

# Repurposing Vacant Lots for Green Infrastructure in Lucas County

Workshop: Designing and Developing  
Stormwater Practices in Northwest Ohio  
April 14, 2016

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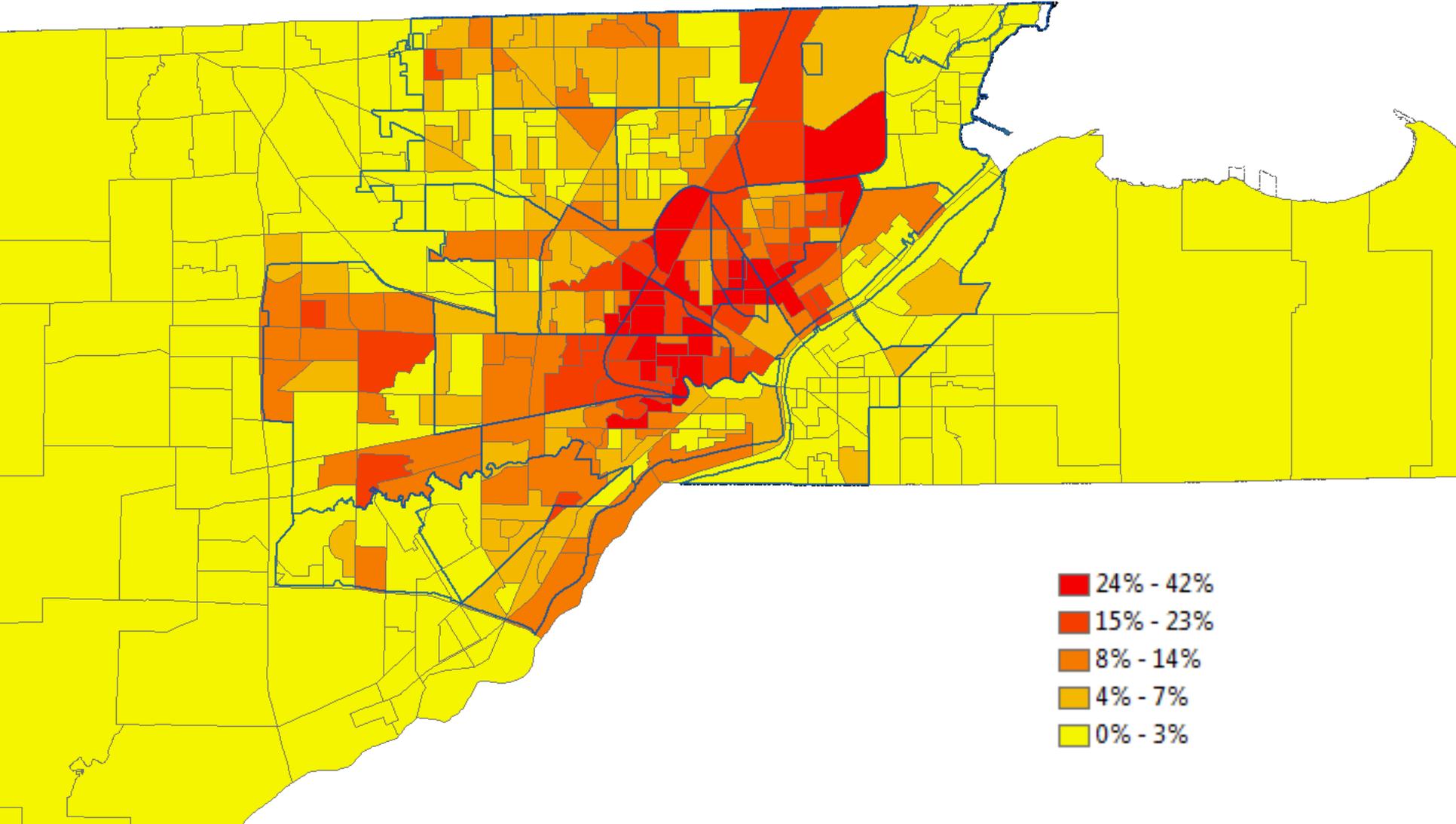
# The Issues

