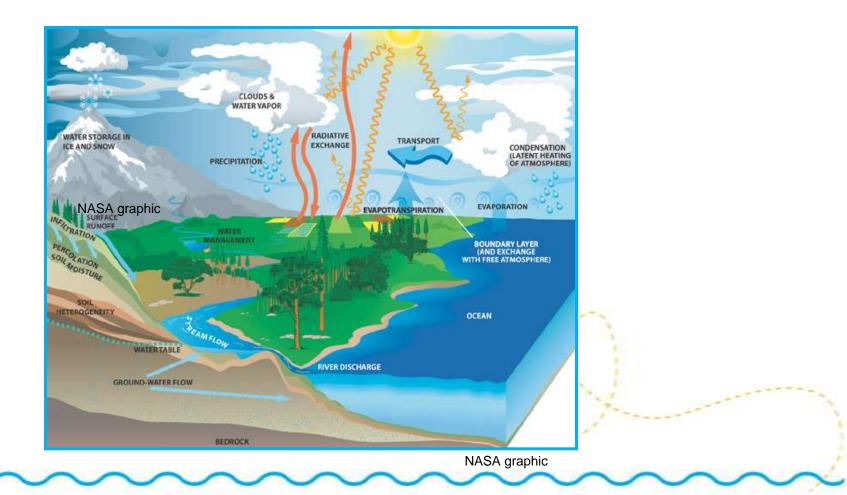
- Topography
- •Overflow Path
- Geotechnical Evaluation
  - Native Infiltration Rates
  - Groundwater or Impermeable Strata
- •Slopes
- •Structures with Habitable Space
- •Code Setback Requirements
- Existing Vegetation

## **Overview of Presentation**

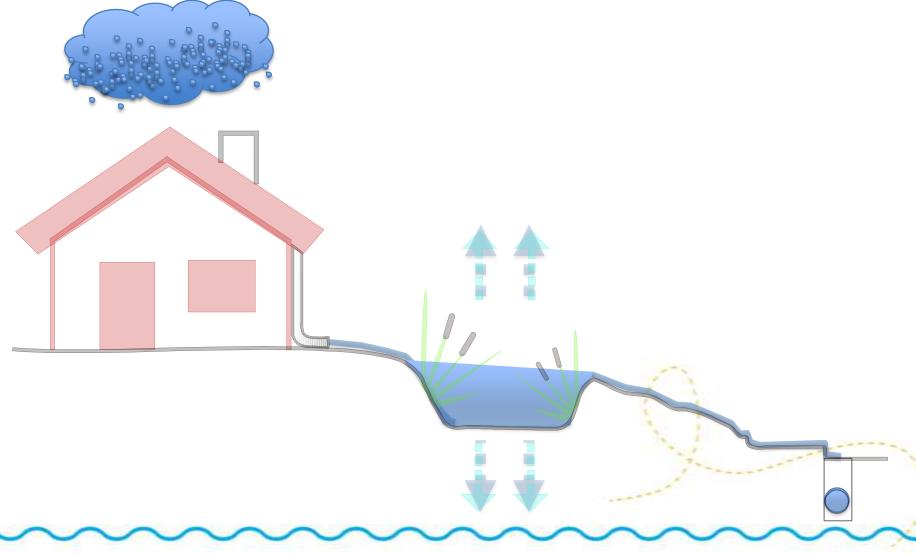


- Applicability
- •Sizing & Design
- •Regulatory Permitting (UICs)
- Construction

## What is it? The Hydrologic Cycle



## Mimic the Hydrologic Cycle



## Goals



- Local Regulatory Jurisdiction
- Mitigation
- •Mimic the Hydrologic Cycle





## **Critical Criteria for Sizing**

•Storm Catchment Area and Event



Credit: Flickr

- •Native Soil Infiltration Rate
- Importing Growing Medium Infiltration Rate
- •Facility Type and Size

## **Sizing for Site Conditions**

- •Sizing Ratio
- •Multiple Smaller Facilities or Combined
- •Plumbing/Conveyance
- •Maximum Catchment Area

### **Infiltration Testing**



Falling Head

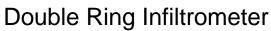
Credit: Earth Engineers



Credit: Flickr

- •Type of Tests
- •Number of Tests
- •Depth of Tests









Credit: University of Sydney

### **Growing Medium**

Three-part Mix

- Loamy Sand
- Compost
- Sand



# **Testing of Growing Medium**

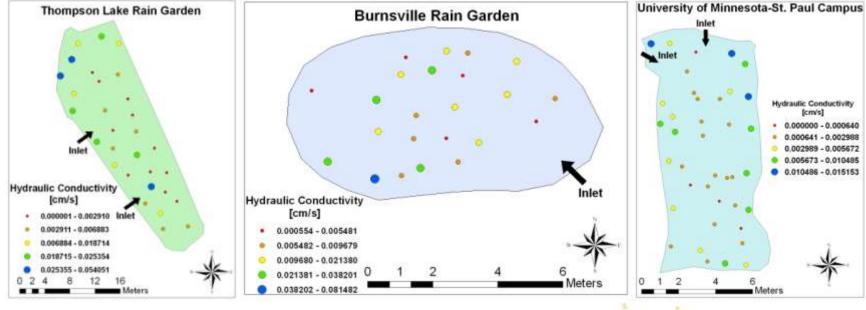


Falling Head Perco-Meter

Developing the best blend ratio

- Laboratory ASTM Testing
- Informal Falling Head Testing
- Mock-up Garden Testing

