

# Multisolving - Equity and Green Infrastructure in Atlanta

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The Julis-Rabinowitz Family

The Keating Family



Roy A Hunt Foundation



SURDNA FOUNDATION

*Fostering sustainable communities in the United States*

THE  
KRESGE  
FOUNDATION



**Angela Park – Mission Critical**



- Share what we are doing and learning in Atlanta
- Offer some tools and exercises that have worked well for us
- Open a conversation about systems thinking, equity, community empowerment and how the pieces fit together

## Resources and Links:

<https://www.climateinteractive.org/commonbound2016/>

## Mission:

- **Partnership for Southern Equity** pushes for policies and actions that promote equity and inclusive prosperity in metropolitan Atlanta. Through forums, research, and organizing efforts, we bring together our regional community to lift up and encourage just, sustainable, and civic practices for balanced growth and opportunity.

## Accomplishments:

- **Equitable planning and engagement efforts with the Atlanta Regional Commission**
- **Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas**
- **MARTA expansion through Clayton County for equitable access to public transportation**
- **Organizing of diverse interests to promote energy equity and democracy in metropolitan Atlanta and beyond (Just Energy Circle )**

# Equity Impact Areas

## 1. Transportation Equity (Accessibility)

- Transportation has become either a barrier or gateway to opportunity in Metro Atlanta.

## 2. Equity of Opportunity (Vitality)

- Developing economic models that are lucrative, inclusive and just.

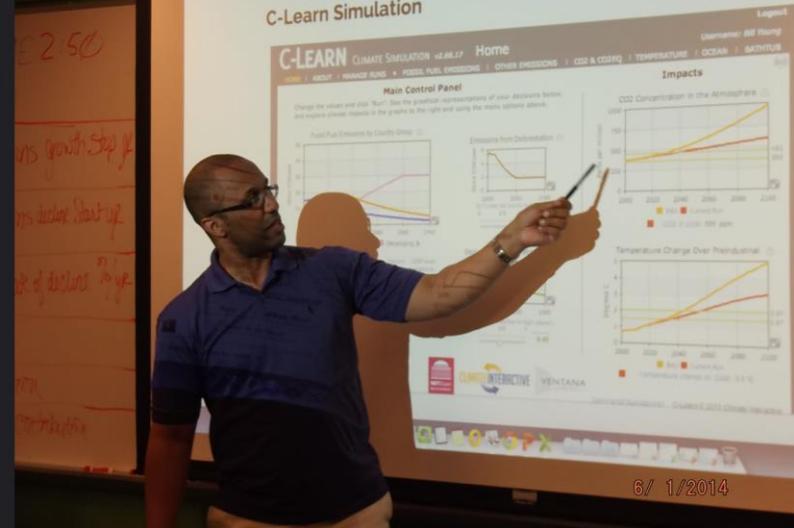
## 3. Equitable Development (Harmony)

- Unbalanced growth and investment in our region have created a less sustainable and competitive region.

## 4. Energy Equity (Democracy)

- Elevating and connecting the voices of vulnerable populations to ensure equity ensure clean energy decisions for everyone

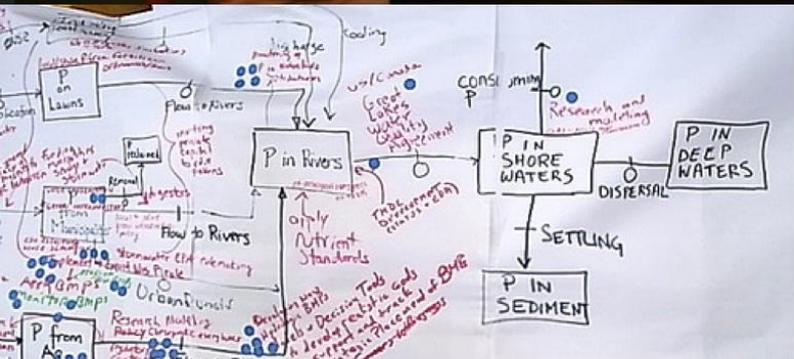




# CLIMATE INTERACTIVE

Helping people see what works to address our biggest climate challenges:

- clean energy
- food and water
- resilience



[www.ClimateInteractive.org](http://www.ClimateInteractive.org)



# About Climate Interactive

## Helping people see what works to address climate change and related issues

### Can you negotiate to keep global warming below 2°C? Or 1.5°C?



Where will proposals from the climate negotiations lead?



### New York Times

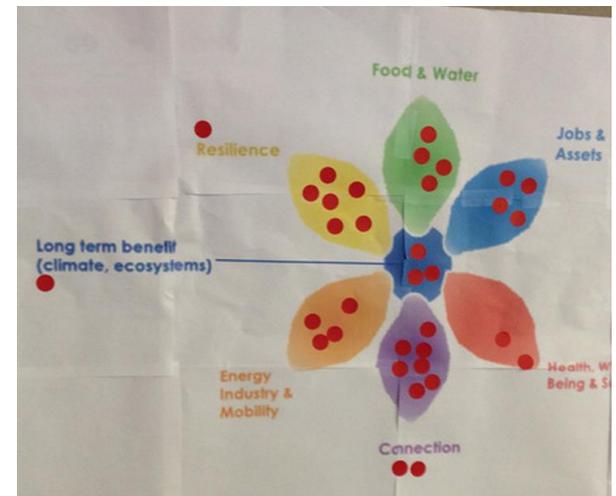
NEW YORK, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2015

#### Progress Seen On Warming, With a Caveat

Nations' Goals Still Fall Short, Scientists Say

By JEREMY GILLIS and SOMINI BENJEFKA  
The pledges that countries are making to battle climate change would still allow the world to heat up by more than 6 degrees Fahrenheit, a new analysis shows, a level that scientists say is likely to produce catastrophes ranging from food shortages to widespread extinctions of plants and animals.  
Yet, in the world of global climate politics, that counts as progress.  
The new figures will be released Monday in New York as a week of events related to climate change comes to an end. The highlight was an urgent message from Pope Francis, urging countries to reach "fundamental and effective agreements" when they meet in Paris in December to try to strike a new global climate deal.  
For much of this year, countries have been issuing pledges about how much emissions they are willing to cut in coming decades. With a plan announced by Brazil on Sunday, every major country except for India has now made a commitment to take to the Paris conference.  
An analysis by researchers at Climate Interactive, a group

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**Multisolving: the search for systemic solutions that protect the climate while improving health, equity, and well-being**



# Commonalities, Differences, Synergies



	<b>Partnership For Southern Equity</b>	<b>Climate Interactive</b>
Scale	Placed Based, City/Metro, American South	Virtual organization, national and international projects
Tradition & Mentors	Civil rights, community organizing, anchored in the US South, Equity/EJ Movement	Systems thinking and computer simulation, Limits To Growth
Foundation of prior work	Web of relationships, long history of work on equity in many focus areas: energy, transportation, economy, intersectional approach, research and action.	Long history of systems thinking leadership training, computer simulation for learning, decision making, and collective intelligence

