

## Green Infrastructure as Standard Operating Procedure: Town of Franklin

**Who:** The Town of Franklin Department of Public Works.

**What:** Integration of green infrastructure in all development and redevelopment projects.

**When:** The first green infrastructure project was installed in 2008. Since then, dozens of projects have been completed including rain gardens, tree filter boxes, infiltration basins, and reducing the amount of pavement in roadways, cul-de-sacs, and sidewalks.

**Where:** Multiple sites across the Town of Franklin

**Why:** The Town of Franklin has good reasons to invest in green infrastructure projects. First, the EPA has identified phosphorous as a chief source of algae blooms in the Charles River. Almost all of Franklin lies within the Charles River watershed. Treatment of stormwater before it enters waterways is key to reducing phosphorous in the Charles. Second, the Town of Franklin relies on groundwater for its drinking water supply. Infiltrating rainwater is critical to maintaining a healthy aquifer and adequate water supply for the town.



**Projects are located throughout the town**



**Anchorage Road rain garden**

**How:** Use of green infrastructure is standard operating procedure for the Franklin DPW. Public outreach, including signage at project locations and education in the schools, has been key to developing and sustaining public support. The DPW has been entrepreneurial in pursuing grant support for green infrastructure projects. In the past decade, they have received nine grants from state, federal and private sources, totaling just over \$1 million for projects, planning, and analysis.

## Green Infrastructure as an Amenity

The Sculpture Park is a unique and beautiful park that happens to provide stormwater treatment for an adjacent four-hundred unit condominium complex that previously had no stormwater treatment. The town-owned site sits along Mine Brook, which is a major tributary of the Charles River. In the 1930's, as part of a WPA project, the dam was constructed to create a town swimming pool. Use of the swimming pool was discontinued in the 1970s and the pool became overgrown with trees.



Sculpture Park, Panther Way



A local citizen championed the idea of creating a sculpture park on the unused land. In 2014, the Sculpture Park was officially dedicated. The project was a collaboration between the Town of Franklin and the Franklin Art Center, supported by funding from the Franklin Cultural Council, among others. Constructed by the DPW, the former pool was re-purposed as an infiltration basin to treat stormwater runoff before it reaches the adjacent brook. A walking path, dotted with sculptures, meanders along the infiltration basin and the brook. While creating a lovely local gem, the DPW also managed to seamlessly integrate stormwater treatment for a large residential development.

## Green Infrastructure and Cost Savings

In all roadway reconstruction projects, the DPW looks to reduce impervious surfaces and improve stormwater treatment and infiltration. In the Northgate neighborhood of Franklin, nearly 90,000 square feet of impervious surface was eliminated by shrinking the roadway width from 32 to 26 feet and removing sidewalks on one side of the road. This saved \$195,000 in asphalt costs. Rather than purchasing proprietary tree filter boxes, the DPW developed their own design, dramatically reducing the cost of their installation.