- ▶ Toledo has a vacancy problem
- ▶ The Toledo Region has a water quality problem
- ▶ Stormwater pollution is a primary urban cause of impairment to our waterways

# Vacancy

- ▶ Some neighborhoods in Toledo experience vacancy rates of over 40%
- ▶ Vacant lots are nuisances
  - Overgrown grass and weeds
  - Attract rodents and undesirable wildlife
  - Illegal dumping
  - Crime
  - Blight begets more blight

# Block Group Vacancy Rates – Percent of parcels vacant (public and private ownership)



# Greening vacant land addresses both water quality and blight



Photos courtesy of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

# Benefits of Greening Vacant Lots

## Green Stormwater Infrastructure

- Promotes infiltration/reduces runoff
- Treats pollutants
- Can prevent flooding

## It can also:

- Provide beautiful spaces to live work and play
- Encourage economic reinvestment
- Provide educational opportunities
- Provide job opportunities

# Great! But where do we start?

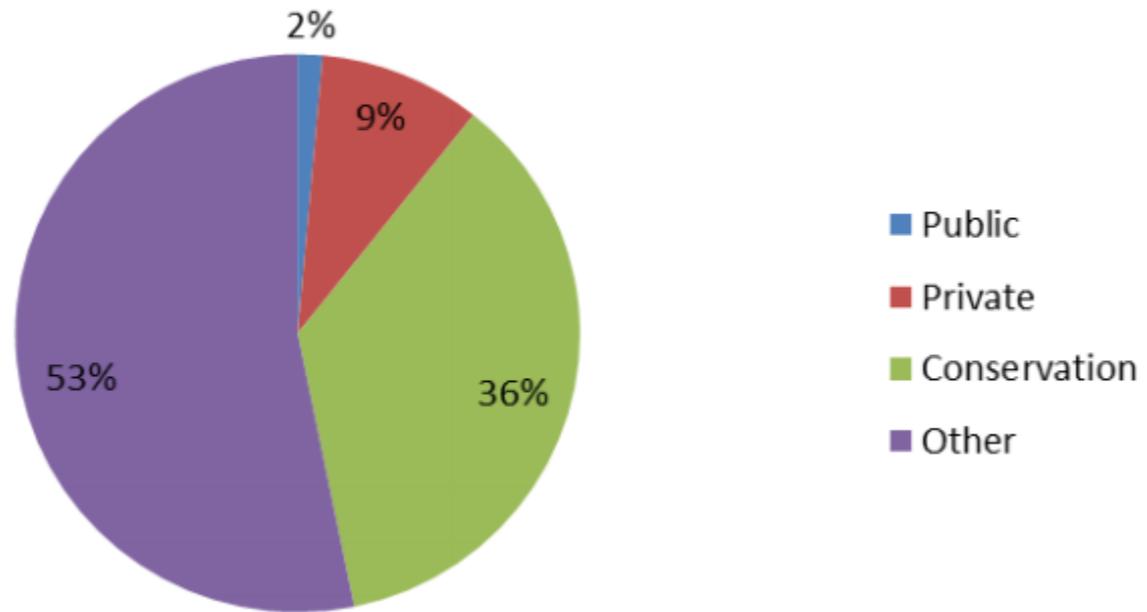
- ▶ 25,000+ “vacant” parcels in Lucas Co.
- ▶ 600+ building demolitions in 2015–2016
- ▶ Need to determine where greening is feasible and necessary
  - GIS spatial analysis
  - Form advisory group of stakeholders and technical experts
  - Lake Erie Protection Fund grant

# Advisory Group

- ▶ Land Bank
- ▶ City of Toledo
- ▶ Ohio EPA
- ▶ NRCS
- ▶ University of Toledo
- ▶ Local consulting firms

