

# Green Infrastructure Projects in Chicago & the Surrounding Region

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## Chicago Green Alleys Program – Chicago Department of Transportation

The City of Chicago's Green Alleys program began as a pilot in 2006 with the goal of incorporating innovative environmental technologies to help manage stormwater and reduce the urban heat island effect. Green alleys incorporate a variety of characteristics including permeable pavements and open bottom catch basins, and improved grading and pitch to facilitate drainage. These features prevent stormwater from collecting on hard surfaces or draining into the sewer system. Other green alley components include recycled materials such as concrete aggregate and recycled tire rubber, high-albedo pavement, and dark sky-compliant light fixtures.



Photo Credit: [www.landscapeonline.com](http://www.landscapeonline.com)

[http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/street/svcs/green\\_alleys.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/street/svcs/green_alleys.html)

## Space to Grow: Greening Chicago Schoolyards – Chicago Public Schools



Photo Credit: [www.healthyschoolscampaign.org](http://www.healthyschoolscampaign.org)

Space to Grow is an innovative program led by Healthy Schools Campaign and Openlands to transform Chicago schoolyards into vibrant outdoor spaces that benefit students, communities and the environment. With capital funding from Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Department of Water Management and the Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, schoolyard renovations prioritize physical activity, outdoor learning, exploration and community engagement. The green schoolyards incorporate landscape features, including permeable asphalt, native trees and plants, and rain gardens that capture a significant amount of rainfall, helping keep the city's water resources clean and resulting in less neighborhood flooding.

<http://www.healthyschoolscampaign.org/programs/space-to-grow/>

## Designed Green: Innovative Stormwater Management System – Navy Pier

Navy Pier's southern boardwalk is being transformed into an open promenade lined with locally-sourced trees and native plants as part of a stormwater management system that brings great long-term environmental and social benefits to the Illinois Coastal Zone community. The system's innovative design and use of best management practices improves runoff quality and controls its volume during major storm events. Stormwater captured by approx. 43,000 square feet of permeable pavement and 77 tree tubs is either filtered and released or stored in underground cisterns for reuse as irrigation. The system has the capacity to detain and slowly release 2.3 million gallons of water per year.



Photo Credit: Navy Pier, Inc

<https://navypier.com/sustainable-navy-pier/>

## Midlothian Village Greenway Project – Village of Midlothian



Midlothian Creek Green Infrastructure Map

This project was identified through the Midlothian Creek Green Infrastructure Planning process in collaboration with Chicago Wilderness, South Suburban Mayors and Managers, and other partners. The Village of Midlothian used the 2013 Midlothian Creek Green Infrastructure Plan to secure implementation funding for a lot near the Village Hall. This project includes the installation of approximately 3600 square feet (0.08 acres) of rain garden, 6700 square feet (0.15 acres) of porous asphalt

and 14,000 square feet (0.32 acres) of native plants. Funding is primarily from an Illinois Green Infrastructure

Grant (IGIG) from the Illinois EPA, with additional funding from a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Grant through the Illinois DNR Coastal Management Program.

## Fresh Coast 740 – Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District

In 2011, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) adopted its 2035 Vision plan with the guiding principal that future planning, design and operations decisions will be based upon the sustainable bottom line approach that balances economic, environmental, operational, and social values. Integral to this plan, MMSD is taking a watershed-management approach that will preserve and restore natural hydrology and implement green infrastructure practices. Part of the goal is to use green infrastructure to capture 740 million gallons every time that it rains. Dozens of exciting projects have been implemented over the past decade, including green roofs, natural lawn care projects, cisterns, rain gardens and bioswales.

<http://www.freshcoast740.com/>



Illustration by Amanda Frayer

## Milwaukee Avenue Green Development Corridor – Metropolitan Planning Council



Metropolitan Planning Council was awarded a \$200,000 IGIG grant in 2012 from the Illinois EPA to support property improvements to improve water quality in the North

Branch of the Chicago River. When the stormwater system is overwhelmed during wet weather events, Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) is released into the

river, degrading water quality. This project focused on Milwaukee Avenue in the Logan Square neighborhood in Chicago between Kimball and California, an area with over 95% impervious surfaces. Twelve projects were completed, ranging in cost from \$3,086 to over \$48,000. Together, the projects capture an estimated 8,748 gallons of stormwater per rain event through newly installed permeable paving, native plants, rain gardens, and rain barrels. In addition to water quality benefits, this project resulted in greater local awareness of green infrastructure as well as numerous lesson-learned that can be applied to future projects. <http://logansquareh2o.org/>



Photo Credit: <http://logansquareh2o.org/>

