

Water, Sewer and Stormwater Rate Board  
Public Input Hearing  
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Good evening. My name is Julie Slavet, and I serve as Executive Director of the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF).

Our mission is to improve the health of our watershed by collaborating with our municipalities and leading our communities in our 30 square mile urban watershed in education, stewardship, restoration, and advocacy. Our watershed includes neighborhoods in North, Northeast, and Northwest Philadelphia as well as the upstream municipalities of Cheltenham, Abington, Jenkintown, Rockledge, and Springfield. Through outreach, education, and projects, we support and implement projects to restore our impaired creeks and streams, while building environmental stewardship.

We are the only Philadelphia watershed partnership to be incorporated as a non-profit organization, supported by our member municipalities. Our mission requires us to work across community boundaries, and we are proud of our ability to serve as convener, bringing together ever-growing numbers of partners to assure ongoing and sustainable programs to enhance water quality, creeks and habitats, and parks and trails.

We are proud to support the Water Department's Green City Clean Waters plan. We have seen first-hand the positive impact of this plan on our Philadelphia watershed neighborhoods and parks. The implementation of green infrastructure not only reduces the impact of stormwater runoff on our city's infrastructure, it leads to healthier, safer neighborhoods and increased community engagement.

In collaboration with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, many organizational stakeholders especially the Friends of Vernon Park, and scores of community members, we designed and installed rain gardens in Germantown's historic Vernon Park and at the Olney Recreation Center. These gardens of native trees, shrubs, and plants not only slow down and filter rainwater but have resulted in strengthened stewardship, increased park beautification, and expanded environmental education. These are just two examples of how the green infrastructure key to Green City Clean Waters will lead to greener, cleaner, healthier neighborhoods.

We have also seen the impact of the Green City Clean Waters grant programs on clean water and neighborhood health in our watershed. Projects at sites as diverse as Cardone Industries, Friends Hospital, and our home at the Globe Dye Works in Frankford, are enabling us to meet our federal requirements in an innovative, efficient way.

The headwaters of our creeks are located outside of our city's borders. We are witnessing how Green City Clean Waters is leading to improved appreciation and stewardship of the creeks and streams that flow through our watershed parks and then into our rivers, the sources of our drinking water. We are sharing the lessons learned through Philadelphia's green stormwater infrastructure leadership with our upstream stakeholders and partnering with them to protect the waterways within their communities. I am proud to report that we have implemented projects at four schools and two communities of worship. We have engaged over 1100 volunteers, created four rain gardens, planted more than 1000 native trees and shrubs, restored a wetland, and managed runoff from more than 10 acres.

Green City Clean Waters is transforming our city. Innovative planning and implementation of this groundbreaking, sensible plan is also leveraging investment in improving the creeks and streams in our upstream communities, and will result, over time, in healthier regional and Philadelphia watersheds.

Thank you for your kind consideration.