Provided guidance on site selection criteria

## Ownership of vacant parcels by area



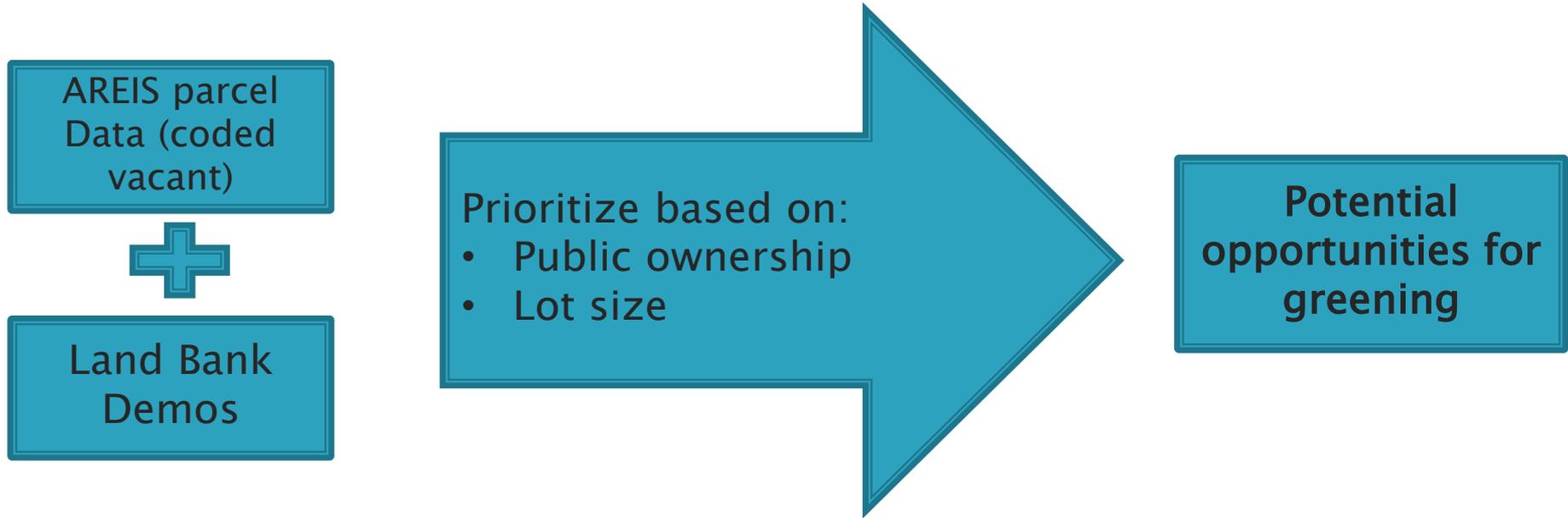
### Vacant Lot Summary

	Public	Private	Conservation	Other	Total
Number of parcels	2,124	8,651	473	14,152	25,400
Total Acres	410	2,687	10,451	15,412	28,960

