



# CLEAN WATER ACT'S STORMWATER PROGRAM

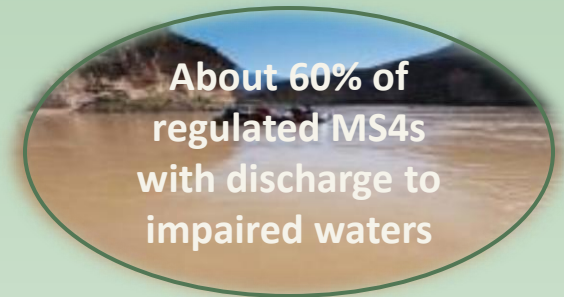


Suzanna M. Perea, EPA Region 6  
May 14, 2013

# Stormwater is a leading cause of water quality impairment and its impact is growing

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- Urban stormwater is a leading source of impairment
- Fast growing water quality concern
  - Approx. 800,000 acres being developed every year (> 1.0 million acres by 2039)
- Development increases the amount of impervious cover in the landscape
- Small increase in impervious cover leads to big impacts in receiving waters
- Development upstream can cause downstream impacts in communities
- Local governments face growing wet weather-related costs



# Stormwater Impacts: Pollution, Flooding, and Property Losses

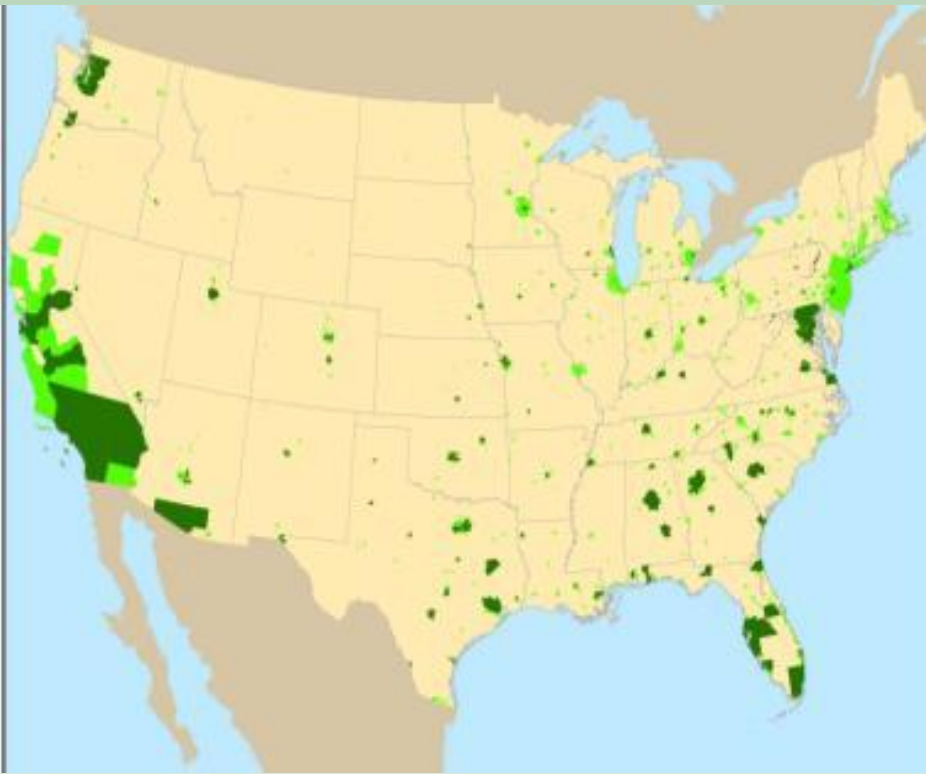
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- Stormwater pollutants
  - Cause beach closures & swimming illnesses (bacterial contamination & algal blooms)
  - Impact fisheries & shellfish harvesting (excess sedimentation, nutrients, bacteria, metals, & temperature)
  - Increase the costs of treating drinking water supplies
- Stream impacts
  - Increase stormwater volume & velocity (flooding, scouring & sewer overflows)
  - Reduce groundwater recharge (water supplies)



# Existing Program

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## Current coverage

- Primarily in urbanized area
- Accounts for much of the population
- Only about 2% of the land area

- Many communities already have waterbodies polluted by stormwater discharges from impervious areas
- Communities are working hard to address stormwater and are looking for cost-effective solutions moving forward
- Communities are prioritizing investments through integrated planning

