



*Environmental Integrity Focus Area*  
**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT**

**Working Document from September 26, 2011 Meeting**

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*On September 26, 2011, the Plan Tucson Team held a Green Infrastructure Policy Working Group meeting to review goal concepts for the Green Infrastructure Element contributed by participants at the August 19 Environmental Integrity Focus Area meeting. For the September meeting, each goal concept was provided on a separate card, and participants worked as one group, discussing each goal concept and deciding whether it was a major goal or a sub-goal. Once the goal concepts were arranged to reflect the group's decisions, participants were given an opportunity to add goals or sub-goals.*

*The first part of this document reflects the results of this group exercise, while the second part provides a transcription of comments made during the discussion. It should be noted that the goal and sub-goal statements are neither exhaustive nor final. The Green Infrastructure goals will be further reviewed and refined as the Plan Tucson Policy Working Group process continues.*

*A separate Green Infrastructure Policy Working Group meeting will be held to review the policy concepts for Green Infrastructure that were provided at the August 19 Environmental Integrity Focus Area meeting.*

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**Suggested Green Infrastructure Goals and Sub-Goals**

*(Note: In some cases, participants questioned whether a goal concept was really more a policy concept. This will be revisited in future meetings regarding Green Infrastructure.)*

1. Protect, preserve, and enhance open space for recreation, enjoyment and ecosystem function
  - Create connections between green nodes
  - Connect neighborhood parks by a trails system for each side of town
  - Use signage to educate the community about native plants and wildlife, including ways to minimize human-wildlife conflicts
  - Re-establish and restore, when possible, natural ecology and hydrologic function and structure in washes and riparian areas
  - Preserve biologically-rich open space and habitat
  - Minimize land disturbance and destruction of mature and healthy trees
  - Integrate transportation planning with habitat protection
  - Promote urban agriculture and community gardens
  
2. Incorporate existing natural features and green infrastructure into new and existing developments
  - Promote and enhance the urban forest to provide multiple benefits and utilize rainwater harvesting to support it
  - Restrict or require approval for tree removal
  - Incorporate tree requirements into street improvement and transportation projects
  - Strive to achieve tree canopy goals
  
3. Use green infrastructure to create safe and attractive routes and destinations

- Promote effective connections between people and local destinations
  - Create trail connections between City and County parks
  - Create environment-enhancing streetscapes and transportation routes including bicycle/pedestrian only spaces
  - Encourage comfortable and safe walking routes through shade, wide sidewalks and increased multi-use density
  - Allocate funding to encourage expansion of sidewalks, trails systems and bikeways along existing and new thoroughfares
4. Revise codes and regulations to further enhance urban green infrastructure
- Require that post-development hydrology mimics pre-development runoff rates and volumes
  - Create green multi-use spaces with 50% tree canopy cover, combining green spaces, connective trails and transition zones
  - Incorporate green space into infill, redevelopment and transportation projects
  - Encourage plazas and open space in land planning
  - Increase percentage of land that must be dedicated to open space and/or walking and biking trails in new developments
  - Ensure that regulations enforce preservation of habitat and support improved tree planting and maintenance of existing vegetation
5. Use green infrastructure for stormwater management and use stormwater for the development of green infrastructure
- Create a green infrastructure ordinance for new development and redevelopment to support stormwater harvesting infrastructure and associated native trees and plants
  - Use natural drainage systems to support and extend green infrastructure networks
  - Provide integrated benefits to the urban environment including habitat, shade, beautification, improved air quality and mitigating urban heat island through stormwater management
  - Use available, harvested water to support desirable plant growth
  - Use green infrastructure to manage flood events and storm water quality
  - Consider supporting LEED for neighborhoods standards
  - Support and promote water harvesting goals
  - Create rainwater harvesting ordinance that includes new residential subdivisions
6. Manage the urban forest to simultaneously promote habitat preservation, resource production, climate adaptation, and recreation and social connections

7. Ensure that all goals and policies consider the relationship between socio-cultural and biophysical resources and how such goals and policies can maximize both

### **General Comments during the Meeting**

*(Note: Transcribed from flip chart notes taken during meeting discussion.)*

- Need to create a clear definition of green infrastructure
- Enhance urban forests in order to provide multiple benefits: mitigate urban heat island, provide wildlife habitat, produce food. Urban forests are just trees, not typically understory.
- Green infrastructure is more than urban forest
- Define all the benefits of green infrastructure:
  - Habitat for wildlife
  - Shade
  - Reduce heat island
  - Aesthetics
  - Recreation
- Urban forests could include natural spaces and more designed spaces
- Mitigation of human destruction/degraded environments; remediate soil, water
- Provide value to residents and natural habitat
- Encourage restoration, preservation, re-establishment
- To maximize benefits should be a guiding principle
- Preserve, protect and enhance open space or recreation and enjoyment
- Support internal mobility
- Stormwater harvesting, maybe should be at the policy level
- Create livable streets
- Beneficially use all rainwater to support desirable plants (feeds back into washes)
- Large sub-divisions – incorporate rainwater harvesting
- Define was ‘safe’ means
- Resource statements
- Need implementation plan
- Promote urban agriculture
- Revise the land use code to enhance and promote urban green infrastructure; have higher standards for new development