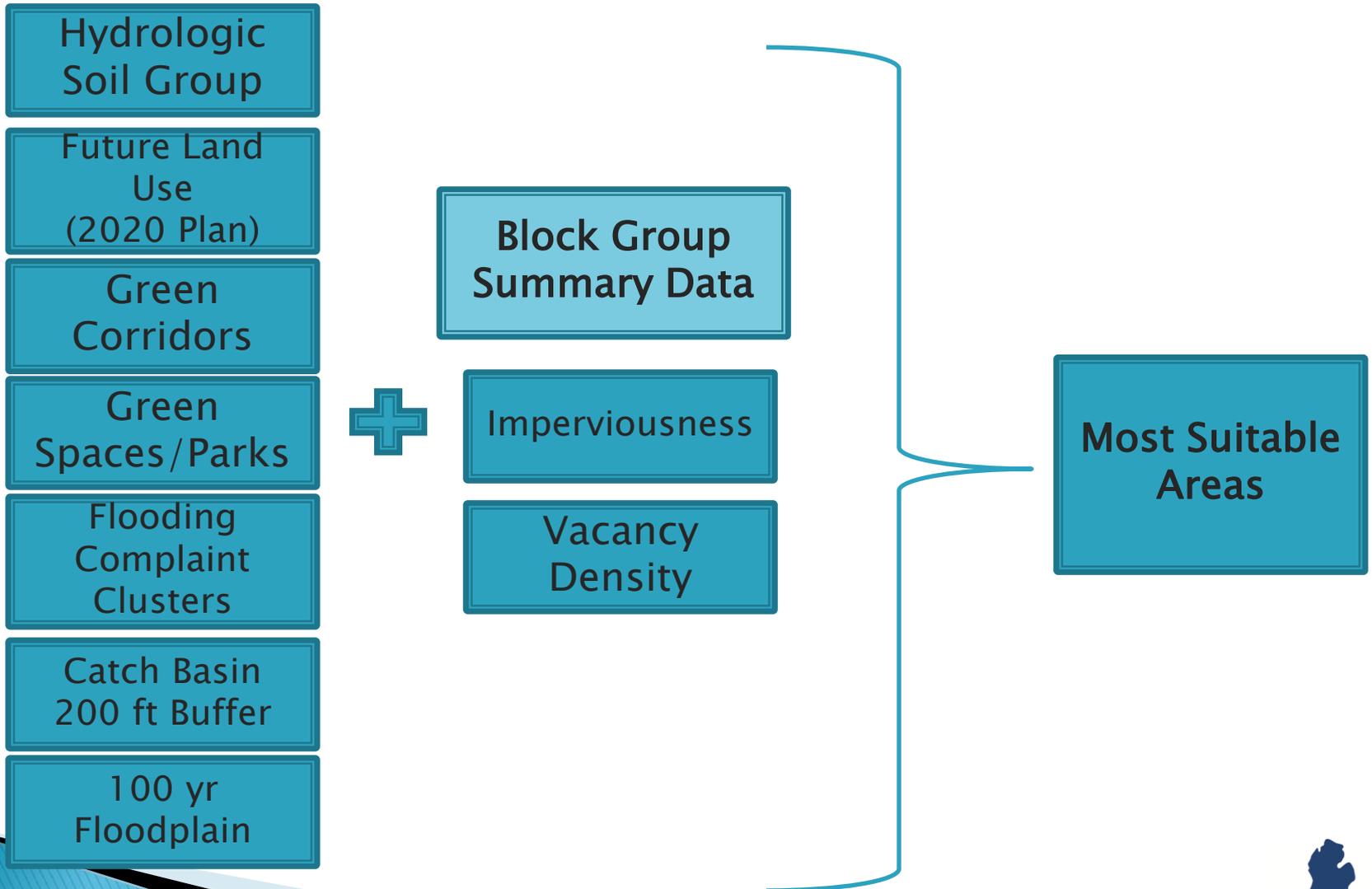
# Green Infrastructure uses analyzed

- ▶ **Small Scale** – side lot rain gardens, downspout redirection
- ▶ **Medium Scale** – Bioretention areas and Bioswales, stormwater wetlands
- ▶ **Large Scale** – Reforestation, Restoring Nature