### **Variable Performance**



Credit: University of Minnesota

# **Facility Type and Size**

### •Available Space

•Topography





Credit: Vivian Felton, NRCS



Credit: Rain Gardens of West Michigan





Credit: Virginia Department of Forestry

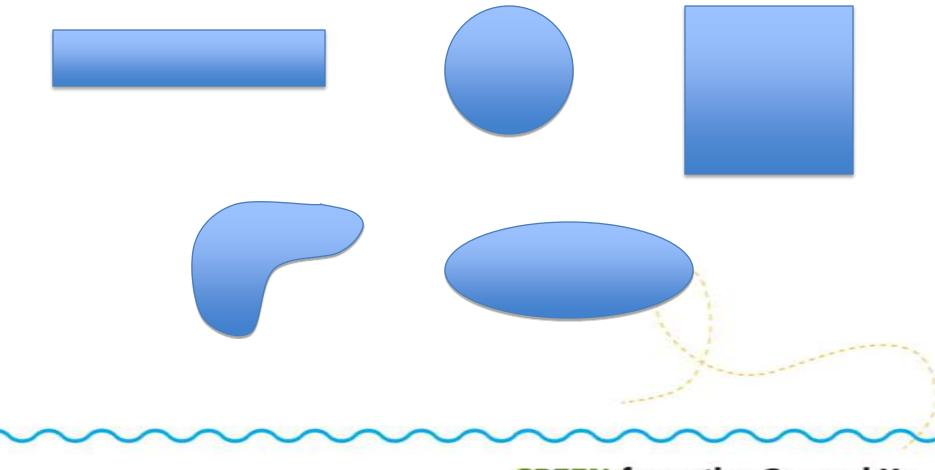


Credit: Maplewood MN Rain Gardens



Credit: Flickr

### Geometry



### **Overflow Scenarios**

















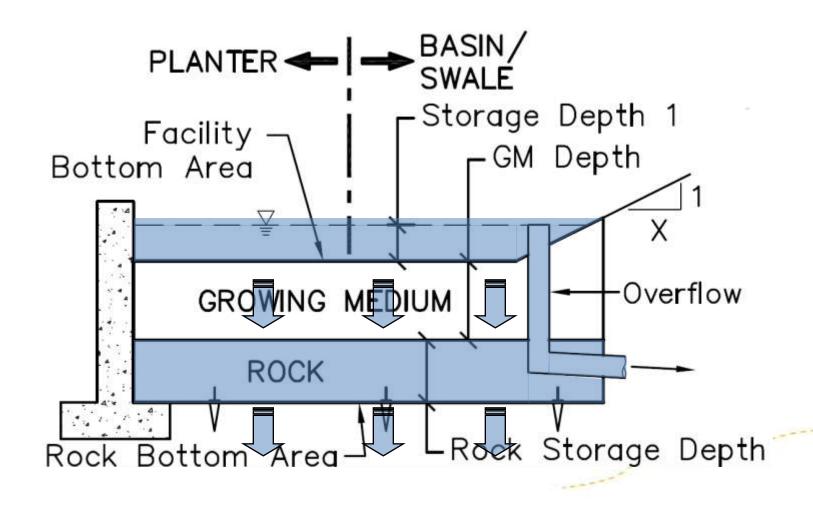


Credit: Flickr

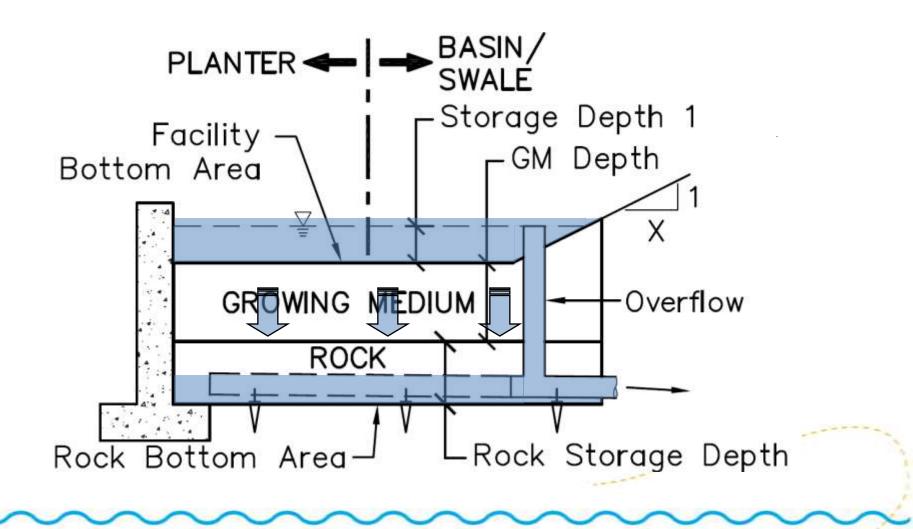
## **Facility Function**

- •Surface Infiltration Facility
  - With or Without Gravel Storage Bed
  - No Underdrain Pipe
  - Controlled Overflow
- •Flow Through Facility
  - With Underdrain Pipe in Gravel
  - Assumed Little to No Infiltration
  - Controlled Overflow

### **Infiltration Facility**



## **Flow Through Facility**



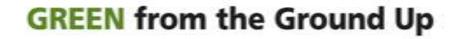
### **Overview of Presentation**



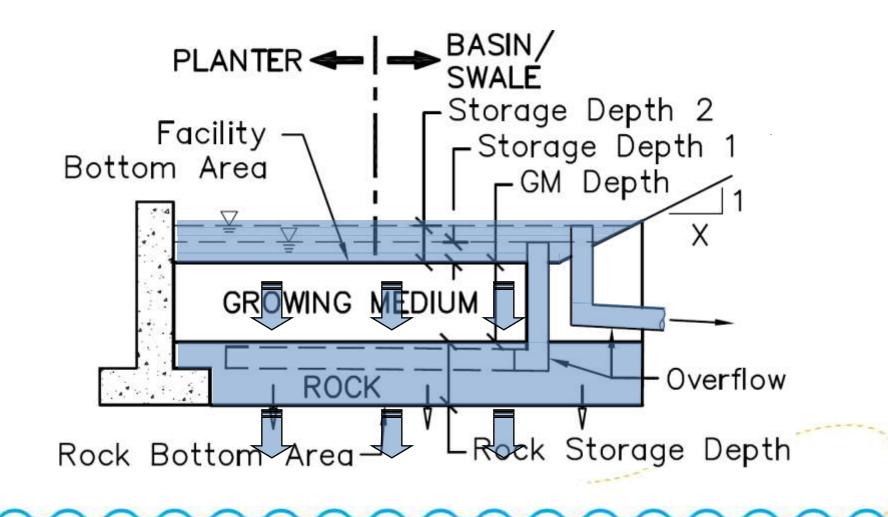
- Applicability
- •Sizing & Design
- •Regulatory Permitting (UICs)
- Construction

