

Overcoming the Barriers to the Implementation of LID



A survey of local decision makers provided important insight into the barriers to implementation of low impact development practices in communities.

In 2009, Project Investigators conducted a market survey of over 700 local decision makers representing localities in Minnesota, Ohio, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine to understand the common barriers to implementing low impact development in their communities. The surveys showed that there were similar barriers in all of the communities.

COST

LID is often perceived as a more expensive option than traditional stormwater management. LID can be a cost-effective solution

Connections between high levels of development and declining water quality are well established, and can result in financial impacts through the loss of natural resources within the community if they are not controlled or mitigated.

to a community's stormwater management challenges due to the treatment of runoff at the source helping reduce the downstream infrastructure impacts during flooding events. LID can also reduce the development costs due to reductions in curbing and clearing for large detention basins and can introduce significant cost savings when separating storm sewers.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Many local officials identified the need to be informed as an important component to making good decisions for their community. Valuable outreach in innovative and cost effective stormwater management can be conducted by Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO), Coastal Training Programs (CTP), Extension Programs, Universities or NGOs. Consider hands-on exercises, field activities or planning charrettes.

THE FOUR MOST COMMON BARRIERS

- 1 The perceived costs associated with LID practices.
- 2 The need for additional education on specific topics directed to local officials and secondarily the general public.
- 3 Lack of political will to implement LID.
- 4 Concerns with long-term function and maintenance.



LANGUAGE

The translation of technical materials for local officials is a key component to successful

Local officials tend to obtain most of their environmental information through the use of the Web and from direct trainings or presentations.

outreach activities.

The backgrounds of local officials are often varied, and their understanding of stormwater management is not

often equal between officials. Using terminology and communication formats that reach a broader audience improves comprehension of the outreach activity. Consider testing the message or materials with the intended audience to confirm understanding.

POLITICAL WILL

Local officials are representatives of their communities and need the support of

While many educators would hope that local decisions are made based upon factual, logical information, many decisions are influenced by emotional and personal bias.

their constituents when making decisions.

Public outreach campaigns assist in the development of the political

will necessary to implement innovative or alternative approaches.

LACK OF CAPACITY TO BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

Environmental educators are tasked with informing wide ranging audiences on ground breaking information regarding resource

protection. However, those educators are often limited in their ability to lead group discussions to develop local policy changes in favor of innovative approaches. Consider improving the capacity to lead and nurture group process.

CREDIBILITY

Environmental educators are provided a short window of time to inform local decision makers about new information that could assist in their role. Providing information that is timely, relevant and unbiased are means to ensure successful delivery. Universities, NEMO, CTP, Sea Grant Cooperative Extension, and NGOs can be effective tools for implementing local change.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION PLANS

Stormwater management structures, both traditional and innovative require regular maintenance to be performed to maximize performance during their life span. Effective maintenance and operation plans outline the specific steps necessary to keep stormwater practices operating to the maximum benefit.

ADDITIONAL BARRIERS

- negative perceptions of “new technologies”
- concerns over long-term performance and liability
- doubt as to the performance and function of the technology.

FORGING THE LINK: Linking the Economic Benefits of Low Impact Development and Community Decisions • www.unh.edu/unhsc/forgingthelink
Chapter 6: Overcoming the Barriers to the Implementation of LID

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