# The infrastructure leverage point



Investment decisions influence:

- Green house gases
- Air and water quality
- Health
- Jobs
- Local economic benefit
- Level of social equity
- Balance of benefits between neighborhoods/groups

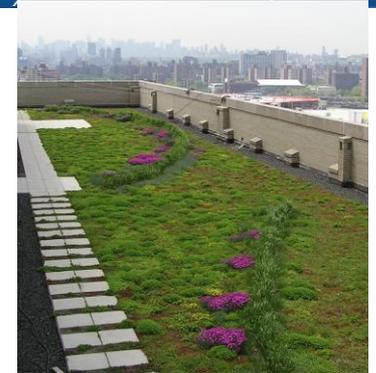
All for the next 50-100 years

# The Systems Challenge



## Current Infrastructure

- poor health
- inequity
- lack of opportunity
- unsustainability
- low resiliency

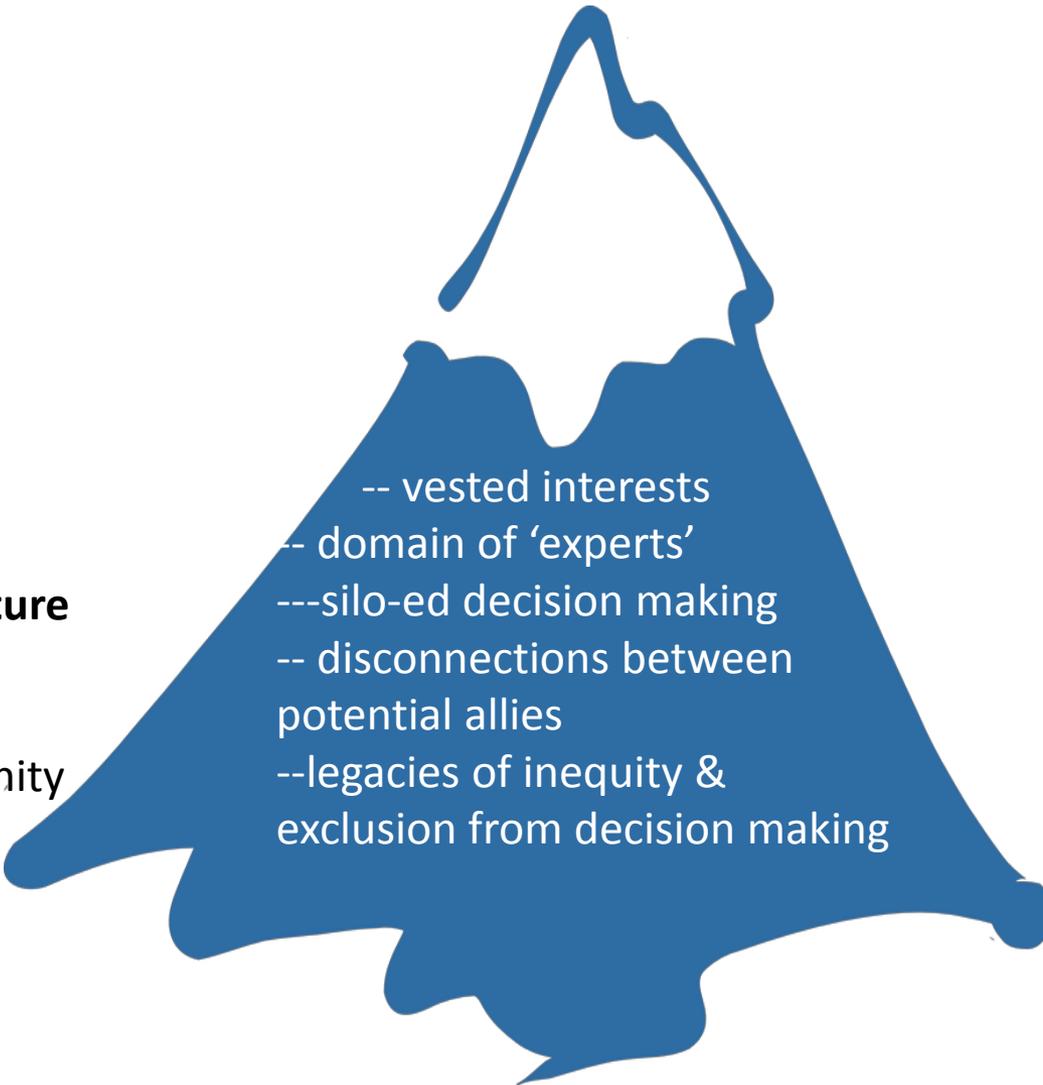


## Possible future infrastructure

- more just and balanced
- more healthy
- sustainable
- Resilient
- Often more affordable, when all benefits included

## Current Infrastructure

- poor health
- inequity
- lack of opportunity
- unsustainability
- low resiliency



-- vested interests  
-- domain of 'experts'  
---silo-ed decision making  
-- disconnections between potential allies  
--legacies of inequity & exclusion from decision making