## **Facility Function**

- •Surface Infiltration Facility UIC
  - Direct Connection to Underdrain Pipe in Gravel
  - Controlled Overflow



### **Underground Injection Control**



### **Oregon DEQ UIC Registration**

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	B. FACILITY DESCRIPTION (A)	TACH DOCUMENTS A	IS MEEDED!
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#### UIC REGISTRATION FOR STORM WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Oregon Department of Envisonmental Quality (Submit for comm of this form to DEG. See following pages for detailed instructions)

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### **Overview of Presentation**

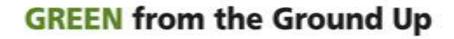


- Applicability
- •Sizing & Design
- •Regulatory Permitting (UICs)

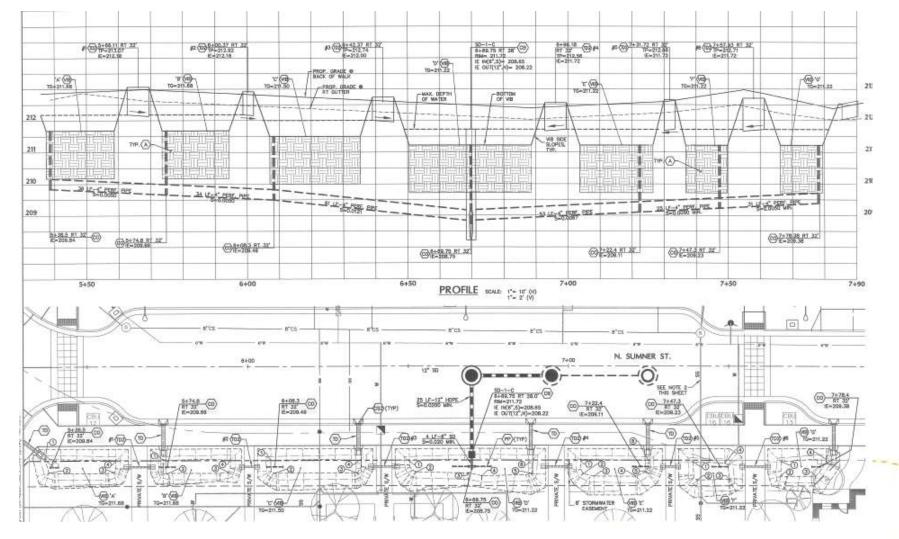
•Construction

## **Construction Phasing**

- •Pre-Con with Engineer & Jurisdiction
- Many variables vulnerable during construction
- •Details and Horizontal Control



### **Green Streets - Sumner**



### **Green Streets - Sumner**

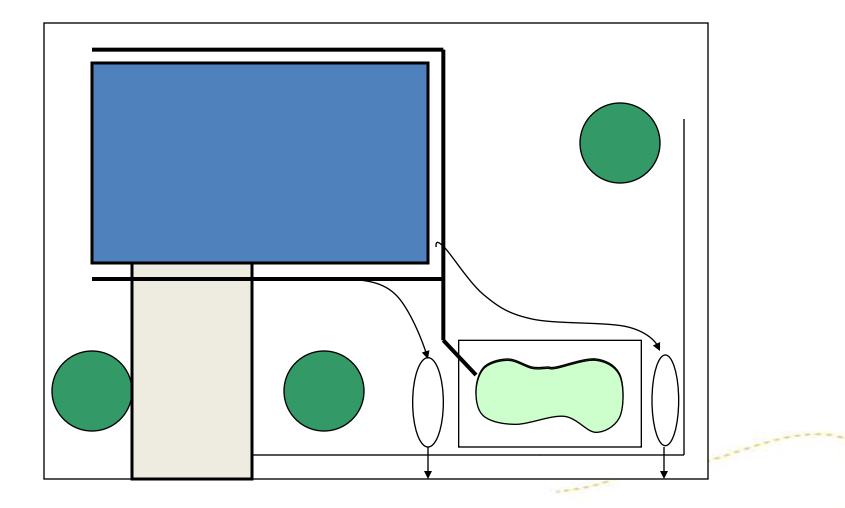




## **Construction Phasing**

- •Pre-Con with Engineer & Jurisdiction
- •Many variables vulnerable during construction
- •Details and Horizontal Control
- Installation Sequencing & Erosion Control

