

Governing Green Workbook

How to Use

Governing Green immerses you in 3 true-to-life stories of green infrastructure projects. The kinds of projects and decisions involved in this toolkit were distilled from interviews with city officials, non-profit representatives, and community leaders in 6 US cities. In this Workbook, we invite you to draw from your own professional or personal experience with a green or sustainable infrastructure project. Over the course of these pages you will be guided to identify and describe the context, challenge, and possible choices to address your chosen scenario. You are then provided a prioritization matrix to consider the implication of your proposed choices. This workbook can be used individually or amongst a group.

How We Determined Prioritization Categories

We asked interview participants about the benefits of green infrastructure and the barriers faced when implementing projects. The five categories featured in Governing Green – environment, equity, stormwater management, institutional capacity, and durability – broadly summarize participant responses. Stakeholders working on the ground frequently cited environment, equity, and stormwater management as desired goals associated with green infrastructure implementation. The categories of institutional capacity and durability reflect structural barriers stakeholders commonly faced during projects. For instance, many people interviewed noted that green infrastructure was hard to maintain over time (durability). Maintenance struggles increased when community groups or non-profit organizations performed maintenance tasks (institutional capacity).

Considering how these categories are prioritized (or not) in governance decisions is essential if green infrastructure use and implementation are to expand.

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Identify Context

Use the space below to describe the context (or background) of a challenge you are currently facing related to a green or sustainable infrastructure project. The context should include:

- Specific historical details including dates, events, or steps leading to the present challenge.
- Relevant stakeholders such as interested individuals and institutions.
- Contextual details including demographics of project area, trends of investment or disinvestment, and past infrastructure projects.

Identify Challenge

Use the space below to describe the challenge you are currently facing related to a green or sustainable infrastructure project. The challenge should include:

- Identify relevant stakeholders such as interested individuals and institutions involved in the challenge.
- Document concerns, actions, or steps taken to address the challenge.
- Describe any limitations or constraints that impact how you can address the challenge.

Identify Three Choices

Use the space below to describe three choices that you or your organization could make to address the identified challenge.

1

2

3

Prioritization Questions

Environment

To what degree does this decision influence the environmental impact of the project?

- Does this decision enhance tree cover, expand green space, or provide ecosystem services?
- Does this decision restore an environment or address an existing environmental problem?
- Does this project provide a habitat for wildlife or pollinators?

Equity

To what degree does this decision take equity into account?

- Which communities, neighborhoods, or groups stand to benefit or be burdened by this decision?
- How does this decision address the needs, choices, and desires of the prioritized community?
- Does the decision address long-standing concerns or unaddressed harm?

Institutional Capacity

To what degree does this decision prioritize institutional capacity?

- Does this decision take into account the ability of the agency/organization to manage the project?
- Are power differences between the parties involved considered in this decision?
- Do the participants involved have the capacity to continue this project in perpetuity?

Stormwater

To what degree does this decision prioritize the project's ability to manage stormwater?

- Does this decision prioritize the project's ability to manage stormwater (quality or quantity)?
- Would a different decision enhance the functional capacity of a project?
- Did regulatory constraints or technical priorities factor into the decision?

Durability

To what degree does this decision prioritize the long term durability of the project?

- Does this decision influence how the project will be maintained, repaired, or cared for moving forward?
- Was this decision made in collaboration or coordination with other projects, institutions, groups, or systems?
- Did financial, labor, or supply chain considerations factor into your decision-making?

Prioritize Choice 1

Environment

To what degree does this decision influence the environmental impact of the project?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Equity

To what degree does this decision take equity into account?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Institutional Capacity

To what degree does this decision prioritize institutional capacity?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Stormwater

To what degree does this decision prioritize the project's ability to manage stormwater?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Durability

To what degree does this decision prioritize the long term durability of the project?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Prioritize Choice 2

Environment

To what degree does this decision influence the environmental impact of the project?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Equity

To what degree does this decision take equity into account?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Institutional Capacity

To what degree does this decision prioritize institutional capacity?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Stormwater

To what degree does this decision prioritize the project's ability to manage stormwater?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Durability

To what degree does this decision prioritize the long term durability of the project?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Prioritize Choice 3

Environment

To what degree does this decision influence the environmental impact of the project?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Equity

To what degree does this decision take equity into account?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Institutional Capacity

To what degree does this decision prioritize institutional capacity?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Stormwater

To what degree does this decision prioritize the project's ability to manage stormwater?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization

Durability

To what degree does this decision prioritize the long term durability of the project?

0 no prioritization

1 little prioritization

2 some prioritization

3 moderate prioritization

4 good prioritization

5 maximum prioritization