National Book: GIC's green infrastructure planning guide, published in Oct. 2015, continues to get rave reviews. The GIC held a series of webinars to launch the book and presented it at the American Planning Association Conference in Phoenix, AZ. The book showcases examples from multiple states and covers implementation of green infrastructure planning at all scales from urban sites to regions. Chapter Seven describes how to build a habitat model to rank important landscapes in any state. Get the book from Island Press! http://islandpress.org/book/strategic-green-infrastructure-planning.
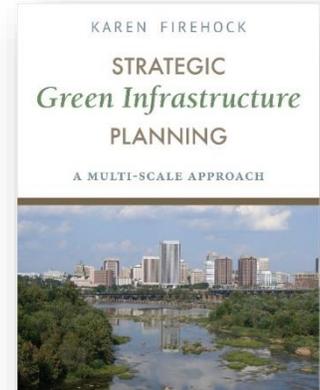
National Geographic Mention: Look in the December issue of National Geographic Magazine to see GIC's work for Ulster County New York. You'll find GIC on the pull out map of our Ulster County NY map.

Healing Our Landscapes: Healing Our Veterans: The GIC completed work on the arboretum at McGuire Veterans Hospital, in Richmond, Virginia meeting GIC's goals to use green infrastructure to build healthy communities. Patients who can see or access green space heal 30% faster than those who can't. Following on work to map the entire city's green infrastructure and mapping opportunities to re-green the city; GIC installed demonstration projects on vacant and underutilized lands. Dominion Virginia Power, VA Dept. of Forestry and Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay are key funders. Luckstone donated the dedication boulders. The GIC trained 8 disabled veterans, 6 of whom graduated to full time jobs.

The arboretum is named the "The Phyllis E. Galanti Memorial Arboretum." Phyllis founded the POW-MIA program. The arboretum was named by Congress and officially dedicated on September 16, 2016. Medical Center Director Brandecker officiated. Engineering director James Dudley and Virginia Congressman David Brat spoke and Paul Galanti personally thanked everyone for honoring his wife Phyllis.

More than 83 trees are growing at the GIC-created arboretum. Trees are been tagged with smart tags linked to a web site GIC built with facts for each tree: https://www.plantsmap.com/organizations/24785

National Model: The GIC partnered with Esri, the world's leading geographic information mapping software company to create a national model of green infrastructure based on GIC's habitat models developed for southern states. The national model can be accessed to learn where the highest values habitats are located nationally. The data can also be downloaded and manipulated to add local priorities and other themed overlay maps. The GIC is writing a book for Esri describing how to use the model. It is most applicable to suburban and rural areas.
http://www.esri.com/about-esri/greeninfrastructure
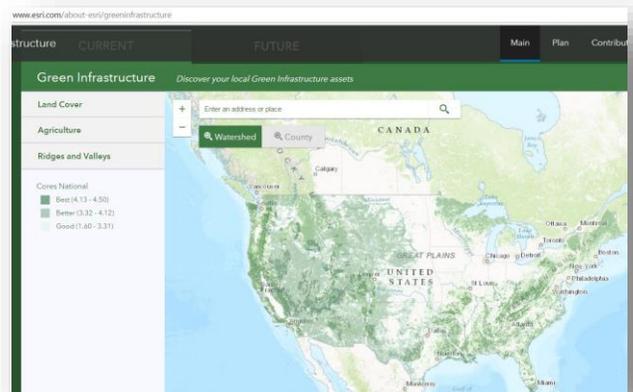
Trees and Stormwater: Over the past six months, the GIC completed tree canopy maps for 10 cities. The GIC also assisted 7 states with winning a proposal to link better stormwater management with urban tree canopy across the southern U.S. The GIC will map tree canopy for 10 cities and then link their urban forests to stormwater management. A tree can uptake anywhere from 400 to 3000 gallons of stormwater annually, which is a lot of water considering all the trees in a city. This can help cities reduce flooding and impacts from climate change – stay tuned for the exciting statistics and findings! The GIC will also look at other benefits such as reducing urban heating and providing outdoor recreation.

University Curricula and Building the Practice: The GIC continued teaching two graduate level green infrastructure courses at University of Virginia, one at the site scale - Green Cities; and one at the landscape scale - Green Lands. The Green Cities course is funded by the Univ. of VA, while Green Lands is funded by the VA Department of Forestry with funds from the USDA Forest Service's Urban and Community Forests Program. Graduate students produce real plans for our adopted localities. This meets the GIC board's directive to grow the field of practice (in addition to our training program). Numerous course graduates -- planners, landscape architects and engineers are now working in this field.

GI Technical Support: The GIC is available to support counties and communities to develop their own GI network at any scale. In 2016, the GIC continued to work with partners such as statewide nonprofit organizations, counties and states, to effectively achieve their goals. The GIC wrapped up a project in Hot Springs Arkansas which was one of the first cities to advocate walking for health almost 100 years ago and they are redesigning their city with healthy landscapes as a key goal. At left, community members express support and input for the plan. The GIC also completed work in the town of Town of Summerville SC, on an urban green infrastructure plan and on a rural plan for Darlington County, SC. GIC assisted with meetings, data analysis and green network maps.

Green Infrastructure Community Planning Grants for Virginia: The GIC continued its work to assist 11 Virginia localities with green infrastructure plans thanks to Re-Design Funding from the USDA Forest Service and the Virginia Department of Forestry. Localities include the Counties of Albemarle and Grayson, a joint project for Essex and Tappahannock, the Cities of Charlottesville, Hampton, Radford and Suffolk, and the towns of Buchanan, Woodstock and South Boston. Each project utilizes different strategies and techniques but they all follow the GIC's 6-step process for creating a successful plan. GIC is helping them map key habitats, assess urban tree canopy and land cover, set goals, assess existing natural assets, determine risks, develop opportunities and begin implementation of conservation or restoration work.

Living Shorelines Green Infrastructure Planning in Norfolk, VA:
Since October 2015, the GIC has been working on a green infrastructure coastal resiliency plan for the City of Norfolk, funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The GIC is mapping coastal areas that will be lost to Sea Level Rise and recommending where to locate future habitats. At right, staff examine wetlands restored to help absorb storm surge and clean urban runoff while also providing habitat. Norfolk is the second most threatened landscape in America. The GIC has mapped the city's green assets and is now developing strategies for resilience.

Want to learn more? You can download project case booklets at http://www.gicinc.org/projects.htm or connect with us on Facebook! If you'd like to support our work, all donations are 100% tax deductible and are used to help communities. Donate today at http://www.gicinc.org/donate.htm