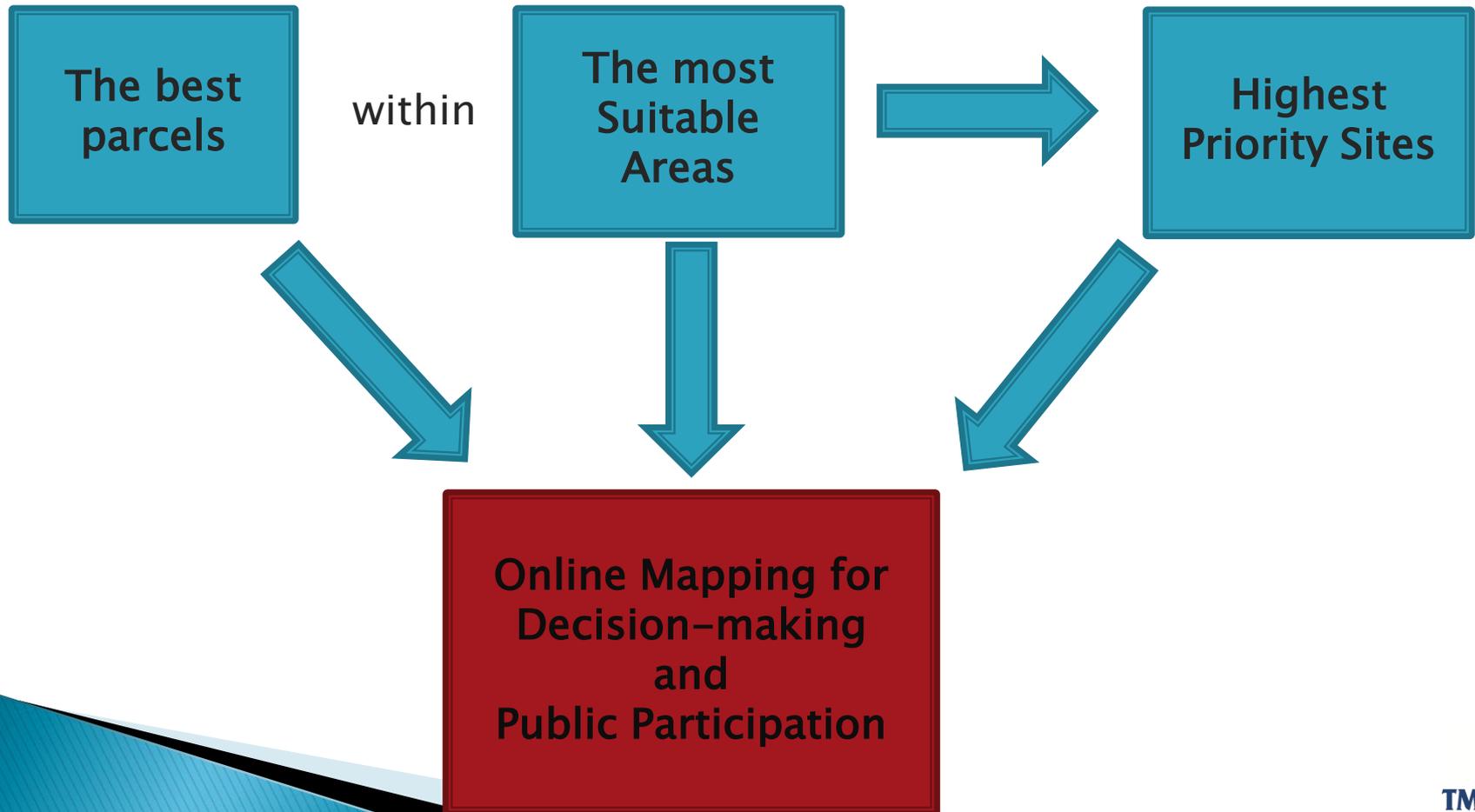
# First Cut selection based on parcel characteristics



