



GREEN STREETS | GREEN JOBS | GREEN TOWNS INITIATIVE

The Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Partnership (G3) aims to stimulate the green jobs market and enable families to work where they live and play. Small to mid-sized communities can boost their local economies and protect water resources through the use of watershed planning, design and construction of stormwater best management practices.



20 trees planted



200 native plants installed



10,000 sq. ft. impervious surface removed



3,000 sq. ft. pervious surface installed



5,700 sq. ft. invasive species removed



1,000 lbs of trash removed



Downtown
CAMBRIDGE



SHORERIVERS

Greening Urban Vacant Lots - Cambridge Neighborhood Revitalization

The goal of this project was to pilot a program to restore blighted lots in Cambridge, Maryland with the objectives of reducing impervious surface and invasive species, increasing native trees and plants, and increasing environmental stewardship activities in the community. This project succeeded in revitalizing two lots owned by community partners, Habitat for Humanity Choptank and Waugh Chapel United Methodist, through the objectives mentioned above.

The Habitat lot was not suitable for home construction and was sitting empty collecting trash and growing invasive species. Through this grant opportunity 5,700 sq. ft. of dense invasive species were removed and community volunteers planted native trees and flower beds and removed over 1,000 lbs of trash. Habitat for Humanity Choptank was thrilled with the opportunity to beautify a highly visible property, engage and educate their homeowners about environmental stewardship, and plant native trees and flowers that will help to absorb stormwater in a neighborhood prone to standing water.

The lot owned by Waugh Chapel United Methodist was used for overflow parking despite the broken concrete and dangerous metal debris. Downtown Cambridge, a nonprofit focused on increasing business, jobs, and beautifying the city, initially received a Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) grant to remove the concrete pad and repave the lot with asphalt. ShoreRivers learned of this project and through this grant received funding to incorporate grass pervious parking mats and native trees. As the project evolved, the plans shifted to eliminate the asphalt completely and create a totally green lot. All project partners and property owners became fully invested in the goal that the green parking lot would be an innovative project in Cambridge that would demonstrate how green infrastructure can be incorporated into planning in order to meet function, create beauty, and exemplify environmental stewardship.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

- **Impervious Pavement Removal** – Rain hits impervious surfaces such as parking lots and roads, and because it cannot soak through, it instead runs off into storm drains or directly local waterways.
- **Native Trees and Plants** – Native plants offer numerous benefits. Because native plants are adapted to local environmental conditions, they require far less water. They provide vital habitats for birds, insects and other species of wildlife, prevent water run-off, and improve air quality.



SUSTAINABILITY & GROWTH

ShoreRivers staff monitored the site during heavy rain events and the grass pervious parking lot significantly reduced stormwater runoff coming from the property, while neighboring properties had significant water flow from their driveways and roofs. ShoreRivers and the church will continue to monitor and maintain the property, especially during the hot and dry summer months to ensure native plants survive the first summer season.

The concept of grass parking mats is truly unique in Cambridge and continues to garner positive attention and questions that lead to educational opportunities about stormwater and environmental stewardship. Additionally, through press and the ribbon cutting event, local business owners and representatives witnessed the benefits of incorporating green infrastructure into private property planning. Already ShoreRivers has received phone calls from local churches and businesses interested in turning their parking lots "green" in order to reduce flooding, beautify their properties, and promote stewardship.

ShoreRivers will continue to support the vacant lot program through the key focus area of providing green public space that will also provide environmental benefits. Numerous grants and funding opportunities have been identified with diverse sources including the AARP Community Foundation and Partners for Places grants. The City of Cambridge is working with Dorchester County to create a land-bank in order to obtain, hold, and revitalize blighted and abandoned properties. As this program is being formed, green infrastructure and green space will be a priority in revitalizing these properties.

Year Awarded: 2018

Award Amount: \$52,928

Match Amount: \$41,037

Paver Installation Before & After



Habitat Lot Before & After



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

Project Partners: Chesapeake Bay Trust, Downtown Cambridge, Habitat for Humanity Choptank, ShoreRivers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency