

Sustainable Southfield News and Updates

Green Infrastructure at an Individual Level

Amid rising environmental challenges, it is critical to look at human behavior as part of the problem, but most importantly as part of the solution. There are many factors that contribute to climate change and the methods in which we can implement to combat the increase of temperatures, greenhouse gas emissions, water pollutants, and other environmental issues. One solution is the implementation of green infrastructure practices to improve air quality, water quality, and enhance vegetation in urban communities.

Green infrastructure practices have been around for thousands of years with civilizations, such as the Mayans, using agricultural terracing to help manage water runoff and reduce soil erosion on crops planted in tough, hilled terrain. However, the term “green infrastructure” emerged in the 1990’s as a way to designate importance to natural systems in infrastructure planning efforts.

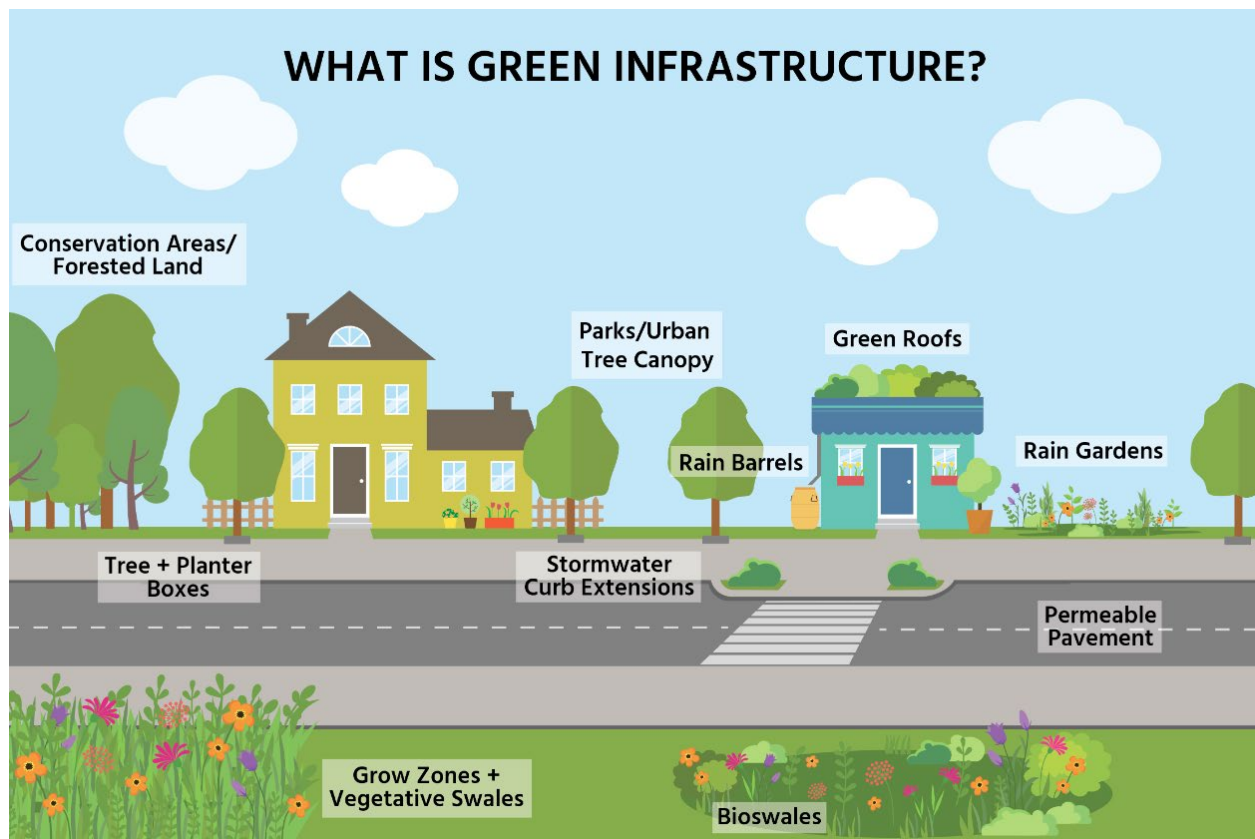


Image Source: <https://www.brec.org/green-infrastructure>

Green infrastructure is incorporated on a larger scale for major city infrastructure projects. However, individuals can install various green infrastructure components in their homes as well and contribute to the overall sustainability of their community. Here are some practical ways to incorporate green infrastructure practices into your home improvement projects:

Rain Barrels:

Install rain barrels or cisterns to collect rainwater for future use. This not only reduces your water bill, but also alleviates demand on the local water system. Utilize collected rainwater for watering plants, lawns, and other applications around your home.

Permeable Surfaces:

Choose permeable materials for driveways, walkways, and patios. This allows rainwater to reach the soil mitigating erosion and filtering water pollutants.

Tree Planting:

Planting trees and native plants are an excellent way to solve many environmental problems related to excess heat, flooding, and poor water quality. Trees help absorb excess water from flood-prone areas and have the potential to save you up to 30% on cooling your home. Native plants require less water as well as cut down on lawn maintenance.

Bioswales, Rain Gardens, and Grow Zones with Native Plantings:

Select locally adapted, native plants for your home landscaping. This not only promotes biodiversity, but also lowers the overall watering requirements for these plants.

By incorporating these practices, you contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle which plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of life in your community.



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