

VALLEY PARK PROJECTS

Many of the area’s neighborhood parks are targeted for reinvestment and are ideal places for green stormwater infrastructure.

Many of the parks in the upper watershed were created in low valleys where development was less desirable. In some places, historic waterways still move through the buried sewer system, and the sound of flowing water can sometimes be heard underground—evidence that inflow and infiltration remain an issue.

These valley parks offer good opportunities for stormwater management. Some parks naturally receive runoff from surrounding areas and can store water during storms. In other cases, water from nearby streets and neighborhoods could be directed to the parks where it can be captured and managed.

Most of these parks need reinvestment to meet current standards. Maintenance has often been limited, and some facilities have been abandoned, raising questions about long-term care. At the same time, the low level of disturbance has allowed strong ecological communities to grow, though invasive species are common.

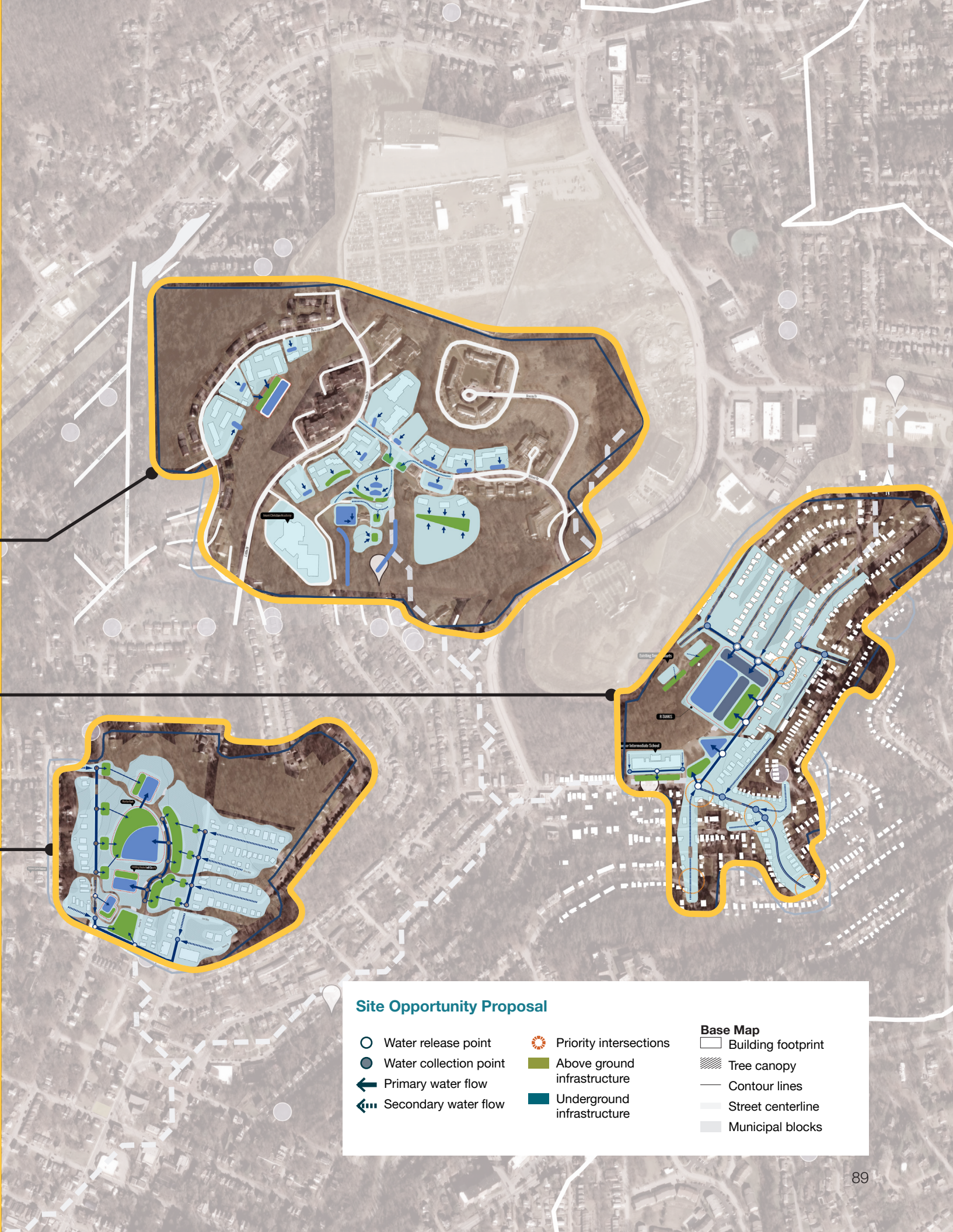
With thoughtful investment, these parks could provide significant benefits for both water management and neighborhood life.



East Hills Park and Park Hill Drive

Turner Intermediate School

Hunter Park



Valley Park Projects

Select Community Feedback

[Hunter Park] Many of the community members engaged were not concerned about flooding near and around Hunter Park, although there were a few homes experiencing issues. The primary concern people shared were the abandoned homes in the area and pests like raccoons. There are also opportunities to connect with local efforts to build a nature trail through alleyways in the area. Wilkinsburg Borough is planning to make updates to the park, which could be an opportunity to integrate green infrastructure with those changes.

[Turner] “Please visit our area (Laketon Montier Clark Wright intersection) and see for yourself what a heavy rain looks like at the corner. No one seems to care about this Ward.”

“The intersection of Montier and Wright streets. Water floods down from that area onto our curbs unto yards and driveways constantly. Maybe the sewer system isn’t working at Clark and Wright therefore water streams and floods us! This has happened for years and is getting much worse. Rocks and sediment live our sidewalks and driveways after each rain.”