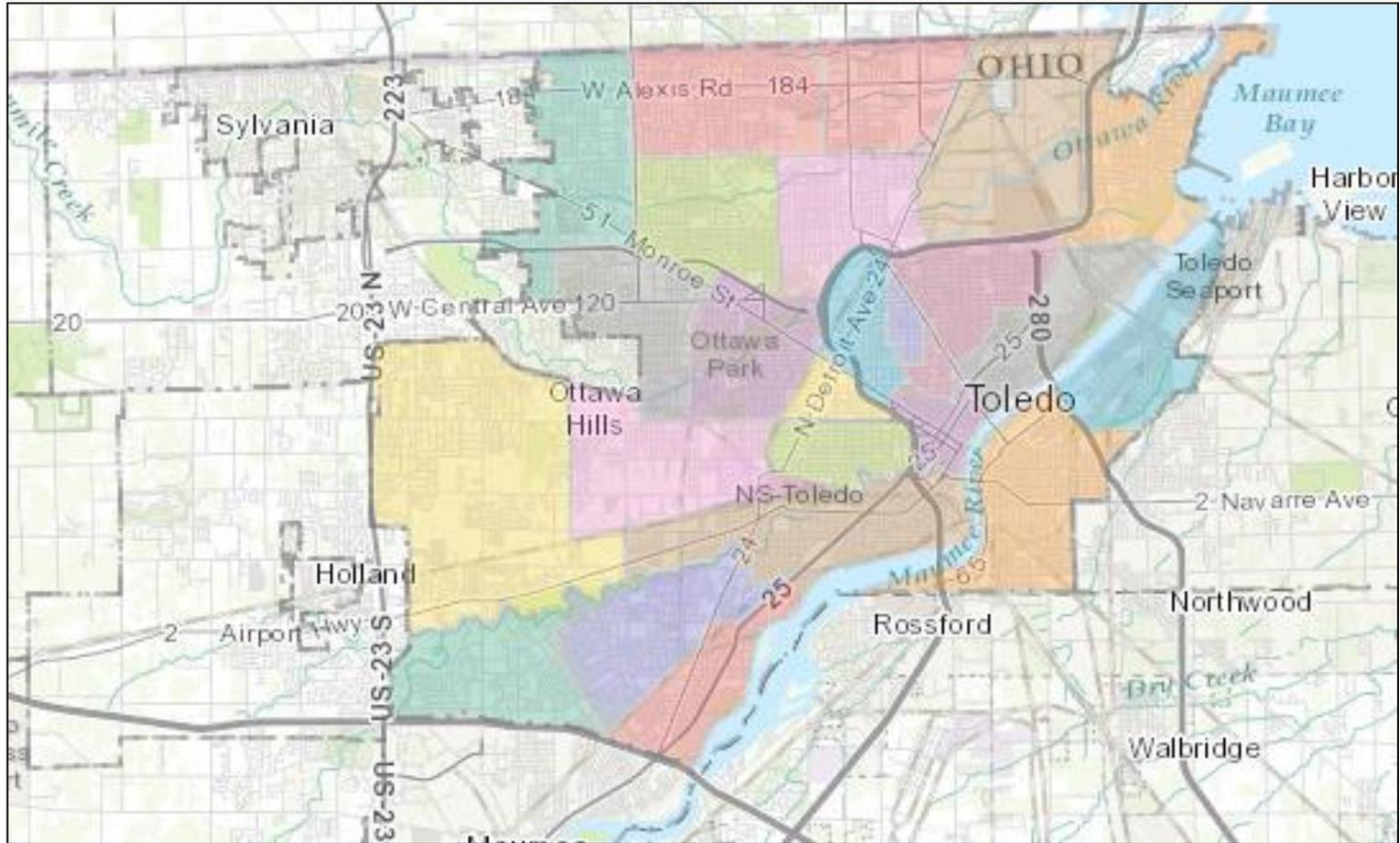
# How suitable is the land?