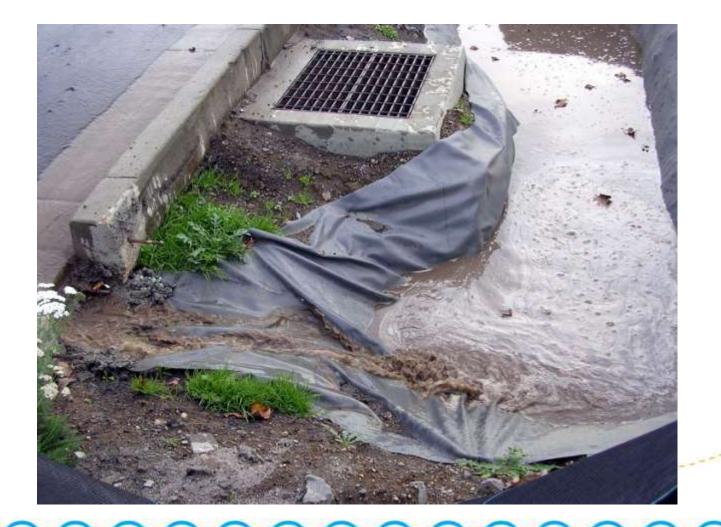
### **Construction Sequence**



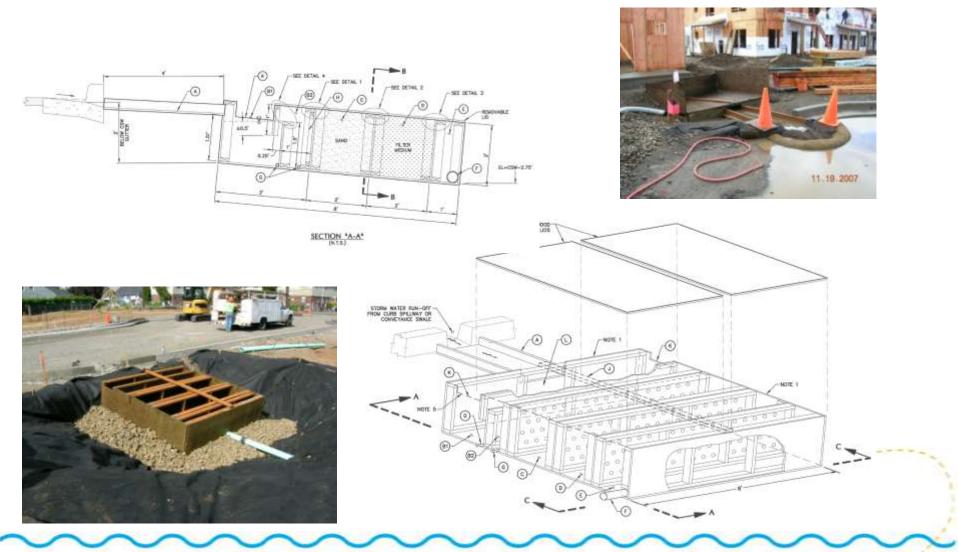
## **Facility Construction**

- •Outline area of facility
- Remove existing sod or vegetation
- •Strip surface soils to expose suitable subgrade
- •Build berm if needed on prepared subgrade
- •Set gravel and/or growing medium per plan
- •Final grading
- •Plantings and finish materials
- Establishment period
- •Route drainage to facility

### **In-Line Erosion Control**



### **Erosion Control – Dual Filter**



## **Construction Phasing**

- •Pre-Con with Engineer & Jurisdiction
- Many variables vulnerable during construction
- Details and Horizontal Control
- Construction Sequencing & Erosion Control
- •Submittals & Testing
- •Anticipate Weather Conditions
- •Placement and Compaction
- •As-Built Verification
- Maintenance

### **Construction – Gravel Bed with Underdrain**



### **Construction – Initial Landscaping & Jute**



### Construction – Growing Medium and Rock Channel Bed



### **Construction – Growing Medium Replaced**



### **Construction – Restored Facility**



## Summary



- •Learn about site conditions and suitability
- •Establish goals for facility
- Select facility type
- •Facility should be designed by an experienced and knowledgeable Engineer with Detailed Grading Plan
- Pre-Con & Construction Sequence
- •Submittals & Horizontal Control
- Erosion Control
- •As-Built Verification

### **Questions**?

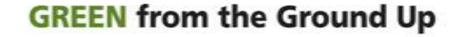
Paul M. Dedyo, PE, LEED AP KPFF Consulting Engineers paul.dedyo@kpffcivilpdx.com





### Lessons Learned

### Design, Construction, and Practical Theory



### **Design Lessons Learned**

• Create design solutions that "fit" within the surrounding neighborhood context.

• Get a detailed topographic survey. Working with water is working with minutia.

• Planting solutions vary from site to site and with types of stormwater facilities.

• Plant in high densities (They don't call it a "green infrastructure" for nothing!).

• Do I really need that? Keep the design as simple and cost effective as possible.

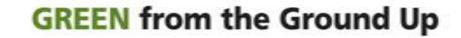
• Design for people, not just stormwater

Don't forget pedestrian circulation



### Creating Design Solutions That "Fit"





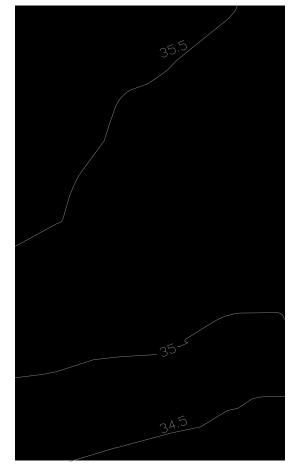
#### Creating Design Solutions That "Fit"



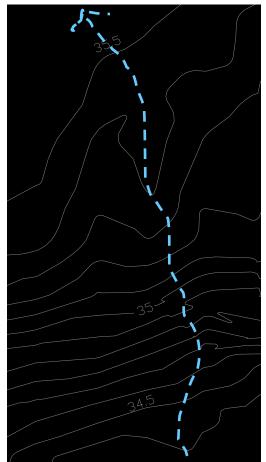
## Creating Design Solutions That "Fit"



## Get A Detailed Topography Survey



Topographic Survey 1/2 foot contour interval



Topographic Survey 1/10 foot contour interval





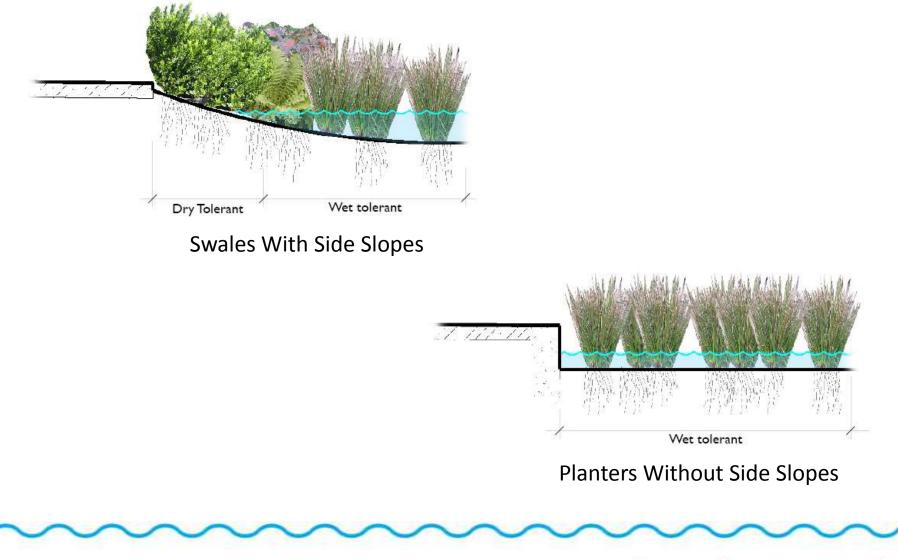
SW 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street (Small Space, Single Species Planting) Mount Tabor Middle School (Large Space, Diverse Planting)

