

Rain to Roots Ambassador Program- April Meeting



Welcome!

- What is your name?
- Think about the reasons why you care about trees. Share one of your reasons with the group!

1

1

Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)

Benefits of GSI:

- Supports tree canopy
- Reduces temperatures
- Reduces potable water use
- Mitigates flooding
- Promotes cleaner waterways
- Creates wildlife habitat

Learn more about GSI and its benefits at Sustainable Tempe – [Green Stormwater Infrastructure](#).

Rio Salado Pkwy. & Hardy Dr.



Lemon St. & Dorsey Ln.

2

2

Rain to Roots Master Plan

- **Project Purpose**

- Expand green infrastructure & urban cooling initiatives.
- Promote cross-departmental coordination & planning.
- Identify opportunities for long-term funding.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure helps us address...



Record-breaking
Extreme Heat



Severe Drought &
Water Use



Flooding & Water
Quality Concerns



Need for Climate-
Ready Vegetation

3

3

Meeting Objectives

- *In this session, we will discuss...*
 - **History of Arbor Month** (10 minutes)
 - **Growing Together - Project Overview** (20 minutes)
 - **GSI Project Prioritization & Public Engagement Strategies** (20 minutes)



4

4

History of Arbor Month



5

5

History of Arbor Month *with Richard Adkins*



6

6

Growing Together

A Tree Stewardship & Workforce Development Program



7

7

Growing Together - Overview

Purpose: Expand Tempe's urban forest to mitigate extreme heat.

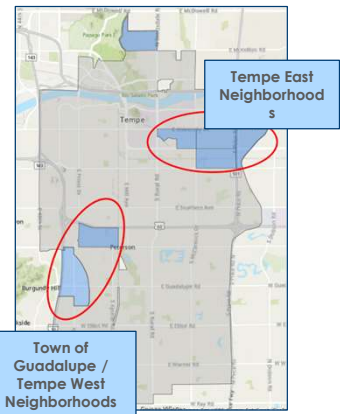
Project Area: Northeast Tempe & Town of Guadalupe/Southwest Tempe

Total Funding Amount: \$1.6 million

Timeline: April 2024 – March 2027 (3 years)

Funding Sources:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service
- AZ Department of Forestry & Fire Management (DFFM)



8

8

Growing Together - Overview



Goal: Expand Tempe's urban forest to promote **equitable urban cooling** and create opportunities for **workforce development** within the field of urban forestry.

The initiative involves 3 main components:

Community Tree Stewards Program	School Greening & Grounds Maintenance Program	Food Forest Pilot Projects
Pay Tempe residents to grow, plant, and maintain trees in neighborhoods with low canopy coverage & high heat vulnerability.	Provide additional capacity for school greening through new staff roles and professional development trainings.	Develop two new food forests to provide shade and increase community food access.

Community Tree Stewards Program

Overview:

- Cohort-based, on-the-job training program.
- 6 cohorts, 10 residents per cohort (**60 total participants**).
- Participants paid **\$20/hour**, 12 hours/month.

During the three-month program, participants will...

- **Learn** how to grow, plant, and care for native and low-water-use trees.
- **Spend time** in the classroom, in the nursery, and in their neighborhood.
- **Provide** their neighbors with trees, supplies, and information.
- **Explore** additional education & career/entrepreneurial pathways.

Growing Together – Next Steps

May - July 2024

- CTS Program Development
- Hire new CTS & school greening staff (5 total)

September 2024

- CTS Cohort 1 Begins
- Complete food forest designs

April 2024

Project Kickoff

August - September 2024

- CTS Program Recruitment
- Begin capacity-building trainings w/ schools

November 2024

CTS Cohort 1 Ends

CTS = Community Tree Stewards

11

11

Project Prioritization & Public Engagement



12

12

Project Prioritization & Public Engagement

- *The Rain to Roots Master Plan will ...*
 - **Develop project selection criteria** to identify & prioritize future GSI sites.
 - **Support the utilization of project selection criteria** across all city departments' capital improvement projects.
 - **Create a process** for Tempe residents to suggest future GSI sites.



City of Tempe – Project Prioritization

Discussion Question:

What factors do you think that the City of Tempe considers when identifying a site for a future GSI project?



