RIVERDALE PARK

Maryland Green Schools - 2020

In 2019 Riverdale Elementary School (RES) and Parkdale High School were recertified as Green Schools through the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE). Both schools were first certified as Level One Green Schools in 2015. These schools serve the families living in the Town of Riverdale Park.

Opening in 2018 in a newly constructed 50,000 square foot facility on Rivertech Court in the Town of Riverdale Park is College Park Academy, a public charter school. It was founded in 2013 in partnership with the University of Maryland as part of the College Park City-University Partnership's 2020 University District Vision to expand high quality K-12 educational opportunities. College Park Academy's intent to apply for Green School status in 2020 was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Riverdale Elementary is located within the Town of Riverdale Park boundaries at 5006 Riverdale Road. Parkdale High School is in unincorporated Riverdale at 6001 Good Luck Road 20737. The image below is from the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education website reflecting the years that Riverdale Elementary and Parkdale High School completed their recertification in the Green Schools program.

Projects

In late summer of 2017 the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) using $900,000 of a state grant engaged Biohabitats to design and build a low impact development (LID) retrofit at RES. The finished project manages and treats stormwater runoff from approximately 70 percent of the 2.6-acre school's impervious surface footprint.

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RIVERDALE PARK

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Riverdale LID Retrofit Design-Build

Riverdale, Maryland

from top: After construction with inset of in-progress conditions; Completed retrofit on school grounds

The reduction of sediment and nutrients and the involvement of community are critical to Anacostia Watershed Society's (AWS) efforts to transform the Anacostia River, deemed hopelessly polluted in the 1980s, into a swimmable, fishable waterbody. By initiating ecological restoration and stormwater management improvement projects in locations on or near schools, churches, and other gathering places, AWS improves water quality while also engaging the community and strengthening stewardship.

The LID retrofits manage and treat stormwater runoff from approximately 70 percent of the elementary school's entire impervious surface footprint and becomes a model for school greening and environmental education opportunities.

Such was the case at Riverdale Elementary School, a 2.6-acre public school with a parking lot, asphalt basketball courts, rooftops, and minimal green space. Stormwater from school grounds was flowing, untreated, from storm drains directly into Wells Run, a tributary to the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River. AWS initiated a project that integrated ecosystem enhancement, water quality improvement, and environmental education and stewardship. The project involved retrofitting school property with stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Working closely with the AWS and the elementary school community, Biohabitats led the design, permitting, and construction of three lined, submerged gravel wetlands, two elevated micro-bioretention planters, and the removal of a small amount of impervious surfaces. In addition to slowing down and improving treatment of stormwater from the school's rooftop and paved surfaces, the retrofits improve habitat, enhance the beauty of school grounds, and add outdoor educational opportunities for the entire school community.

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RIVERDALE PARK

In June 2019, to encourage the RES students to ride their bikes to school, the town donated 125 bike helmets ($3,500) and 93 bike locks ($1,488) from Arrow Bicycle in Hyattsville. In 2020, the town is working with the school to install additional bike racks.

In 2019, RES improved energy efficiency by replacing the school building's windows.

In 2018 and 2019, RES students participated in the town's Arbor Day ceremony.

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