## Varying Planting Solutions – Formal/Manicured



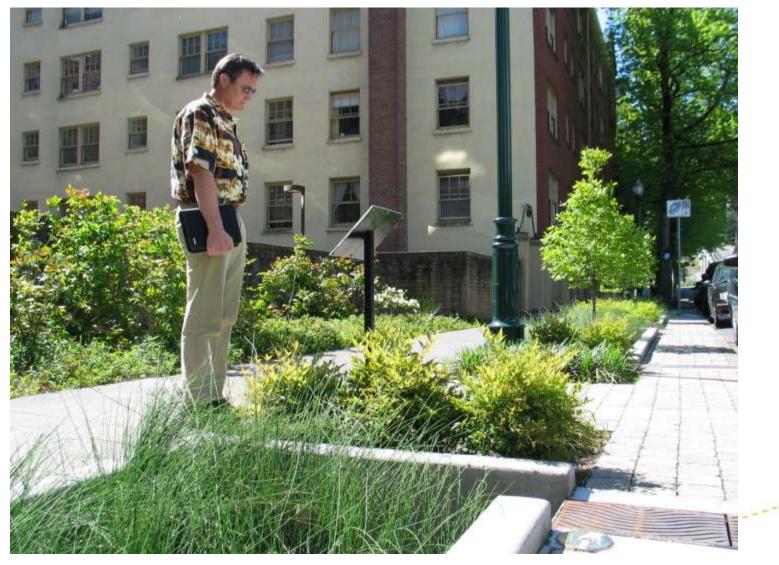
## Varying Planting Solutions – Informal "Natural"











