

Town of Berlin West Street Upgrade

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■ Problem:

Berlin had been experiencing significant stormwater problems at a busy intersection in the heart of downtown. The area was prone to erosion and flooding, putting both businesses and residences at risk. In addition, poorly-managed stormwater conveyed pollutants to Trappe Creek, a tributary of Newport Bay.



A failing culvert caused erosion and flooding in downtown Berlin.

■ Solution:

Using a combination of federal, state and local funding, Berlin installed a new subsurface culvert to divert water under the street to bioretention cells that absorb the water and filter out pollutants and sediment. The new system effectively manages stormwater, and native plantings in the bioretention cells have beautified the area. The project was made possible in part by voluntary stormwater fees paid by town residents and businesses, a model that has subsequently been adopted by neighboring communities.



The new culvert and stream channel alleviated flooding.

Photo credit: Jane Kreiter, Town of Berlin

Key Project Facts

Project Location : Berlin, MD

Type of Project: Culvert repair and bioretention landscaping

Scale: 200 linear foot culvert servicing 4.168 acres of land

Cost: \$160,000

Funding Sources: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Town of Berlin, Berlin stormwater utility fee revenues

Partners: Maryland DNR, Town of Berlin, Berlin residents, and business owners

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What is Polluted Runoff?

The growth of our cities has resulted in too many paved surfaces, which prevent rain water from being absorbed by the ground. Instead, the water runs off streets and buildings, collecting trash and dangerous chemicals on its way. This contaminated water overflows into our streams and rivers, creating public health hazards and toxic waters.

Stormwater projects create safe paths for polluted runoff to be captured and filtered before it reaches our waterways. They keep communities healthy and the environment clean.

When communities and their local governments work together to solve big problems like stormwater runoff, that's a story worth telling!