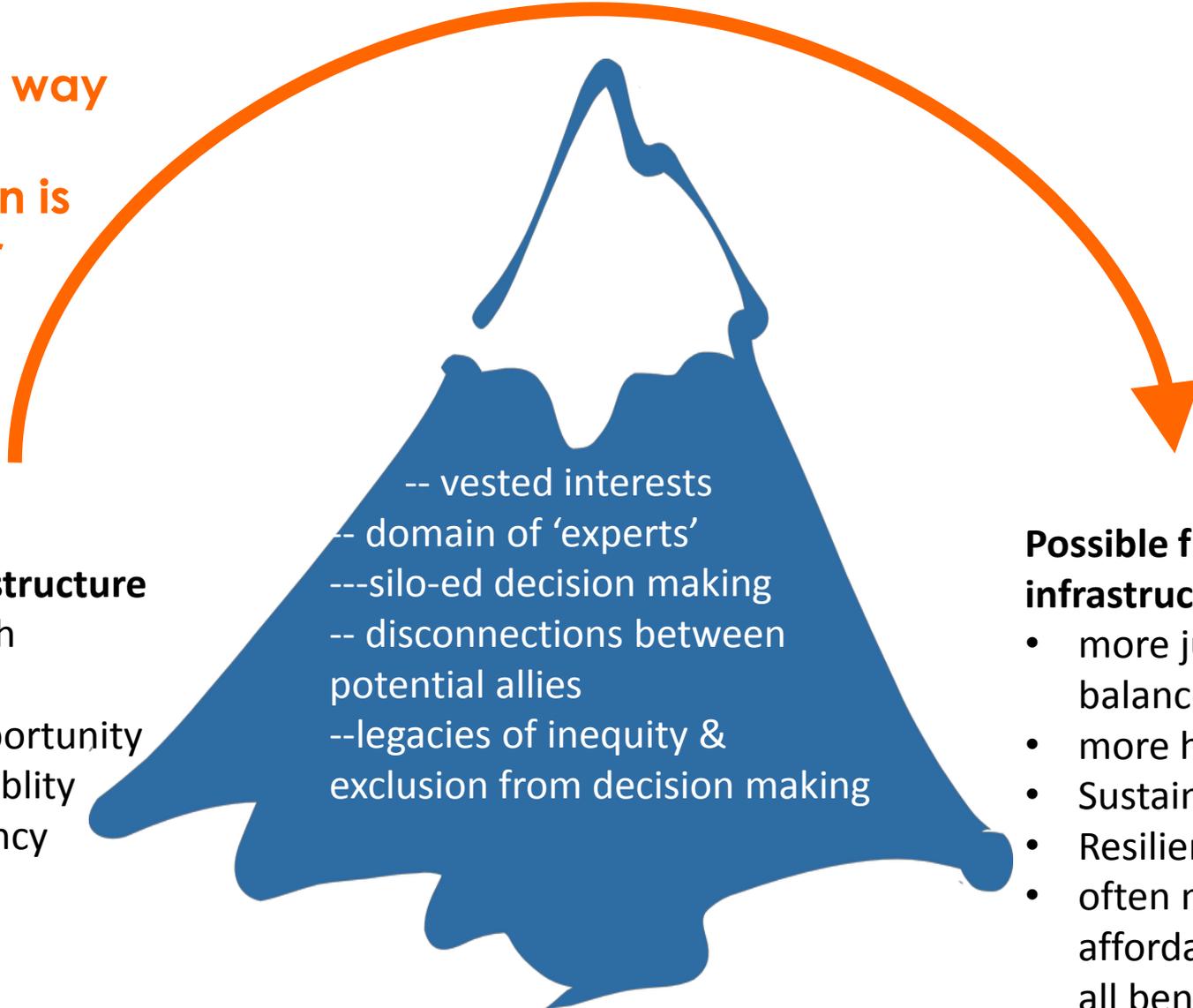
## Possible future infrastructure

- more just and balanced
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The only way  
over the  
mountain is  
together

## Current Infrastructure

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## Possible future infrastructure

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- **Infrastructure type – Green Infrastructure**
- **But we believe this approach is applicable to any type of shared infrastructure in a community**



- Green Infrastructure
  - Much need due to stormwater flooding and rapid developing
  - A few well-liked projects but many forced on communities
  - Deep concerns about displacement
  - Lack of economic inclusion lens
- Civic Infrastructure
  - High inequity by many measures
  - Historically, important decisions taken without effective community input
  - Lack of civic muscle relative to powerful development interests
- Goal of our collaboration is to address both of these together in a way that puts low wealth communities at the center of the thinking and decision making

- 1. From the beginning make it clear that equity will be a pillar of the effort**



# Network of Mutuality

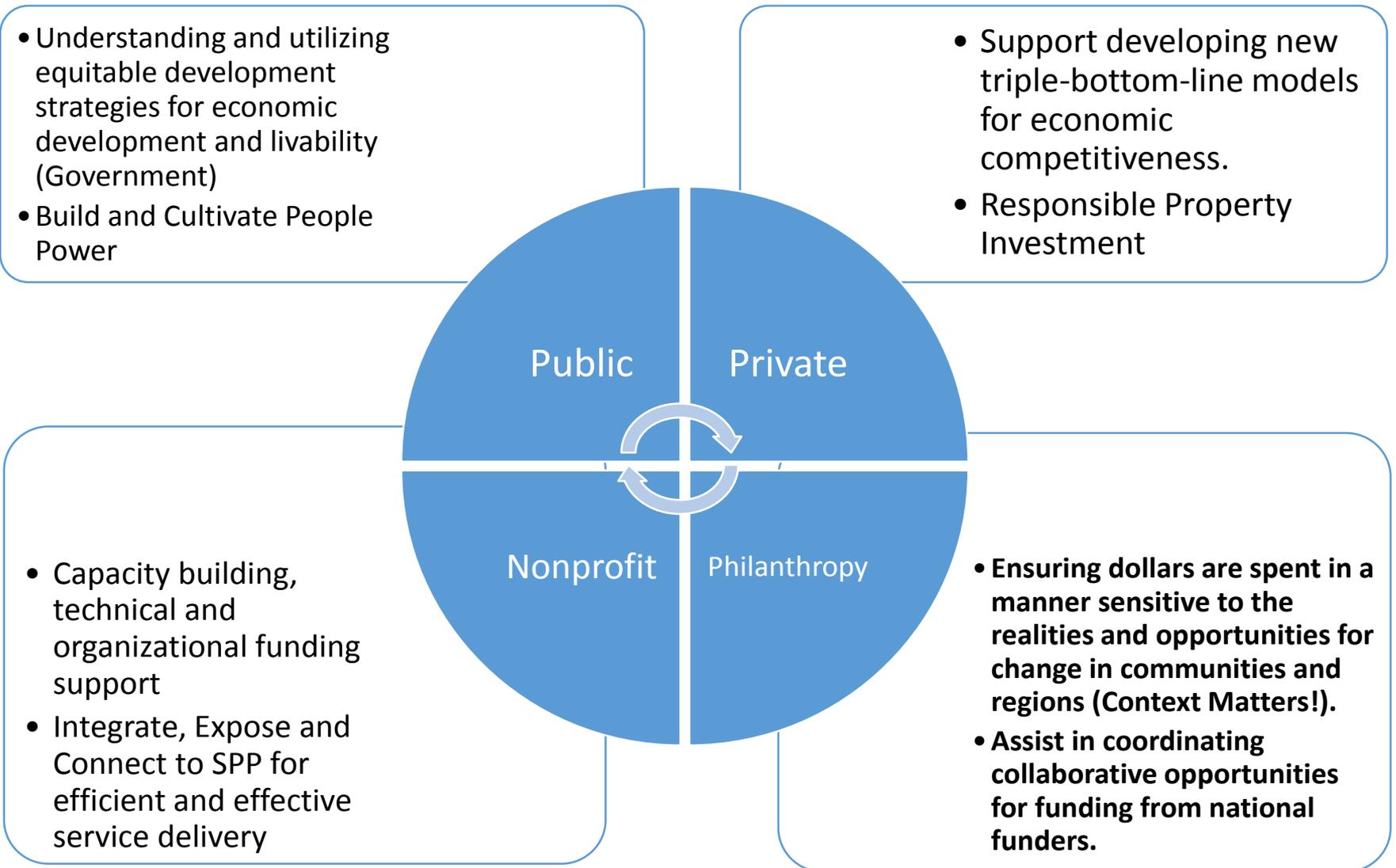
- **“Shared Destiny”** mantra serves as spiritual foundation of PSE’s Network
- **“Silo Busting”** promotes collaboration for systems change (Policy Change + Institutional Change)
  - “Power With” (Partnership and Collaboration) vs. “Power Over” (Domination and Control)



