

Great Lakes Green Infrastructure Champions Program: Bringing Leaders Together to Build Regional Green Infrastructure Capacity

The **Great Lakes Green Infrastructure Champions Program** helps communities overcome the physical and institutional barriers to more effective stormwater management by providing communities with tools they typically lack: funding and expertise. The program piloted from 2016 to 2018 and will continue through September 2020. First, the program coordinates a peer-to-peer mentoring network that links green infrastructure “champions” with communities that lack resources or expertise to integrate nature-based solutions into their stormwater management. Mentors and mentees are paired based on needs and expertise that are tailored to unique community goals. The program also awards mini-grants to a subset of participants in the mentoring network, enabling those communities to develop specific tools or projects that can scale up green infrastructure. Lessons learned by mentors and mentees are shared through periodic convenings among all participants in the mentoring network. Finally, the program offers workshops to showcase successful green infrastructure projects and approaches and to share experiences about the tools and approaches that enable successful green infrastructure implementation.

Physical barriers prevent water from cycling naturally, resulting in flooding, sewer overflows, and risks to human health and property. City institutions that manage drinking, storm, and waste water are often separate systems or in separate departments. With funding support from the Erb Family Foundation, the Great Lakes Commission’s Green Infrastructure Champions program helps address these barriers to facilitate broader adoption of green infrastructure throughout the Great Lakes basin.



**Green
Infrastructure
Champions**



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