The Forest Heights Stormwater Retrofit and BMP Demonstration Site is part of a comprehensive community greening initiative to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff pollution to the Oxon Run—a tributary of the Potomac River. The project is one of many proactive initiatives the Town has implemented to achieve its resolution to become a zero runoff municipality, the first of its kind in the state.

The goals of the initiative were to establish the municipal grounds as an example of effective stormwater management; build the knowledge of elected officials and citizens of Forest Heights on the values and benefits of environmentally friendly behaviors; change local policies influencing stormwater; and provide a working demonstration site that can be used by educators.

The project incorporated a number of best management practices from the simple to the more complex: bioretention cells, living Wall SmartSlope technology, green roof, rain barrel and cistern rain water reuse, conservation landscaping, and various pervious surfaces. The latest phase was the installation of a PaveDrain System, a permeable pavement product that treats stormwater through natural filtration.

Forest Heights demonstrates effective stormwater management on their municipal grounds.
SUSTAINABILITY & GROWTH: ADDITIONAL GREEN ACTIVITIES

The Town of Forest Heights is involved in several major greening initiatives, advanced and supported through this project. The greening of Forest Heights began in 2007, when the Town Council planted trees along the parking lot as a way to catch polluted stormwater before it made its way to the local waterway. In 2008, the Town advanced its "Go Green" initiative by becoming the first local government in Prince George’s County to convert all government owned facilities to the green standard with the unveiling of the green roof on the municipal building.

This completed demonstration project on the municipal grounds has provided and will continue to provide an opportunity for townspeople to see how these best management practices might look on their own property and learn about the benefits of each practice. The site has already been used as training grounds for nonprofit organizations and green jobs programs for youth.

The Town’s efforts continue: Since the completion of this project, Forest Heights has pursued the design of and construction funding for two stretches of its thoroughfares, including Arapoe Avenue, based on support provided by this grant program. In addition, the Town has been aiming to map and increase its tree cover, as part of the Tree Canopy Program. This program will provide green coverage in many places within the town to reduce sun heat exposure, improving air quality by natural methods and erecting trees for a cooler overall temperature. Finally, the Town plans to convert its municipal energy use to solar through installation of solar panels. Much of this work is supported by aggressive and successful grant seeking.

For additional information: visit www.epa.gov and www.cbtrust.org.