# Highest priority sites



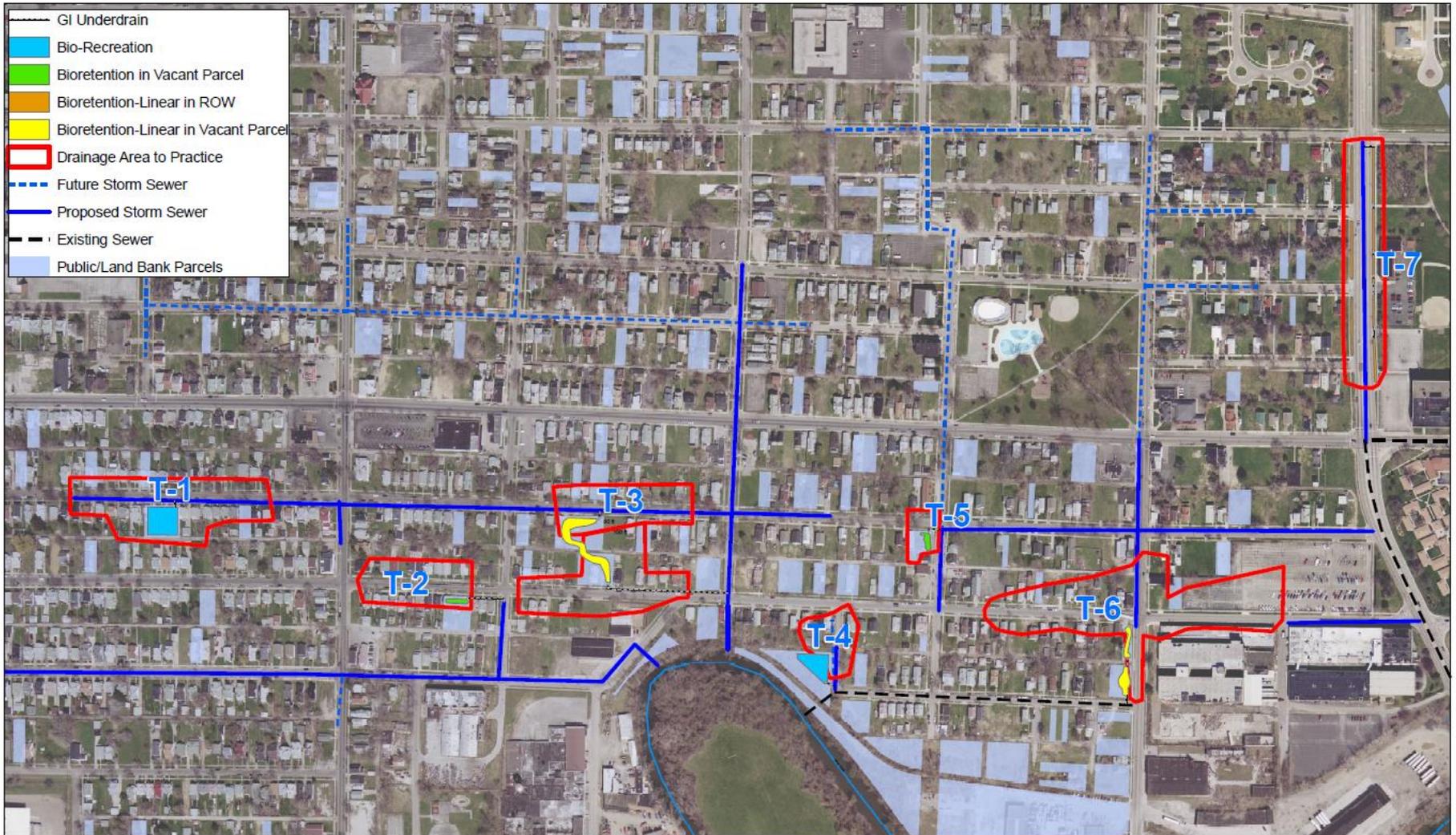
# Map Tool



# Vacant Land Greening can be incorporated into:

- ▶ Redevelopment plans
- ▶ Community revitalization
- ▶ Infrastructure improvement
- ▶ Parks and trails
- ▶ Expanding natural infrastructure