Selecting Future GSI Projects

Site Selection Methodology

Identify Priority Areas	Determine GSI Potential	Align with City Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat Exposure • Social Vulnerability • Flood Susceptibility • Existing Tree Canopy • Water Quality Needs • Walk, Bike, & Transit Scores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Capture • Tree Canopy Expansion • Space / Utility Constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use Path & Streetscape Upgrades • Stormwater Retrofit Projects • Park Upgrades • Landscape Refresh

Priority Area + Potential for GSI + Alignment with City Projects



15

Feedback & Discussion

- **What do you think about these criteria?**
- **Are there any criteria that you feel are missing?**
- **What concerns do you have about this prioritization process?**
- **How could the City make this process more transparent?**

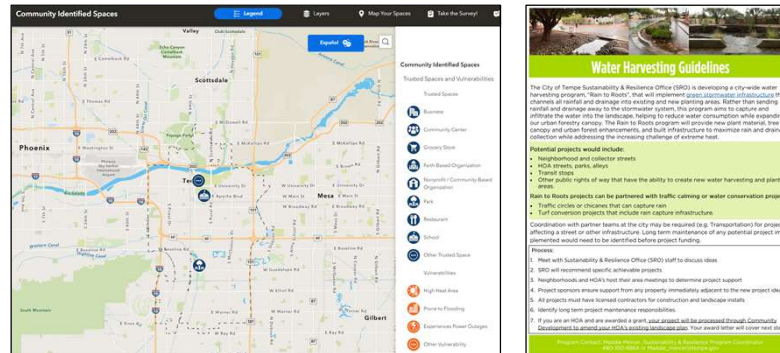


16

City of Tempe – Public Engagement

Discussion Question:

What methods could the City of Tempe use to solicit feedback from Tempe residents on the location of future GSI projects?



17

17

Public Feedback & Engagement Strategies

- **Expanding educational offerings** to raise awareness of GSI as a solution for urban cooling.
- Creating opportunities for community members to **identify neighborhood-level needs** & vulnerabilities (heat, flooding, etc.).
- **Expanding the Neighborhood Grants program** to fund projects that emphasize water harvesting and urban cooling.
- **Developing new programs** for Tempe residents to participate in installing and caring for green stormwater infrastructure.
- *Others?*

18

18

Feedback & Discussion

- **What do you think about these strategies?**
- **How else could the City solicit community input?**
- **Which of these engagement opportunities would you be interested in, and why?**
- **What other engagement opportunities would you like to see the City develop?**

19

19

Rain to Roots GSI Bike Tour

What: Interactive tour of existing COT GSI pilot projects

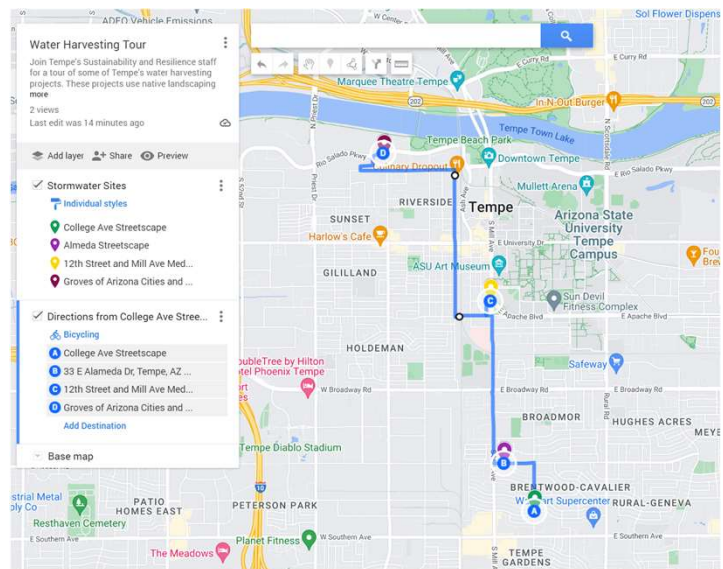
When: Wednesday, April 24th from 5-7 PM

Where:

- **Stop #1:** College Ave Streetscape
- **Stop #2:** Alameda Drive
- **Stop #3:** 12th St. Median
- **Stop #4:** Grove of AZ Cities and Towns

Who: You! [RSVP Here.](#)

**** A limited number of van spots are available ****



20

20

Upcoming Ambassador Program Meetings

Meetings on the First Wednesday of the Month, 5:30-6:30 PM

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Upcoming Meetings:

April 24th: Rain to Roots GSI Bike Tour!

May 1st: Master Plan Deliverable Review



Questions?

Contact Maddie Mercer,
Sustainability & Resilience Office

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