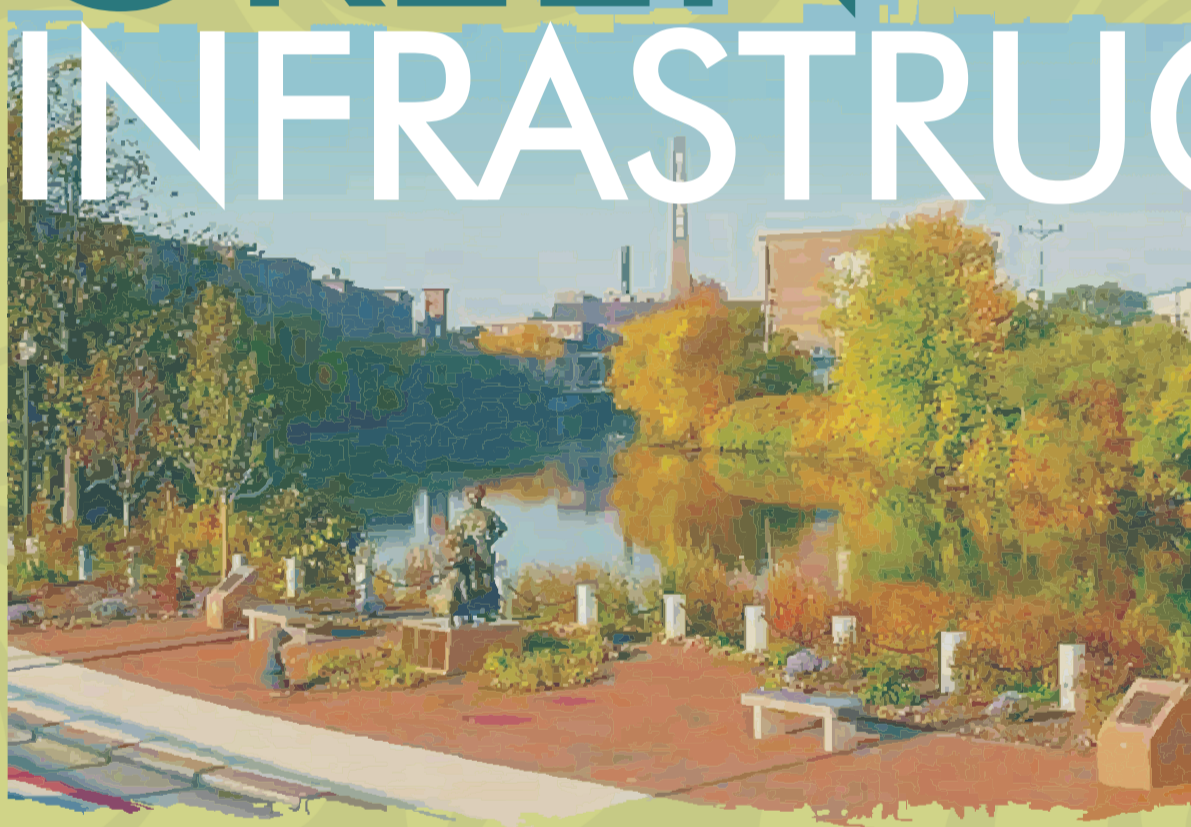




UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

UNECE Public-Private
Roundtables on
Green Economy

INVESTING IN GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



7 March 2011

6.00 – 7.45 p.m.

Booz & Co., 101
Park Avenue, New York

Investing in green infrastructure has huge potential to improve liveability, create jobs and curb GHGs. Public investments, supporting policies and a public-private dialogue are key to leveraging the private capital needed to green infrastructure. How can it be done?

The first UNECE Public-Private Roundtable on Green Economy: Investing in green infrastructure will bring together business leaders and city representatives to present and discuss case studies, with the aim of forging a concrete and actionable outcome for greening infrastructure, to be presented to Ministers at the multi-stakeholder Seventh Ministerial Conference of the Environment for Europe process, and at UNCSD (Rio+20).

Tom Stewart, Senior Partner, Booz & Co.

