



Municipal Roundtables: Tackling Barriers to Sustainable Stormwater Management



Taking steps to change your stormwater management system but running into challenges? The New Solutions for Sustainable Stormwater Management Program can help!

Cities are generating increasing volumes of stormwater as urbanization changes permeable soils into hard, impervious surfaces and changing weather patterns exceed the capacity of local stormwater systems. Traditional grey infrastructure is costly and the lack of a dedicated, consistent funding source means few municipalities are able to proactively plan, build or maintain their stormwater system.

As detailed in our report, *New Solutions for Sustainable Stormwater Management in Canada*, a growing number of Canadian municipalities are implementing stormwater user fees and incentives for green infrastructure to relieve the pressure on their current stormwater management system. Although the environmental, social and economic benefits of these policies has been clearly demonstrated, common challenges have hindered implementation in many communities. Tackling many of these barriers requires coordinated learning and action across municipal departments.

Our Municipal Roundtables, organized and facilitated by Smart Prosperity Institute (SPI) and The Natural Step (TNS), can help communities work together to clearly identify, assess, and problem-solve on key barriers to successfully implement new solutions for sustainable stormwater management. The customized sessions engage communities on their **unique barriers** to managing stormwater through user fees and green infrastructure, with the goal of developing local strategies and action plans for overcoming those barriers. The Roundtables promote discussion amongst municipal staff, decision-makers and relevant stakeholders, with various roles and responsibilities in the stormwater system. Participants will be challenged to **communicate and collaborate effectively** with each other around a common goal. As a result, all participants will develop a greater awareness of the perspectives and challenges faced by other departments and stakeholders in order to develop collaborative solutions for effective implementation of stormwater user fees and green infrastructure incentives.



The Municipal Roundtable Approach

Pre-Session Scoping

We will work closely with you in advance of the Roundtable to customize the session to your needs. To begin, we will share our research and knowledge on commonly faced barriers while implementing stormwater user fees and green infrastructure. This research also highlights effective strategies for overcoming those barriers. A pre-session survey will identify the key barriers experienced by each department, and the conditions needed for change. We will work with you to design an agenda tailored to create the most effective collaborative environment.

Municipal Roundtable

A professional facilitator, supported by subject matter experts, will guide a day long Roundtable of in-depth discussions and working groups. SPI will present an initial summary of the barriers identified by the Pre-Session Scoping exercise. The key barriers will be analysed and participants will work together to develop strategies and action plans for overcoming those barriers that work within the local context. SPI will provide a summary report of the day, which can form the basis of your municipal action plan.

Peer-to-Peer Learning

After the Roundtable, a peer-to-peer webinar will be organized with participants from other Municipal Roundtables to share insights, solutions, and experiences with implementing the strategies and action plans.

Expected Outcomes:

- Roundtable Summary Report to aid in the development of a local implementation strategy
- Greater awareness and collaboration amongst municipal participants and departments
- Network of municipal leaders to draw on for future support, collaboration, and innovation
- Fall 2017 report on Tackling Barriers to Sustainable Stormwater Management

About Us

Smart Prosperity Institute -- Sara Jane O'Neill, Senior Research Associate

SPI's Cities & Communities program focuses on reforming price signals in fields of local jurisdiction in support of environmental and economic objectives. As Senior Research Associate, Sara Jane co-wrote SPI's report *New Solutions for Sustainable Stormwater Management in Canada*, which provided the first Canadian case studies of successful stormwater user fees and incentives for green infrastructure. At SPI, Sara also works on projects related to pricing signals for combatting urban sprawl and on the burgeoning Municipal Natural Assets Initiative. Prior to SPI, Sara worked as an environmental planner for Conservation Authorities in Ontario and through UOttawa's Master of Environmental Sustainability she researched sustainable community planning.

The Natural Step -- John Purkis, Senior Associate

John Purkis, a Senior Associate with TNS and Director of The Natural Capital Lab, is a sustainability expert, facilitator and systems change specialist. He has worked for many years with municipal governments, businesses and other organizations, at home and abroad, to generate and implement bold visions for a sustainable future. He developed and launched a new resource entitled *Amazing Neighbourhoods: Engagement and Sustainability Planning Guide*, which is being used by cities in Canada and Europe. He was also the lead author of *Bridging the Gap in Community Sustainability Planning and Implementation*, and he co-authored *Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government*. Prior to joining TNS, John worked with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), where he helped lay the foundation for the Green Municipal Fund and the Capacity Building Program.

If you are interested in learning more about this program please contact Sara Jane O'Neill at sarajane@smartprosperity.ca

Have questions or thoughts on this program?
Complete this [feedback survey](#) and let us know!



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