



With its thoughtful approach to stormwater management, ecologically supportive plantings, and innovative lighting solutions, Culliton Park serves as a publicly accessible model of environmentally sensitive design within an urban, recreational context. In October 2021, members of the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Officers visited Culliton Park with representatives of DCNR, the City of Lancaster, the design team, and the park's general contractor, Flyway Excavating, to review lessons learned from Culliton Park's design and construction process. During Water Week 2021, City of Lancaster and Lancaster County Conservancy staff featured Culliton Park in its well-attended environmental education workshops open to the public. City staff has identified Culliton Park as a location for future stormwater BMP construction and maintenance workshops.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE



RECREATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL

Located in Lancaster's Southwest (SoWe) neighborhood, this 3.75-acre park exists over an historic stream channel that was long ago sequestered within a 16' wide brick culvert. Planning for park revitalization began in 2009. During the 2020 pandemic, this open space was dramatically transformed in accordance with the wishes of those who live in its surrounding neighborhoods. Our team creatively addressed stormwater management while maximizing this site's recreational amenities – many of which were carefully constructed over the subsurface stream and historic stormwater infrastructure.

New park amenities include an expanded and safer kids play area, new basketball courts, a new ballfield with spectator seating, a hillside amphitheater/sledding area, picnic/grilling spaces, parking with sub-surface stormwater management, public art, site furnishings, and a large central green for all sorts of unstructured and spontaneous recreational activities. Each open space area is now properly illuminated and connected to adjoining spaces via a circuitous and accessible pathway network. Colorful plantings provide a seasonal succession of landscape interest while assisting with water quality and pollinator initiatives. Along with mature tree preservation, several stone walls - once the foundations of former industrial buildings located near this park's perimeter - have been restored and illuminated with soft lighting for improved nighttime security and aesthetics.

Stormwater management facilities and revegetation efforts exceeded state and municipal requirements. Specifically, stormwater volume management exceeded NPDES requirements for the 2-year/24-hour storm event by 50%, or 454,651 additional gallons per year. These improvements effectively reduced the extent of combined sewer overflows into the Conestoga River and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

In addition to open lawn and new tree plantings, Culliton Park now hosts extensive areas of perennials, grasses, groundcovers, and shrubs that are primarily native to the mid-Atlantic region. These plants enhance year-round aesthetics for community benefit, reduce stormwater runoff, and provide much needed habitat for native insects and birds. From this intentional intersection of aesthetics and ecology come environmental education opportunities for the local community.

With a total of 1.37 million gallons of stormwater runoff now annually managed on-site, the performance of Culliton Park's stormwater management facilities (bio-infiltration basin, underground stone infiltration bed, constructed filter and rain garden) exceeds municipal and state requirements. In addition, 40 native trees, 100 indigenous shrubs, and 11,000 native herbaceous plants were installed. The ballfield's specified seed mix included micro-clover because it effectively sequesters nitrogen, reduces fertilizer demands (and nutrient pollution via run-off), and provides a pollinator food source. New park lighting sources are much more energy efficient than previous light fixtures, and produce less light pollution.

Improvements to Culliton Park were long identified as necessary to meet the recreational and open space needs of the surrounding community. These needs, identified through public meetings and engagement with stakeholder organizations, were met by providing an expanded kids play area, new basketball courts, a new ballfield with spectator seating, a hillside amphitheater/sledding area, picnic/grilling spaces, parking, public art, site furnishings, and a large central green.

While achieving these local community goals, broader environmental initiatives were also met. For example, Culliton Park's stormwater management system exceeds regulatory requirements and helps to address broader Chesapeake Bay Watershed goals.



CULLITON PARK
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