## “Equity Eco-System”

- Justice infrastructure formed when equity organizations and champions coalesce as a community to influence the established systems that affect their social, political, economic , and natural environment. (NS)

# A New Covenant for Shared Prosperity



1. From the beginning make it clear that equity will be pillar of the effort
2. **Gather a richly diverse group with 'champions' for each benefit of green infrastructure**



# People can't multisolve alone

- To multisolve people need to:
  - meet those in other 'silos'
  - see what's possible
  - explore trade-offs and options
  - explore fairness and equity - who benefits? who risks?
  - understand their contribution
  - find ways to change the rules



<b>Sewer overflows</b>	
<b>Water quality (TSS)</b>	
<b>Air quality</b>	
<b>KK flooding/high water events</b>	
<b>Basement back ups</b>	
<b>Heat island effect</b>	
<b>Jobs (Green + Grey)</b>	
<b>Property values</b>	
<b>New Greenspace</b>	
<b>Energy savings</b>	

“There’s a real reluctance to engage with community groups in managing water. The city wants to solve it themselves, they are the professionals, they don’t actively seek out community representation. They come with the answers and expecting communities to accept them.”

“One big need is to stop creating barriers that people have to jump through to get to resources. The silos in our systems get in the way.”

“And most people want to ally themselves with things that will empower them – sometimes the way we do partnerships can be very disempowering. That’s a big obstacle. The partnerships should be done in such a way that you are willing to share power. People feel frustrated,- you do the research, you get the publication, what do we get?”

# Results So Far – Broad Participation

## Government

- Watershed Department
- Mayors Office of Sustainability
- Atlanta Regional Commission

## Community

- West Atlanta Watershed Association
- Eco-Action
- Collective Wisdom Group

## Water/Environment

- The Conservation Fund
- American Rivers
- Chattahoochee Riverkeeper

## University/Philanthropy

- Emory Sustainability Office
- Georgia Tech: Serve Learn Sustain
- Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

## Health

- Georgia Health Policy Center

## Energy

- Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance
- Southface

1. From the beginning make it clear that equity will be pillar of the effort
2. Gather a richly diverse group with 'champions' for each benefit of green infrastructure
- 3. Invest in relationships and exploration of shared values**



- Pre-Interviews with participants to inform design
  - Focused on their sense of opportunities and barriers and what they would need from a process
- Introductory question, first workshop
  - Think about a time in your professional life when your personal values intersected with your work objectives.
  - How did that feel?
  - What were the outcomes?
- Each workshop – iteratively craft a list of shared values

# Results So Far – Shared Values Regarding Green Infrastructure

## Protect against displacement

Property values will increase with more installation of green infrastructure; managing that increase for vulnerable populations must be considered.

## Benefit marginalized communities

We must ensure that green infrastructure develops in ways that benefit local and surrounding communities that have felt the cost of poor infrastructure in the past.

## Equity

## Community driven

We must ensure transparency and meaningful community participation, leadership, and ownership in change efforts.

## Community empowering

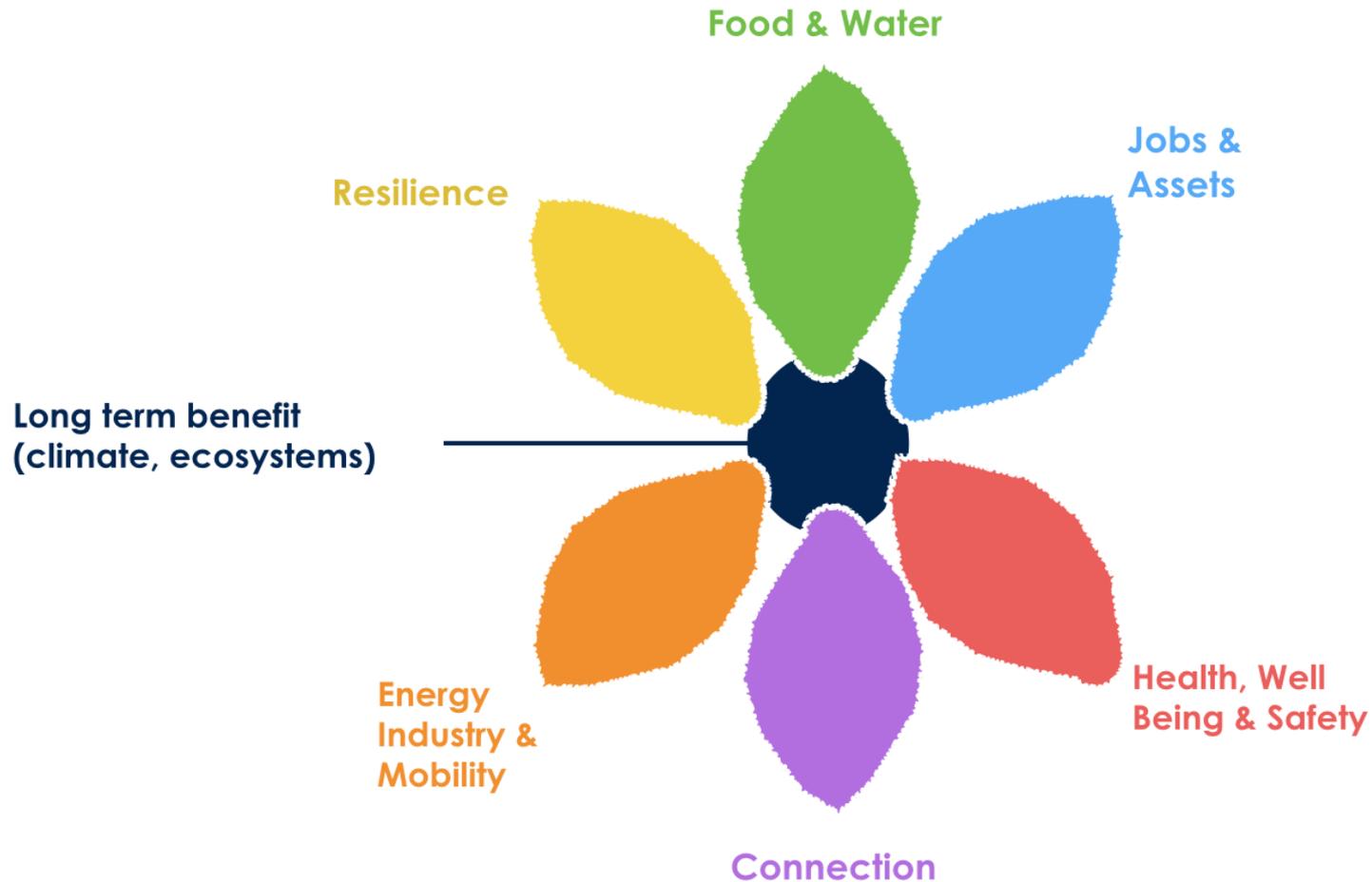
Community empowerment, improved quality of life, and community wellness should be the ultimate outcomes of green infrastructure projects.

