



GREENING OF DECATUR STREET

EDMONSTON, MARYLAND

A town in Prince George's County, Maryland transformed their residential main street to an environmentally responsible street

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town of Edmonston (Edmonston) located in Prince George's County, Maryland straddles the Anacostia River, "the nation's river", which flows through Maryland's Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, then through the District of Columbia into the Potomac. Edmonston has taken a leadership role in the revitalization of the Anacostia River Watershed. The Anacostia is one of the nation's most polluted rivers with stormwater being one of the largest sources of pollution. To improve stormwater management and spur green development, the town is pursuing green infrastructure alternatives.

environmental stewardship. It started with the community's interest and commitment to developing a "Green Plan" to address their current and future needs.

The Town's Mayor Adam Ortiz supported the greening of Decatur Street, stating "All streets have an 'expiration date', a time when they must be repaired, resurfaced, or replaced. Instead of fixing our 'expired' streets in the conventional way, it was proposed that we do so in the most environmentally responsible way. We think that this project is the responsible thing to do. But we also think that if our little working class town can accomplish a project like this, other municipalities - of any size - can and should do them too."

Edmonston suffered severe flooding four years in a row due to development, a poor stormwater management system, and a high percentage of impervious cover (e.g., roadways, rooftops, parking lots). A flood in 2006 left 56 homes in the town partially underwater and most people lost everything they owned. Residents decided it was time for change and envision a safer community that could also be a leader in



GREEN STREET ELEMENTS



Native Tree Canopy



New Permeable Paved Bike Lanes



Bio-Retention Gardens and Tree Boxes



Wind Powered LED Street Lighting



Safe Sidewalks ; ADA compliance - 36" wide





PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

To help mitigate flooding, the Town of Edmonston decided to transform its rundown Decatur Street into a green street. Residents wanted to create a more livable community by narrowing the roadway in order to calm traffic, shorten pedestrian crossing distance, establish bike lanes, and reduce impervious surfaces. The project goals decided upon by the community with input from project engineers, included:

- Capture stormwater pollution before it enters the Anacostia River
- Reduce flooding along Decatur Street
- Encourage green economic development in Edmonston
- Incorporate large canopy street trees
- Slow traffic along Decatur Street
- Create a safe and pleasant environment for pedestrians and bicyclists

APPROACH

The “greening” of Decatur Street began as a community initiative. Although the project resulted in a positive environmental outcome for the Town, it also resulted in community building and increased community livability. Even though Edmonston is a working class town with a small tax base, it was able to meet its goal within the regular capital budget. Residents worked together in “green teams” to accomplish their green street vision.

The Town was also able to leverage additional funding for the project through a \$25,000 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust which was used to develop a Green Street design for Decatur Street, in addition to green infrastructure concepts throughout the Town. The Edmonston green street project was further funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency through a \$1.1 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Stimulus Bill) grant. Stimulus Bill provided funding for states and communities to invest in stormwater and wastewater infrastructure.

PROJECT PARTNERS

This project brought together the resources of key federal programs for energy, environment, economic and community development that were leveraged with state transportation and local public and private resources.

- Edmonston "Green Team"
- Maryland Department of Environment, EPA Region III
- Chesapeake Bay Trust
- Landscape designer Andie Murtha
- Low Impact Development Center
- Neighborhood Design Center
- UMD Engineers Without Borders
- Prince George's Green Power Coalition
- Green ReVisions
- G&C Consultants
- VMP Construction
- Kaiser Permanente Community Health Initiative
- Port Towns Community Development Corporation
- Anacostia Watershed Society
- President Obama
- Staff and residents of Edmonston

RESULTS/OUTCOMES

The Edmonston Green Street project has transformed the town’s main residential street – Decatur Street – and is a model for implementing a green infrastructure strategy in communities across the country. It started with the community’s interest and commitment to developing a “Green Plan” to address their current and future needs. The planning and design of the Green Street took four (4) months, with construction scheduled to begin within six (6) months of the start of the project. While green infrastructure has been used for many years in larger cities like Chicago, Illinois and Portland, Oregon, Edmonston’s small size demonstrates the scalability of the green infrastructure process and the potential to quickly assist some of the nation’s smallest communities.

With a relatively small grant, the town was able to develop a Green Street design and put it out to bid within four (4) months. The ability of the Edmonston project to be construction-ready rapidly and the multi-benefit green infrastructure approach used, epitomize the type of project that Congress and the White House identified as an ideal candidate for Stimulus Bill funding. When construction is completed on the Edmonston Green Street less than a year after project inception, the town will have improved and increased the value of its infrastructure, reduced pollution, and sustained or created jobs.