# Addressing CSOs



0 410 Feet

DRAFT

Green Infrastructure Opportunities  
Swan Creek North



# “Vacant-to-Green” Pilot Hoag St, Toledo

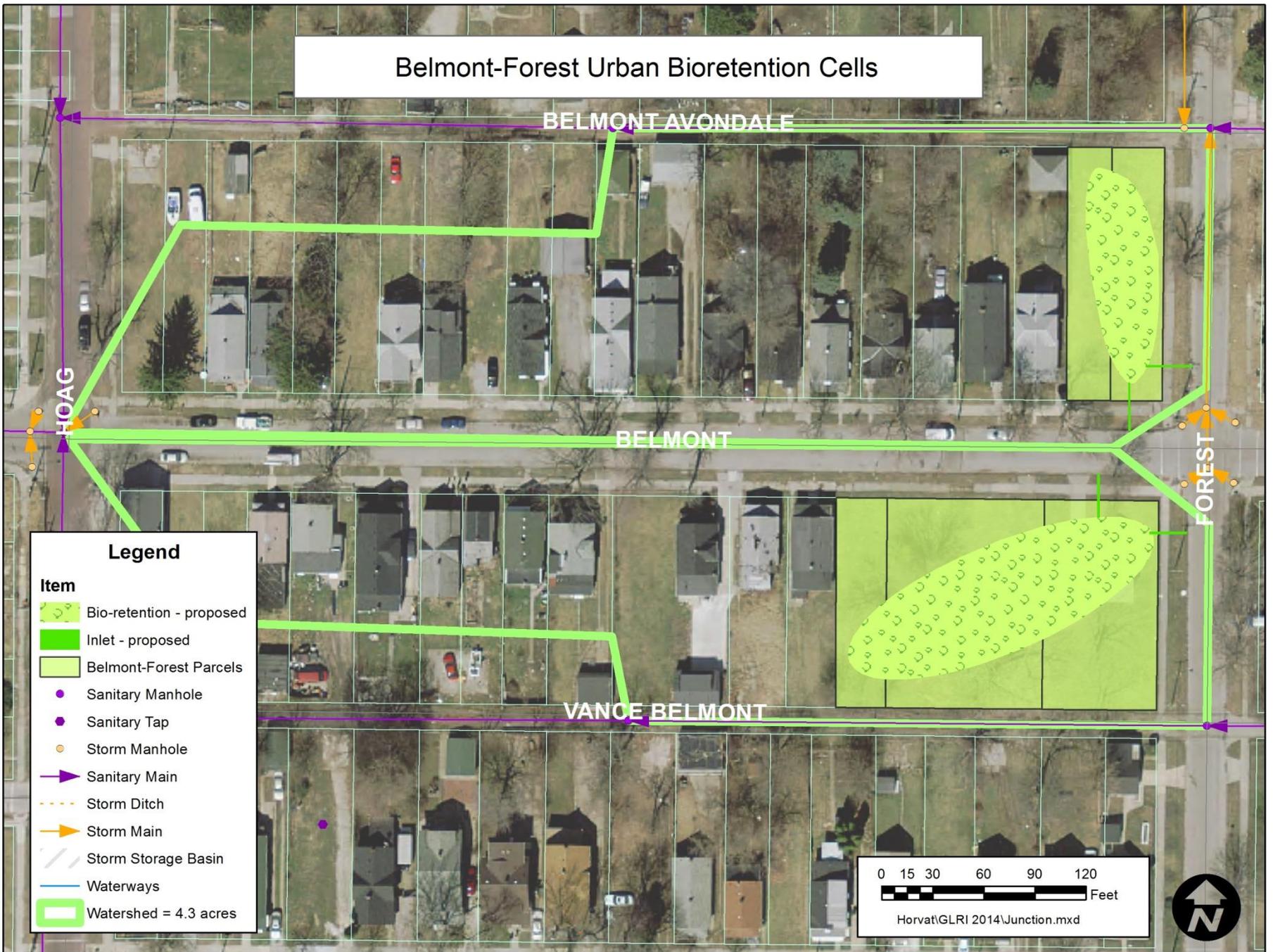


November 2015

# Belmont–Forest Biocells

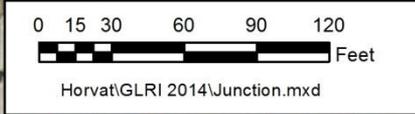
- ▶ Curb cuts divert street/sidewalk runoff to 2 bioretention cells
- ▶ Repurposing five vacant urban properties for neighborhood benefit
- ▶ Key partners – City of Toledo and the Junction Neighborhood

# Belmont-Forest Urban Bioretention Cells



## Legend

- | Item | Description              |
|------|--------------------------|
|      | Bio-retention - proposed |
|      | Inlet - proposed         |
|      | Belmont-Forest Parcels   |
|      | Sanitary Manhole         |
|      | Sanitary Tap             |
|      | Storm Manhole            |
|      | Sanitary Main            |
|      | Storm Ditch              |
|      | Storm Main               |
|      | Storm Storage Basin      |
|      | Waterways                |
|      | Watershed = 4.3 acres    |



# Moving Forward

- ▶ Strong Partnerships
- ▶ Planning
- ▶ Design
- ▶ Community Participation
- ▶ Education

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More information available on TMACOG Stormwater page  
[http://www.tmacog.org//Environment/Green\\_Infrastructure/green\\_infastructure\\_vacantlandreuser.htm](http://www.tmacog.org//Environment/Green_Infrastructure/green_infastructure_vacantlandreuser.htm)