1. From the beginning make it clear that equity will be pillar of the effort
2. Gather a richly diverse group with 'champions' for each benefit of green infrastructure
3. Invest in relationships and exploration of shared values
- 4. Weave in a systems view**



- See a bigger picture
- Expand the sense of common interests
- Identify leverage points
- See how values become manifest in system structure

# FLOWER-Framework for Long-term, Whole-System, Equity-Based Reflection





**Food & Water**

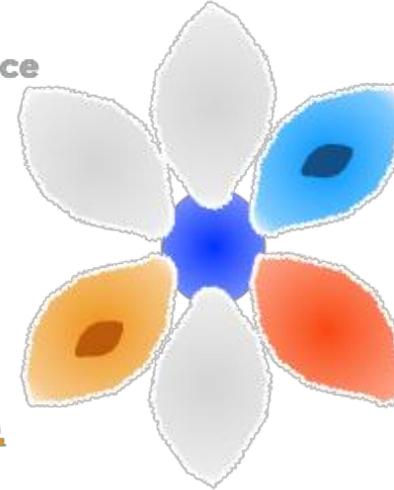
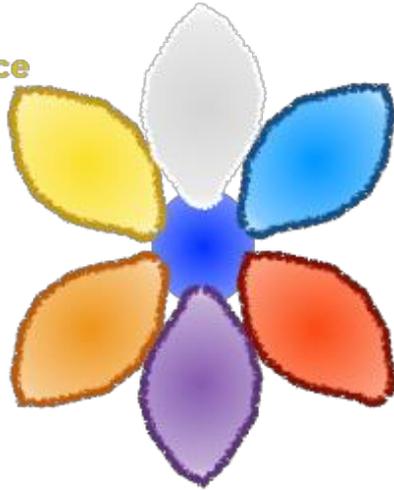
**Food & Water**

**Jobs &  
Assets**

**Jobs &  
Assets**

**Resilience**

**Resilience**



**Energy  
Industry &  
Mobility**

**Energy  
Industry &  
Mobility**

**Health, Well  
Being & Safety**

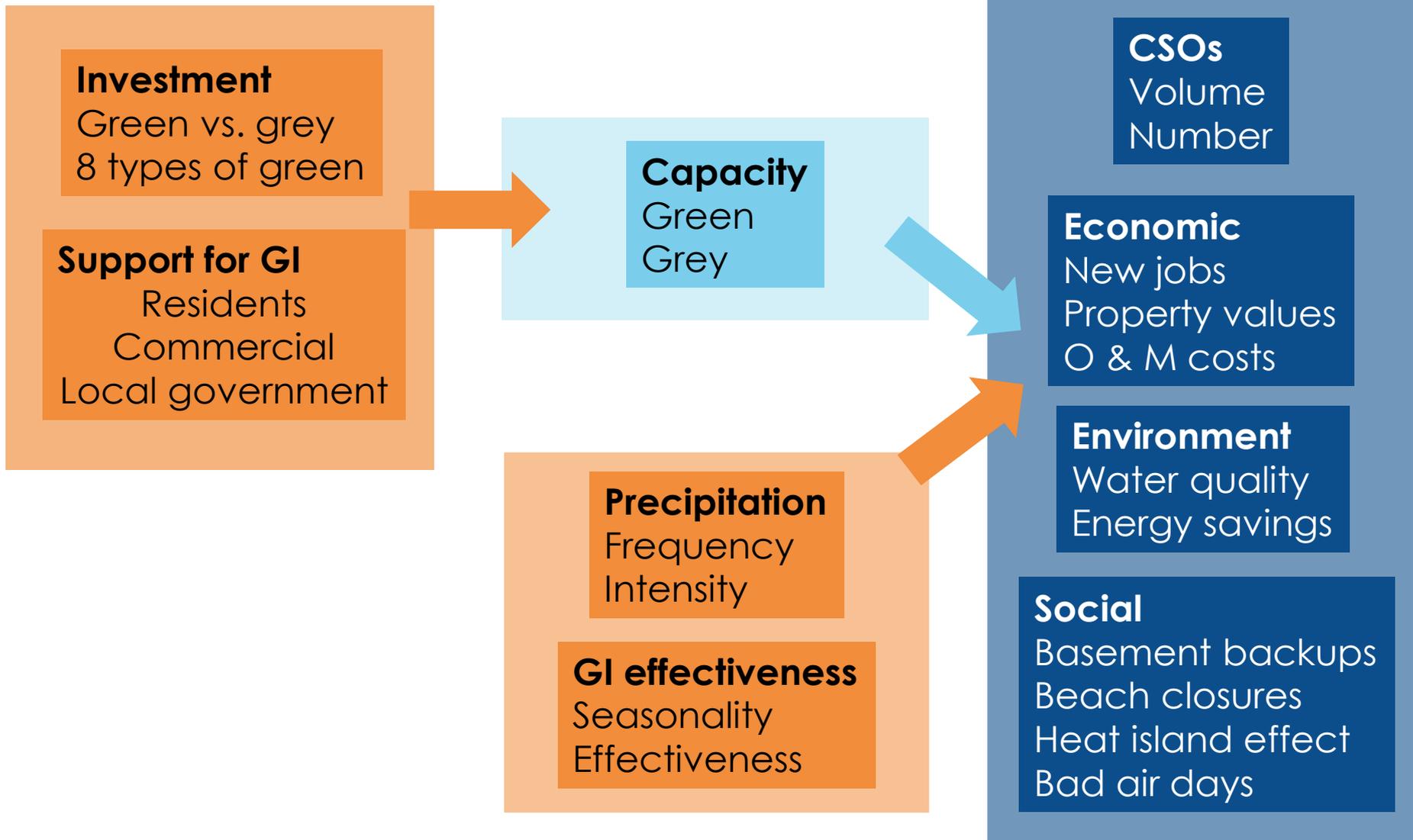
**Health, Well  
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**Connection**