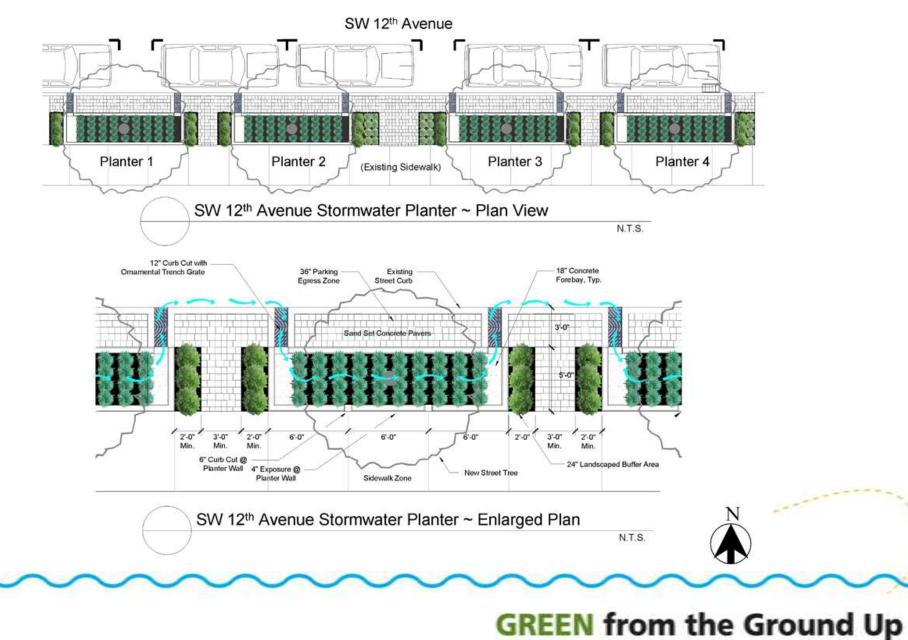


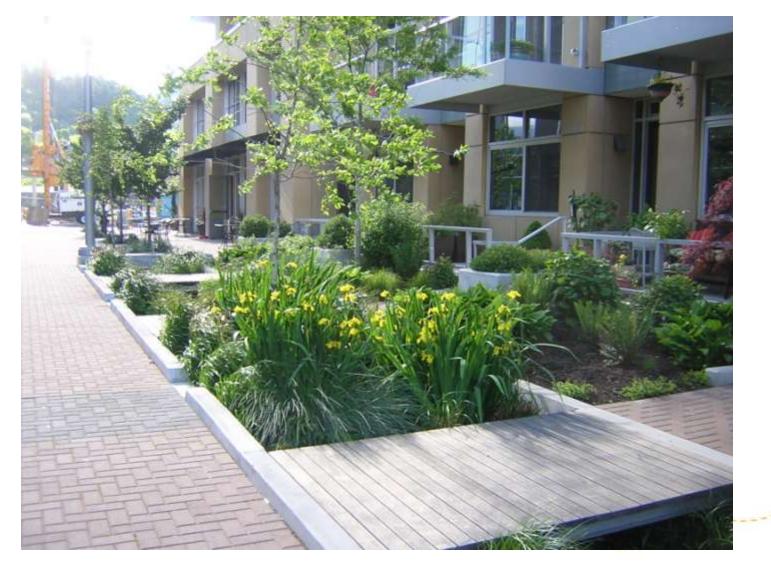


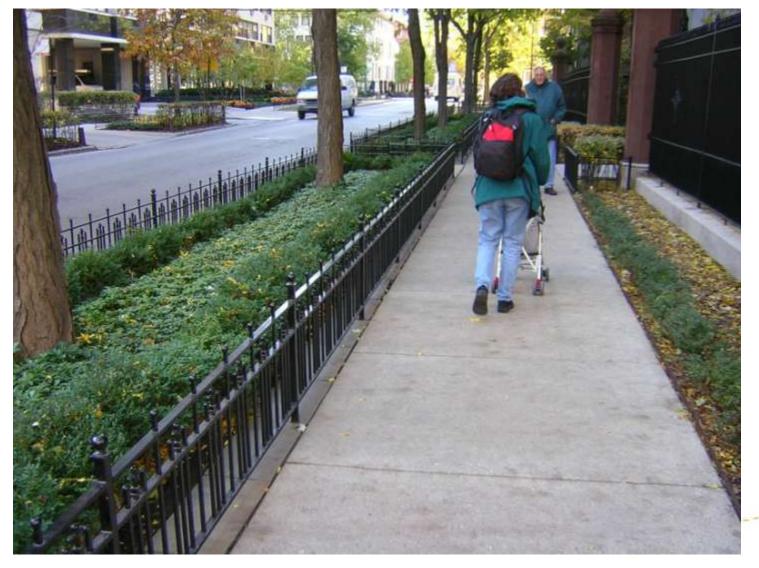






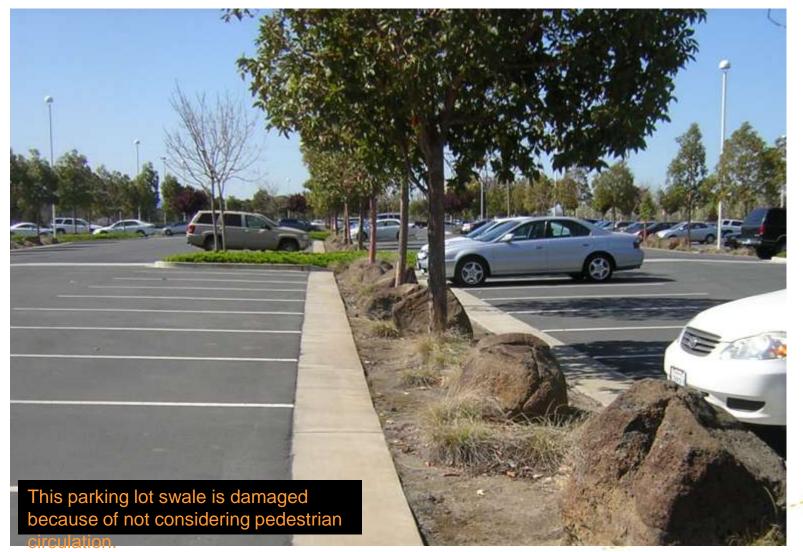




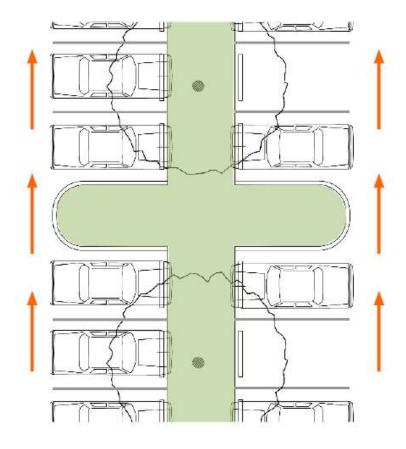














# **Construction Lessons Learned**

• Soil prep is critical, need to break up compaction, then import amended soil mix.

• Specify amended soil with at least 30% organic material within it.

• Allow for considerable construction administration, contractors are not used to doing this work and need help with understanding the design intent.

• Be prepared for in the field adjustments, especially with retrofit projects.

• Keep the stormwater facility "off-line" until after planting.

• Provide post-construction observation to correct any design issues/mistakes.



## Soil Preparation



## Soil Preparation



#### Soil Preparation – Breaking Up Compaction



## Soil Preparation – Import Soil in Lifts



## Soil Preparation – Apply Appropriate Mulch



## Soil Preparation – Protect Facility



# Things To Think About

• Bad examples can be just as influential as the good ones. Make strong efforts to design good demonstration projects.

• Create design solutions that are cost effective and help reduce future maintenance efforts.

• We must continue to innovate and not settle on first designs. There is always room for improvement.

• There needs to be better collaboration between landscape architects, civil engineers, and architects.





# **Presentation Topics**



- Verde
- Stormwater Facility MaintenanceTenant & Homeowner Education
- \*Examples & Costs



The Mission of Verde, a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation, is to improve the economic health of disadvantaged communities by creating job training, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities, fostering the connection between economic vitality and environmental protection and restoration.



# Activities



#### **Social Enterprise**



#### **Outreach & Education**



# **Social Enterprise**





# **Outreach & Education**





### Friendly Maintenance Fact #1: A Stormwater Facility is <u>Infrastructure</u>

#### It's a Lot Like:





It's Not Like:





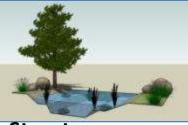
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### Friendly Facility Maintenance Fact #2: Follow the <u>O&M Plan</u>

Stormwater Management Facilities



Access



Structure



Water Flow/Infiltration



Vegetation



Erosion



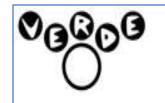


**GREEN** from the Ground Up

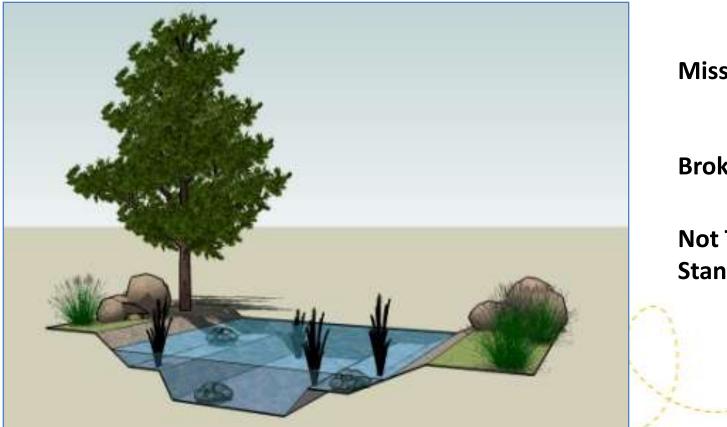
Operation and Maintenance for Private Property Owners







