

Green Street Academy Stormwater Retrofit

Baltimore, Maryland



From top: Pollinator meadow before and after; A pollinator garden helps improve infiltration into compacted urban soils while providing important habitat; Native plants attract a pollinator; A raised planter provides treatment for rooftop runoff and seating for students

With its mission to prepare middle and high school students for the 21st century economy, Green Street Academy (GSA) offers academic pathways toward fields such as advanced technology, conservation and urban agriculture, design, and construction management. In addition to its LEED Platinum building, the public

Middle and high school students in West Baltimore gain exposure to career paths in science and design as they help to improve campus ecology and stormwater management.

charter school features a solar panel-covered parking area, hoop houses, an aquaculture program, and other elements which enhance sustainability and learning opportunities.

When Blue Water Baltimore, a not-for-profit organization with a mission to restore the quality of Baltimore’s rivers, streams and Harbor, teamed with GSA to win a grant from the National Wildlife Federation, they reached out to Biohabitats for help in designing stormwater retrofit practices to improve the quality of water flowing from the school into a neighboring creek, enhance urban ecology, and serve as educational tools.

Working with Blue Water Baltimore and GSA, Biohabitats created detailed designs for three features: a micro-bioretention area to

treat parking lot runoff, a pollinator garden that will help improve infiltration into compacted urban soils, and a raised rain garden planter to treat runoff conveyed from the building’s downspouts. Each of the three areas are vegetated with native pollinator plants to beautify school grounds and enhance wildlife habitat. GSA students helped bring the designs to life by assisting with planting. In the process, they learned skills to prepare them for careers in ecological restoration.

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