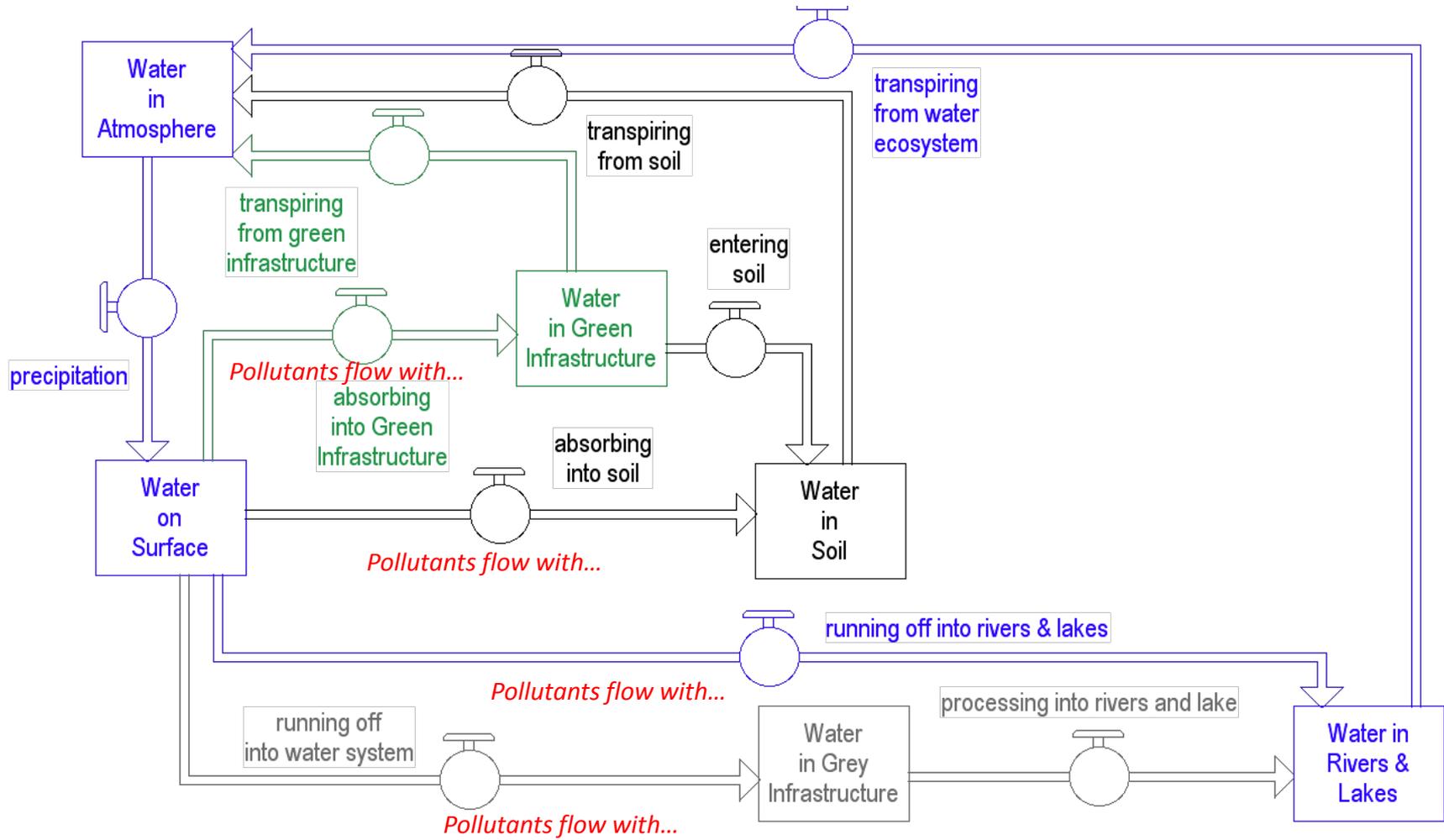
**Connection**



- Built over 1.5 years of iteration with stakeholders and city experts
- System dynamics computer simulation
- Allows for 'what if testing' about different investment choices