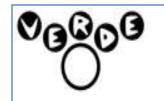
# **O&M Plan:** <u>Structure</u>



**Missing Part(s)** 

**Broken Part(s)** 

Not To Design Standards

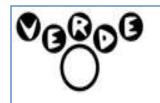


## **O&M Plan:** Water Flow/Infiltration



Blocked, Capacity Diminished

Uneven ponding or Stagnant-Standing Water



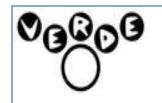
# **O&M Plan:** <u>Vegetation</u>



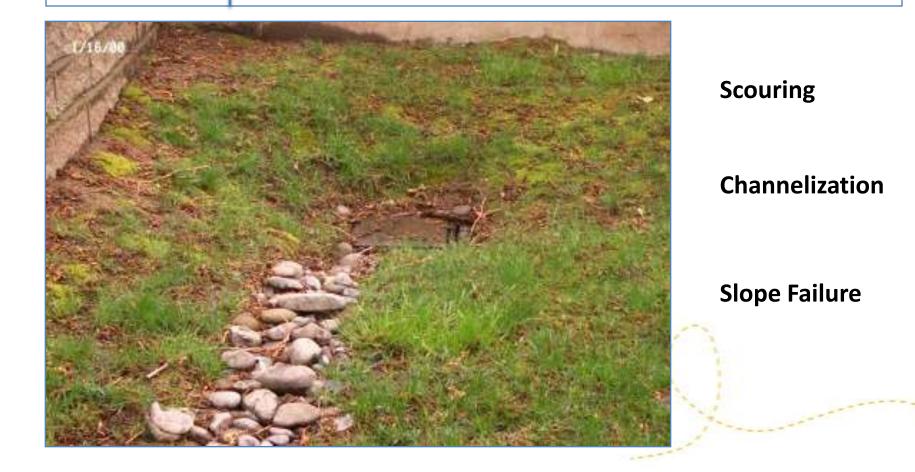
Strained Vegetation

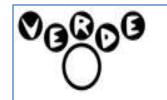
Insufficient Plant Cover

Remove Invasives, Noxious Weeds



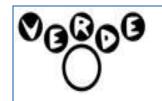
# **O&M Plan:** <u>Erosion</u>





# **O&M Plan:** Pests





# **O&M Plan: Pollution**



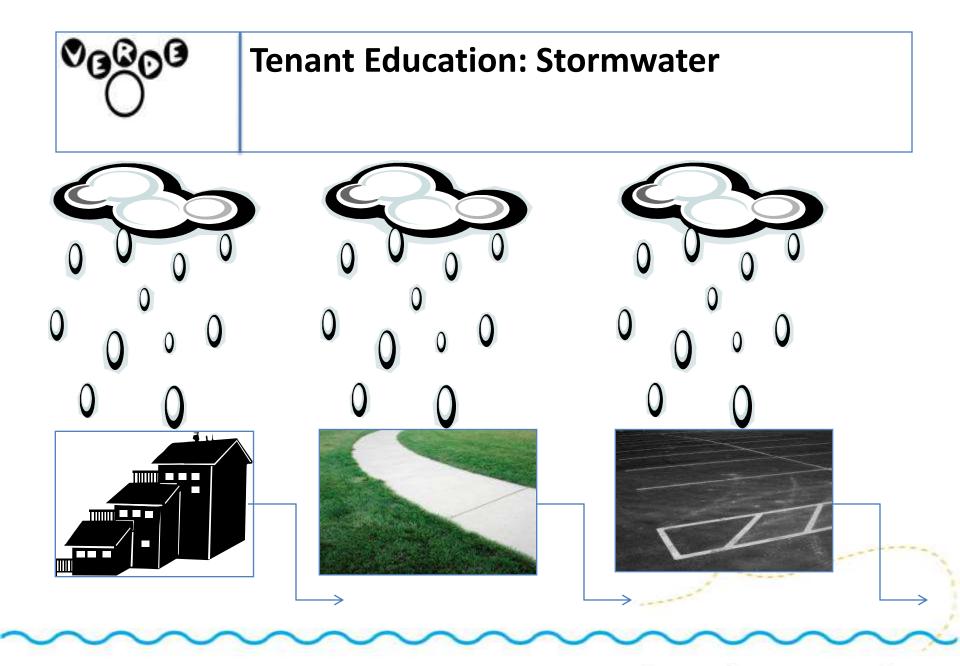
Debris

**Off-Color, Odor** 



### Friendly Facility Maintenance Fact #3: <u>Tenant & Homeowner Education</u> Makes a Big Difference



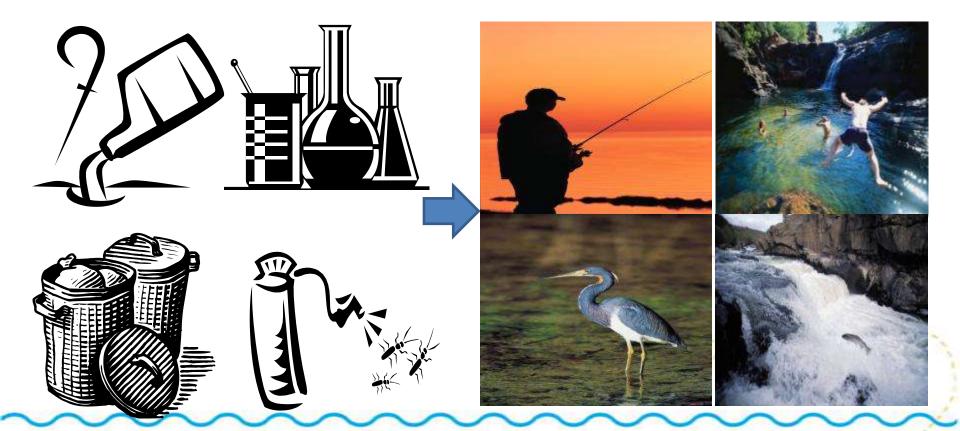




### **Tenant Education: Stormwater**

#### **Stormwater Contains Pollution**

#### **Stormwater Takes Pollution To:**



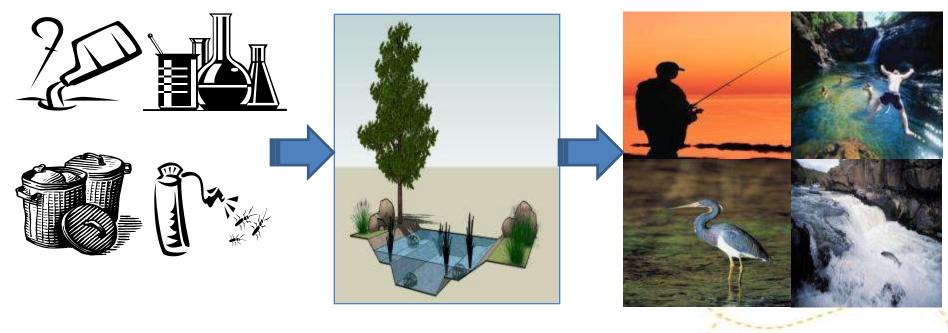


