



Prince George's County

STORMWATER STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

APPLICANT The Empowerment Institute

PROJECT The Empowerment Institute and Southern Marketplace Rain Garden

GRANT AMOUNT \$152,145

PROJECT SUMMARY The Empowerment Institute partnered with Southern Marketplace (SoMa) for this rain garden project. SoMa is a 14-acre site located on Southern Avenue in Oxon Hill, consisting of commercial, residential, and other undeveloped sites.

The objectives of the project included the reduction of impervious surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff and pollution, the increase of urban green space, and the education of stormwater issues and restoration options available to the SoMa community.

Stormwater runoff is rain or melted snow that runs off impervious surfaces, such as roofs and pavement, picking up contaminants as it flows downslope into our waterways. This project reduced stormwater runoff by removing over 2,000

square feet of asphalt in a shopping center parking lot, and in its place, installing a 2,320 square foot rain garden. This rain garden will slow down the stormwater runoff and allow it to soak into the ground. By reducing stormwater runoff, this rain garden helps to improve water quality and protect local streams. This project also created a more pedestrian friendly route from the bus stop to the shopping center.

Finally, an outreach component engaged and trained youth to actively communicate the project to businesses and citizens in the SoMa area. This project improved a blighted parking lot by adding a rain garden near an active commercial strip and bus stop area. This project was a first step to improvements planned for the commercial area.

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