# New Directions

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- **Incorporate green infrastructure into initial development/redevelopment site plans**
  - Most cost-effective opportunity to control stormwater at its source
  - Prevents WQ degradation in healthy waters
  - Helps restore impaired waters
- **Looking at the problem on a watershed basis will be more cost effective**
- **Incentives for sustainable practices that provide numerous other economic and quality of life benefits to communities**



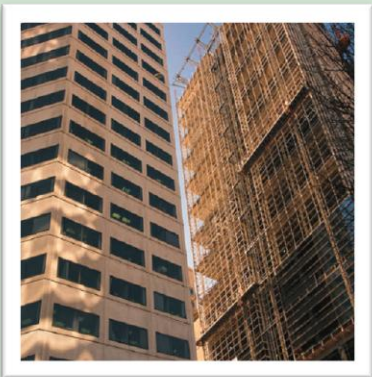
Green infrastructure is a sustainable way to control stormwater.

# If We Don't Take This New Direction – It Will Cost a Lot More

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- **If sites do not incorporate sustainable stormwater controls:**
  - In growing communities, waterbodies will become impaired (high costs to restore the waters)
  - In areas already discharging to impaired waters, WQ of our urban waters will worsen
- **Communities will not realize the many other benefits of green infrastructure, including:**
  - Reduced flooding
  - More liveable communities
  - Increased property values
- **The cost of inaction is high and borne most by local governments**





# Potential Focus of a Proposed Stormwater Rule

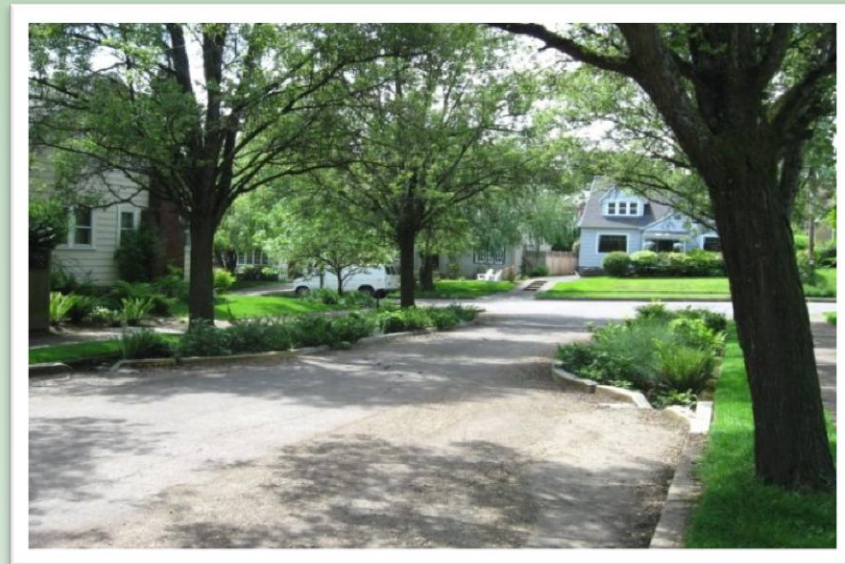
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- Establish performance standards for discharges from newly developed and redeveloped sites
- Encourages watershed approaches for managing municipal stormwater discharges
- Fits with integrated planning and financial capability frameworks





- Retention-based performance standard to require that sustainable stormwater controls be incorporated into sites as they are developed and redeveloped
- Considering a standard that varies according to an area's climate and other location-specific characteristics
- Considering many flexibilities
- Cost-effective ways to meet the standard



About 1/3 of states and many local communities already have some sort of treatment or retention-based performance standard





## Performance Standards (Cont'd)

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- Considering relaxed standard for redevelopment
  - Recognizes site constraints and benefits to reusing already developed site
  - Encourages redevelopment to revitalize urban communities
  - Provides additional incentives for smart growth and brownfields development
- The standard could be directly applied to newly developed and redeveloped sites nationwide or only those sites discharging to regulated MS4s



Applying the standard nationwide would create a level playing field for developers among municipalities and protect downstream communities from upstream development.