### **Tenant Education: Facility Function**

# Stormwater with Pollution

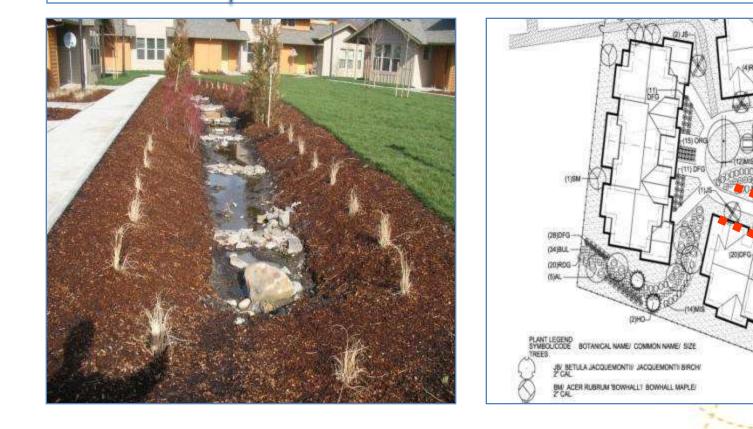
#### Stormwater Facility

#### Stormwater w/o Pollution



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### **Tenant Education: Facility Locations**



#### **GREEN** from the Ground Up

(4)RDG

10) ORG -

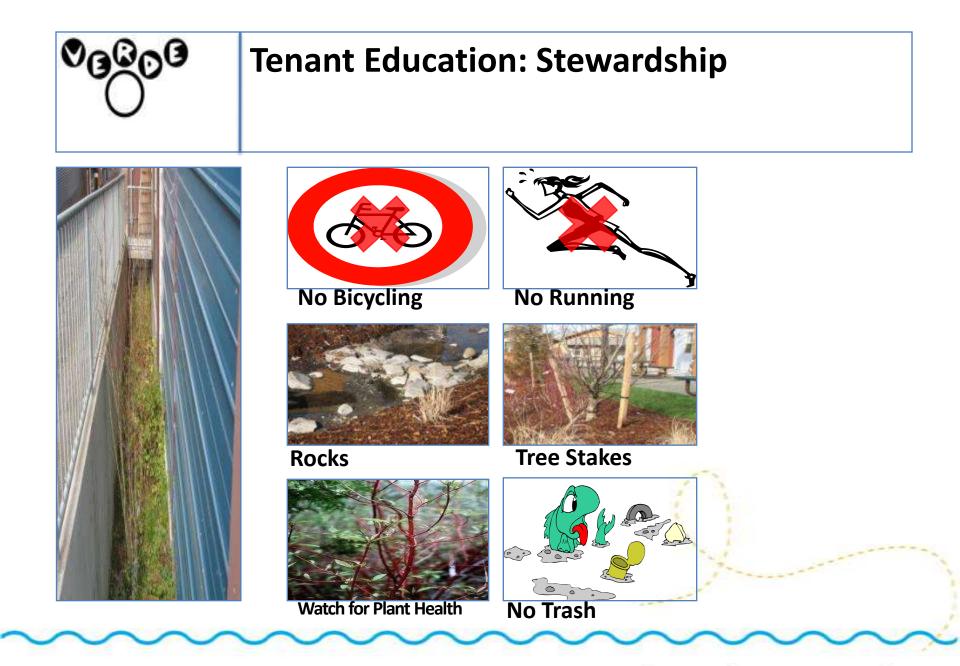


### **Tenant Education: Plant Health**

### Redtwig Dogwood

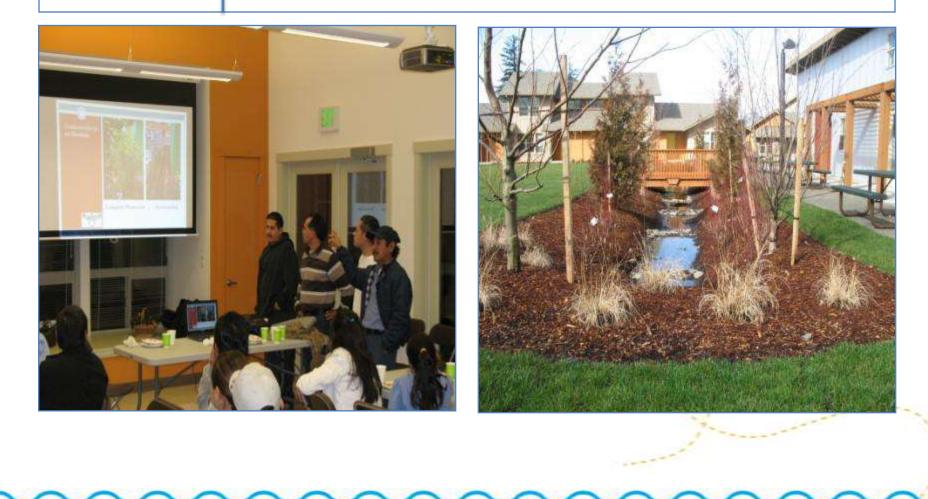
- Function: Habitat, Erosion Control
- Warning: Leaf color changes when plant is not receiving enough water







#### Friendly Facility Maintenance Fact #3: <u>Tenant & Homeowner Education</u> Makes a Big Difference





#### Friendly Facility Maintenance Fact #3: <u>Tenant & Homeowner Education</u> Makes a Big Difference



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alan@verdenw.org

# Thank you partners!

- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Home Builders Association of Metro Portland
- Clackamas River Basin Council
- Nevue Ngan Associates
  - KPFF Engineering
    - Verde





[nev-ü-non] Nevue Ngan Associates