Ronan Dantec, Deputy Mayor of Nantes, Winner of European Green Capital Award

Sara Conte, Director of Corporate Development, Greenstar Recycling

Hooper Brooks, Director of International Programmes, The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment

Perry Hartswick, Distinguished Engineer, IBM Smarter Cities

Jason Hartke, Vice President for National Policy, US Green Building Council

Elizabeth Heider, Senior Vice President, Skanska USA





GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: WHAT HAS WORKED IN THE DIFFERENT SECTORS?

1. ENERGY

Tackling the energy demand of existing building stock is a priority for cities. New and innovative approaches in constructing buildings with green roofs, energy efficient materials, and using appliances that consume a minimum of energy, 'smart meters' for strategic usage of energy at low-demand times have all been successfully encouraged.

Retrofitting buildings with innovative environmental design makes it possible for buildings to consume up to 50 per cent less energy. Stringent building codes, mandatory energy certificates, tax incentives and loans, have all had an important impact on energy demand in a number of green cities across the pan-European region.

Eco-cities optimize the efficiency of energy use by adopting green energy systems such as district heating or combined heat and energy plants. Energy performance is affected by the technology of energy generation (renewable vs. fossil fuels) but also by reducing the distance between the energy source and user interface for cooling or heating systems.

A grid-based, decentralized energy system, with district heating systems that provide space and water heating for large urban complexes or residential neighborhoods have proved successful in reducing overall energy demand.

CONCRETE SOLUTIONS

FOR THE GREEN ECONOMY

3. MOBILITY

More than any other area, transport affects the environmental performance of cities. Innovative transport actions and policies have been pursued successfully by eco-cities to achieve their climate change targets and sustainable mobility plans. Reducing the use of vehicles is essential for an eco-city, for example through public transport, emissions standards, car sharing schemes and car clubs. In order to discourage car use, inhabitants can be encouraged to walk or ride a bicycle. Suitable infrastructure in the form of well-lit footpaths and safe, dedicated cycle paths is essential.

WHY FOCUS ON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

- An important part of green infrastructure investment occurs in the urban space. Cities play a strategically important role in the fight against climate change because they are host to half the world population. They accounted for roughly two-thirds of the world's primary energy demand and more than 70% of global CO₂ emissions (2006). With continued urbanization and urban growth, energy use and CO₂ emissions in cities are projected to increase.

- Cities manage vast public resources, infrastructure, investments and expertise. Solutions and actions at the city level can be implemented autonomously without waiting for progress on global negotiations and directly impact on citizens' welfare and livelihoods.

- Green infrastructure investment creates jobs, generates incomes, has a high social rate of return, and produces many developmental co-benefits. It fosters a country's innovation process.

- In the current environment of low interest rates and a construction slump, green infrastructure investment can stimulate aggregate demand while addressing the deficit in economic infrastructure.

2. WASTE AND WASTEWATER

Through recycling and energy recovery, ecocities reuse municipal waste, minimizing what is sent to the landfill.

Electronic waste has been very profitably recycled by recovering the precious metals contained within. Eco-cities are characterized by a sustainable water supply, including water treatment and recycling for reuse. In brown cities, water leakage is a major source of waste. Upgrading and replacing the water pipes has contributed to large savings of potable water. New methods for conserving water, recycling waste water, preventing saltwater intrusion, managing storm water, treating anaerobic sewage can all be part of the solution. Rain can be collected as 'grey water' and used for non-drinking domestic and industrial uses with virtually no treatment.

ROUNDTABLE 1 WILL:

Feature enterprise leaders and senior representatives from eco-cities.

Discuss successful examples of how green infrastructure was developed.

Look at what worked and how? What has been achieved in terms of improved living, livelihoods, jobs, environmental outcomes.

Seek ways for the successful outcomes to be replicated. Which are the potential barriers to progress and lessons learned?

Publish analysis of lessons learned and elaborate key recommendations.

Develop concrete actions for greening infrastructure and hold dialogue with high level policymakers on way forward.

FUTURE ROUNDTABLES IN 2011:

- Roundtable 2 on Public-private Models for Investing in Green Infrastructure
Paris, France
24 May 2011
- Roundtable 3 on Carbon Mechanisms and Financing for Green Infrastructure Investment
London, UK
16 June 2011
- Key Findings for Policymakers and Way Forward
Astana, Kazakhstan
22 September 2011

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