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Green Streets and Community Open Space

Community open, green space is socially valuable. Walkable neighborhoods, parks, and open green spaces draw people outside and foster social interactions. Green streets integrate nature into the urban environment and provide a revitalizing contrast to the harsh shape, color, and texture of buildings, and stimulate the senses with their simple color, sound, smell, and motions (Dorward, 1990; Miller, 1997). Open, green spaces in communities are attractive to prospective buyers and generate multiple economic benefits for local governments, home owners, and businesses. The economic benefits of open, walkable, green spaces play an important role in policy-making decisions about zoning, restrictions on land-use, government purchase of lands for parks and similar initiatives.

A green street <https://epa.gov/g3/learn-about-green-streets>can be a great place for members of the community to meet, interact and enjoy their community. Designing a green street in conjunction with neighboring community open space opportunities provides socio-economic benefits including an increase in local shopping and dining; ultimately investing in the local economy increases community engagement and instills greater pride in the community as a whole.

What is Community Open Space?

Open space is any open piece of land that is undeveloped and is accessible to the public. In your community, there could be many creative opportunities for open space preservation that could help connect the community and revitalize its economy and social connectivity. Some opportunities for community open space can include:

- Schoolyards

- Playgrounds
- Public seating areas
- Public plazas
- Vacant lots
- Green space (land that is partly or completely covered with grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation)
  - Parks
  - Community gardens
  - Cemeteries

Using the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Approach

A green street can be a hub for local businesses, parks or community events such as concerts, outdoor exercise (yoga in the town square), outdoor movies or town fairs. Design options can include bike lanes to encourage exercise or safe sidewalks for jogging. Increasing open space in the adjacent areas by providing nearby parks or community gardens will encourage even more interaction between the community and the green town. Using a G3 approach <https://epa.gov/g3/green-streets-green-jobs-green-towns-g3-initiative-and-approach#g3-approach> and incorporating green streets and open space will:

- Enhance neighborhood livability and connectivity
- Increase community and property values
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- Protect valuable surface and groundwater resources
- Add urban green space and wildlife habitat

Community Open Space Resources

- Livability Index ⧉ <http://www.aarp.org/ppi/issues/livable-communities/info-2015/livability-index.html> How livable is your community?

Contact Us <https://epa.gov/g3/forms/contact-us-about-green-streets-green-jobs-green-towns-program> to ask a question, provide feedback, or report a problem.

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