

## Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

**Project Name:** *Sharing Services to Maintain Green Stormwater Infrastructure*

- **Year Complete:** 2021
- **Local Government:** Gary, IN
- **Local Foundation:** The Legacy Foundation

### **Project Purpose**

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Green infrastructure assets require regular maintenance to sustain value and performance. Sharing services capitalizes on public-private partnerships, cross-sector and bi-state collaboration, workforce development and new job opportunities.

### **Key Lessons Learned**

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1. Meet your partners where they are. The grant timelines do not necessarily align with City bureaucracy or the field season. Moving ahead of partners creates the risk of reduced collaboration and engagement.

The most effective steps in building relationships were the training and the collaborative planning leading up to the training. The team initially planned to host the training in the spring, however, that did not work with the City's competing priorities. By listening to the City and waiting to host the training until the relevant staff was able to dedicate time, there was high level of participation and engagement in the training day. The training day was an effective step in disseminating information about GSI assets and helping staff understand their value and requirements for care.

2. There are incumbent staff who likely require basic GSI maintenance training to help them do their jobs more effectively. Other City staff – managers and decision-makers will likely also benefit from training. We brought in people who did not have explicit GSI responsibilities, but whose work was adjacent to the sites (groundskeeping, snowplowing) to increase understanding of functionality and the importance of proper care.

### **Additional Information and Resources**

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Learn more about the continuing Shared Services pilot program, which prioritizes low- to moderate-income communities of color who suffer disproportionately from environmental injustice and localized flooding [here](#).