## Performance Standards (Cont'd)

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- Could accommodate site constraints (including water rights laws)
  - Managed through treatment
  - Off-site mitigation
  - Payment-in-lieu
  - Banking or trading programs
- Allow watershed plans that control pollutants/flows
- Would credit alternative programs that are better suited to their needs, but that are as protective as the national standard
- Allow phased implementation
- Allow sites to do their own analyses based on site-specific information
- Allow alternative green infrastructure plan in-lieu-of a new and/or redevelopment standard



# Benefits of a Proposed Stormwater Rule

## Water-Based Benefits

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Improved recreational, aesthetic and non-use values



Lower drinking water treatment costs



Lower dredging costs for navigational channels



Reduced siltation of water storage reservoirs



Reduced downstream flooding damage



Groundwater recharge



Small stream erosion and water quality impacts

## Vegetation-Based Benefits



Improved air quality and reduced human health impacts



Higher off-site property values associated with green infrastructure



Carbon uptake by plants



Reduced energy use by buildings and associated air quality and carbon footprint benefits

Innovative communities across the U.S. already have on-site retention standards in place and are seeing the benefits.

# Rulemaking Schedule

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Proposal: June 2013

Final Action: December 2014



[www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/rulemaking](http://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/rulemaking)

# A New Federal Approach



## PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- Goal is to coordinate Federal investments and align policies to support communities
- Meet multiple economic, environmental, and social objectives with each dollar spent



Houston Minute Maid Park



# The Partnership's Mission



To help American families in all communities — rural, suburban and urban — gain better access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs.



# The Partnership's Guiding Livability Principles



- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Increase economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Leverage federal investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods



# Region 6 Pilot Projects



Austin: Plaza Saltillo



Transit Oriented Development

Port Arthur: Westside



Health Services





# PLAZA SALTILLO – TOD



- **Capital Metro & City of Austin**

- Ridership Generated
- Revenue from Ridership Supports Capital Outlay & Future Maintenance
- Affordable housing, Green Building, Improved Streetscapes, Public Open Space, etc)

- **East Austin Community Needs**

- Affordable Housing Options
- Green Buildings
- Improved Streetscapes
- Public Open Space
- Economic and Employment Opportunities



# PLAZA SALTILLO – TOD

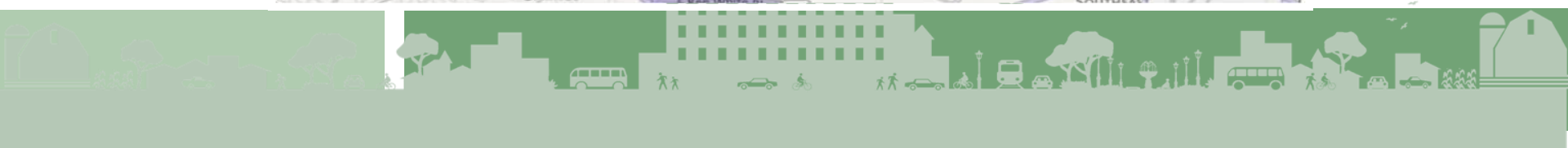
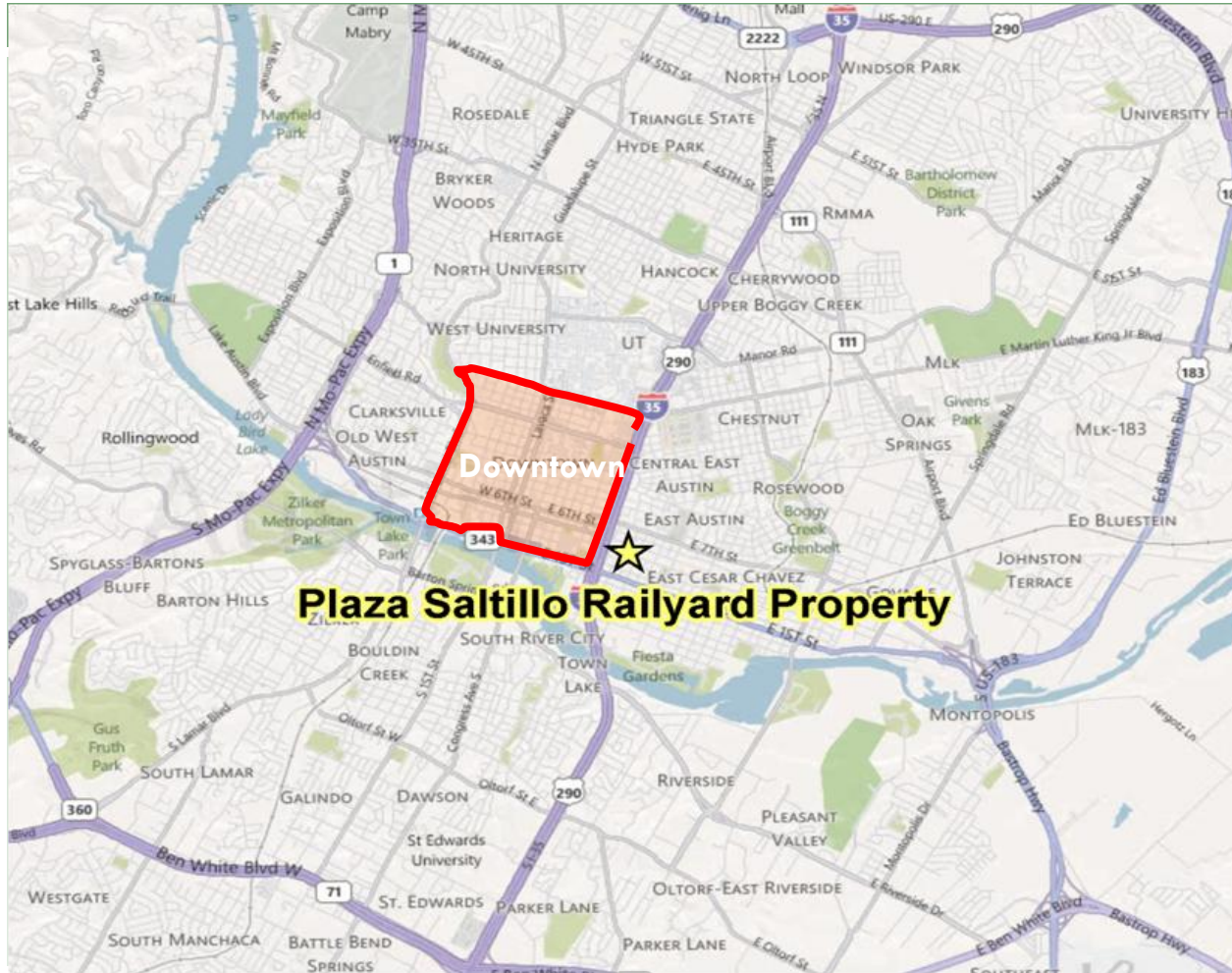