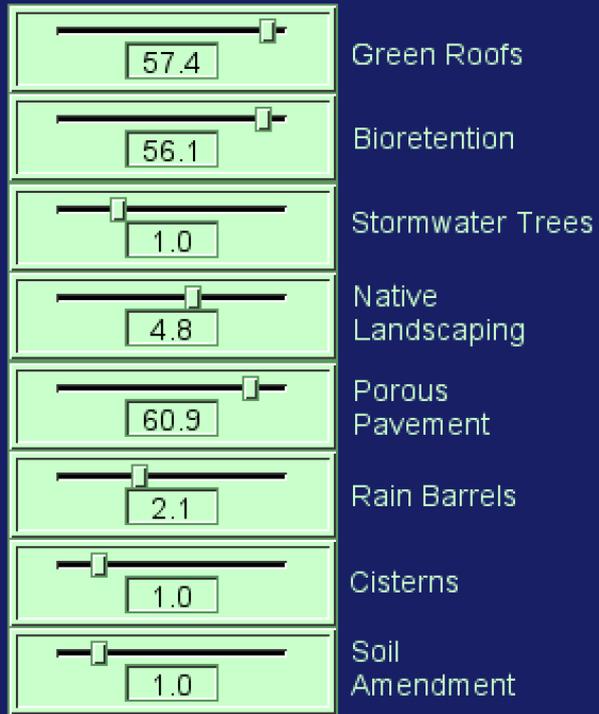


# Simplified Model Logic – Water flow



# Some of the inputs

## ? TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE (\$M)



## ? INVESTMENT TIMING



## ? EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION %

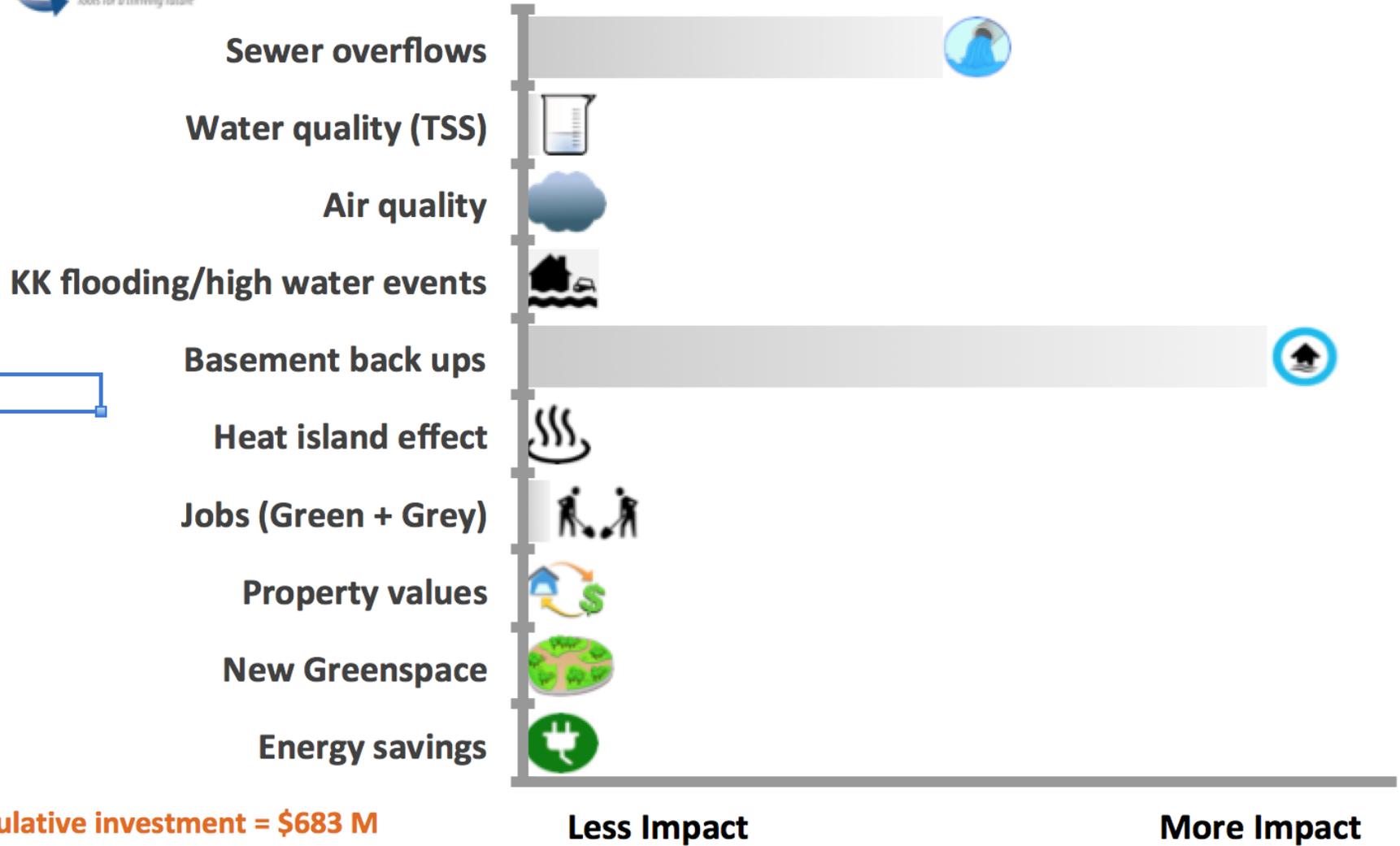
(based on sector support for GI)

