CLEAN WATERWAYS
Healthy Neighborhoods

WHAT IS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

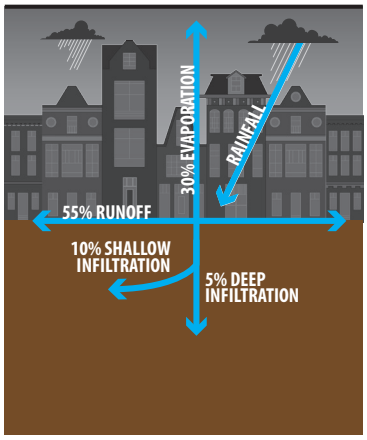
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI) practices manage stormwater by taking advantage of the Earth's natural processes. These include allowing water to infiltrate into the soil, evaporate into the air, or for plants to use the water and transpire it as vapor. These practices can slow down, clean, and in some cases reduce stormwater runoff prior to it entering the combined sewer system.

In a combined sewer system, a single pipe carries both sanitary wastewater and stormwater runoff. During dry weather, sewage from homes and businesses is conveyed to a wastewater treatment plant, where the wastewater is treated to remove pollutants. During certain rainfall conditions, the capacity of a combined sewer may be exceeded. When this occurs, the excess flow, a diluted mixture of wastewater and stormwater runoff, is discharged into our waterways through a combined sewer overflow (CSO). CSOs can adversely affect the quality of waterways by contributing to high bacterial levels and low dissolved oxygen levels, which are harmful to fish and other aquatic life.

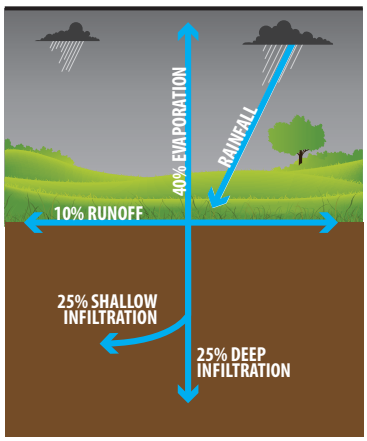
GI technologies treat stormwater as a resource, not something to eliminate. Also known as low-impact development or adaptive management, these techniques capture, infiltrate, treat and reuse polluted runoff before it enters the sewer system.

GI offers environmental, social, and economic benefits. GI can increase property values, beautify neighborhoods, cool extreme summer temperatures, support natural habitat, create local green jobs, and enhance public space.

URBAN ENVIRONMENT
(75% - 100% impervious cover)



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
(natural ground cover)



Green Infrastructure practices include:
rain gardens • porous pavement/asphalt • green roofs • infiltration planters • trees and tree boxes • rain barrels • rainwater harvesting for non-potable uses such as toilet flushing and landscape irrigation.