## Federal Assistance

- ✓ EPA – Brownfields Site Assessments (Joint – TCEQ & EPA)
- ✓ DOT – \$5.3M Surface Transportation Program – Metropolitan Mobility Funds and \$5.0M Livability Funding
- ✓ HUD – \$3.7M Regional Plan for Sustainable Development



# PLAZA SALTILLO – TOD



# PLAZA SALTILLO – TOD



Track relocation to southern edge of site



# PLAZA SALTILLO – TOD



## SUMMARY

### ENVIRONMENTAL:

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Dec. 2011 (TCEQ)
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, May 2012 (TCEQ/EPA)
- EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants – Annual Competition

### HOUSING:

- Capital Metro Preparing Request for Proposals to Build Affordable Housing





## SUMMARY cont'd

### TRANSPORTATION:

- Relocation of Southern Track, Oct. 2012
- MetroBikes – Kramer Station, Aug. 2012; Plaza Saltillo, 2013
- Capital Metro and City Infrastructure Coordination
  - 1) Track Relocation
  - 2) Addition of 2<sup>nd</sup> Track
- Capital Metro
  - 1) Complete double-track segments of MetroRail
  - 2) Lance Armstrong Bikeway into Plaza Saltillo area
  - 3) East Austin/Downtown Gateway



# EPA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



## Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) Grants

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm>

## Building Blocks Technical Assistance Grants

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/buildingblocks.htm>

## Greening America's Capitals

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/greencapitals.htm>

## Governor's Institute for Community Design

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/grants/index.htm>



# OTHER EPA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



## Brownfields Grants and Funding

[http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant\\_info/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant_info/index.htm)

## Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)

<http://www.epa.gov/care/>

## Energy Conservation and Renewable and Clean Energy

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/rfp.htm>

## Water Grants

[http://water.epa.gov/grants\\_funding/](http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/)

## Environmental Justice Grants

<http://www.epa.gov/Compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/index.html>





# Contact Information



More information on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities:

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/partnership/index.html>

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