100%



## GI SCENARIO TOOL

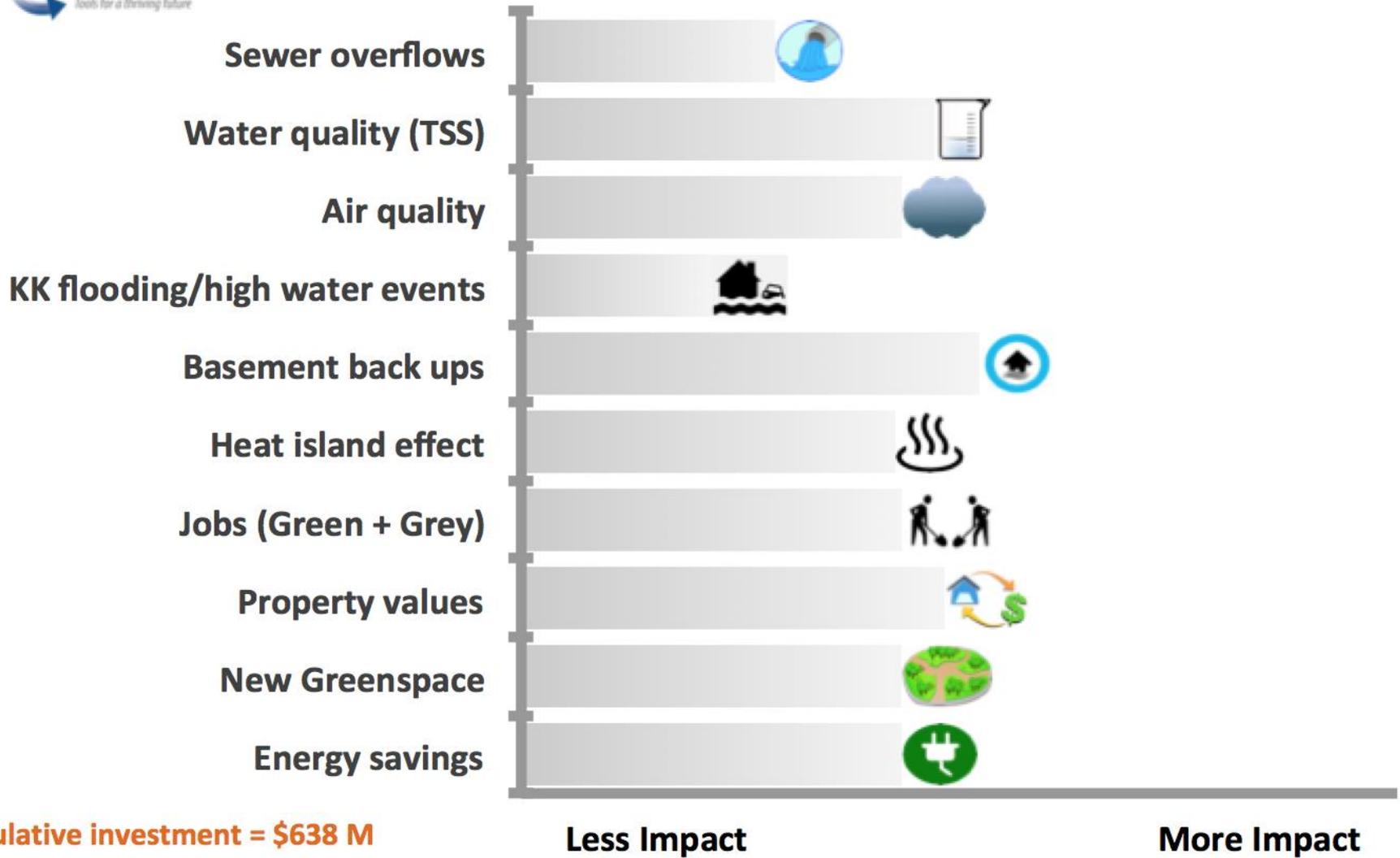
All Grey



Cumulative investment = \$683 M

## GI SCENARIO TOOL

## All Green

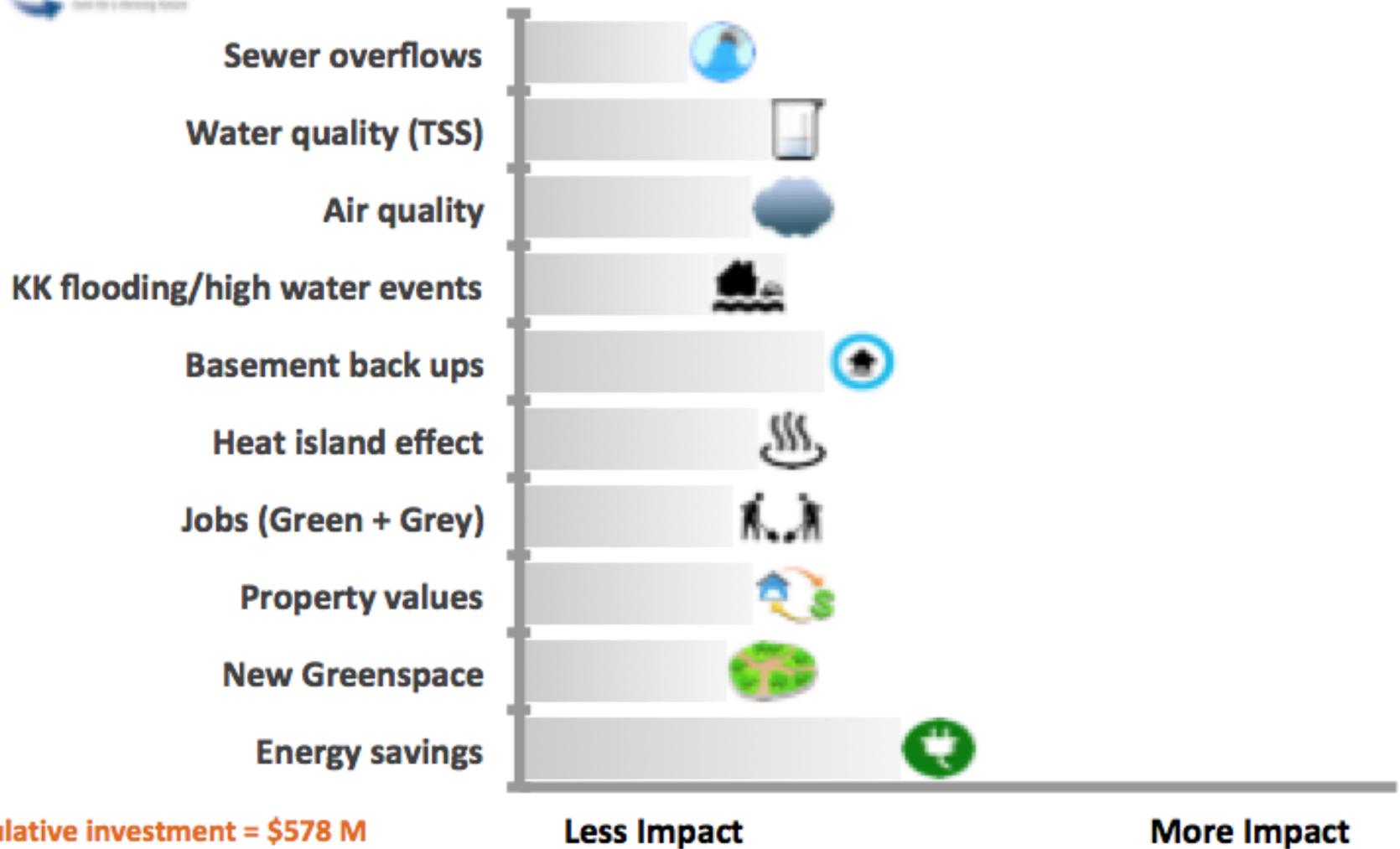


Cumulative investment = \$638 M



## GI SUPPORT TOOL

## "All Green" Without Support from Resident

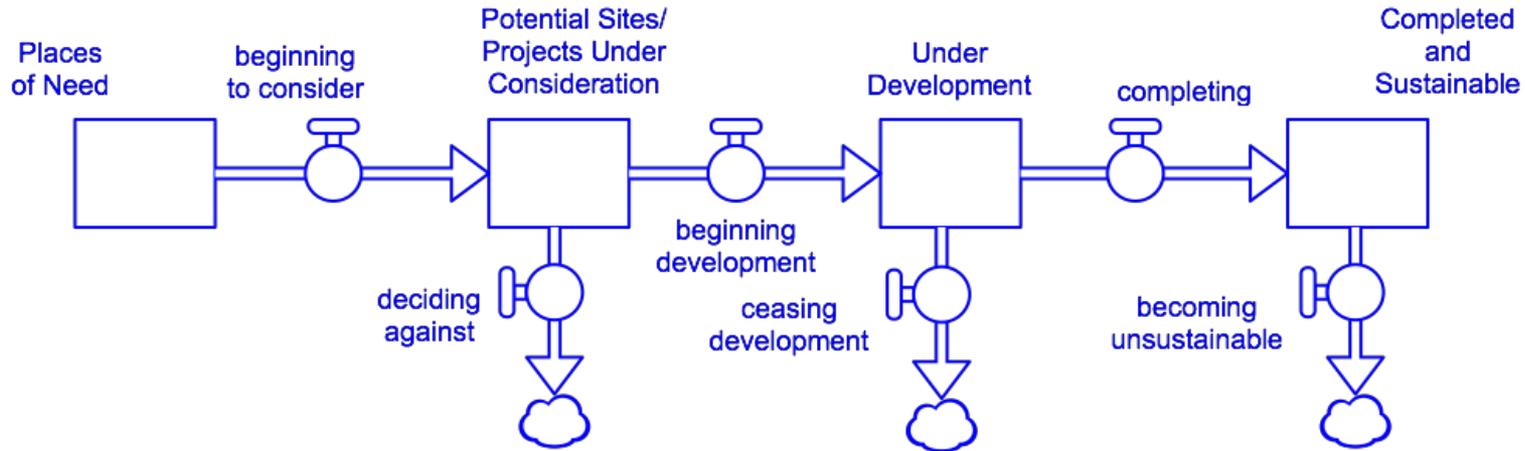


Cumulative investment = \$578 M

# Coming Up Next Week – Structure and Values



Review the group's list of shared values – discuss what special considerations, ways of working, or other factors would have to be true for the development of projects to be aligned with our values. Add those factors beneath the appropriate spot on the map below.



1. From the beginning make it clear that equity will be pillar of the effort
2. Gather a richly diverse group with 'champions' for each benefit of green infrastructure
3. Invest in relationships and exploration of shared values
4. Weave in a systems view
5. **Allow participants to steer the process**



- **Continued relationship building.**
- **Continued exploration of what it means to 'lead with equity'**
- **Expanding membership.**
- **Pooling expertise and cultivating new skills and knowledge**
- **Applied projects and action learning.**
  - **City of Atlanta GI plan as a real opportunity**
- **Mutual support.**

## Resources and Links:

<https://www.climateinteractive.org/commonbound2016/>