[East Hills] The Department of Public Works (DPW), in partnership with Ethos Collaborative and the East Hills community, is planning comprehensive upgrades to East Hills Park. Improvements include a new playground and picnic area, repairs to the basketball courts, pavilion, spray park, and athletic field, plus better accessibility,

lighting, circulation, and stormwater management. Community feedback from the public survey and community meetings included prioritized safety, new amenities such as benches and tables, enhanced athletic facilities, and the addition of necessary bathrooms and water features (slip-and-slide, pool, and water park).

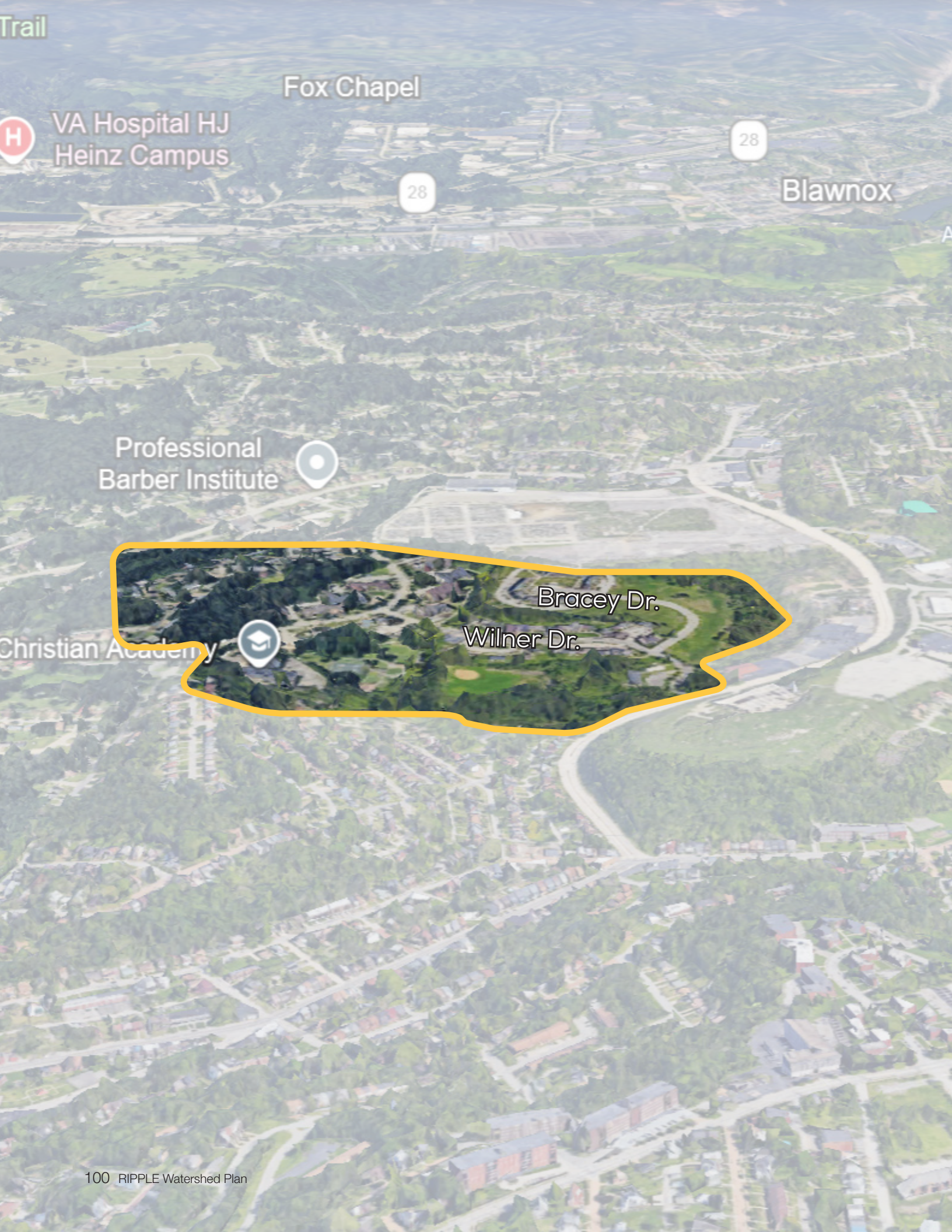
[Nine Mile Run] “too many abandoned residential and industrial properties or with absentee landlords and or owners who live out of state or are not nationals. Too few local rehab contractors with awareness of available sustainable resources.”

“Brick streets such as LaClair and Macon and Trevanian which are pitched toward Frick Park but do not divert much stormwater away from the combined sewer drains and into the park.

Hillsides with dead or dying trees such as Green Ash Black Locust that easily topple over in warm winter storms and do not effectively stabilize the hillsides from landslides.

Street tree pits in residential and business districts that do not effectively capture storm water. For example there are approximately 20 tree pits along Braddock avenue with low curbs (due to roadway build up) that do not retain storm water but allow it to run over and across them washing dirt and mulch onto the sidewalk.”





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East Hills Park and Park Hill Drive

Time Frame

short term

Location

a micro network that direct water to the municipally-owned East Hills Park from on-site and the adjacent streets

GSI Strategy

Private parcel GSI, Public Right-of-Way Improvements, Public Parcel Integrated GSI

UpstreamPgh's Role

support, advocate, partner, watchdog

Potential Partners

Residents and the general community, City of Pittsburgh, PGH20, ALCOSAN



FAR LEFT Aerial photo of Site Facing Neighborhood (UpstreamPgh)
LEFT Aerial photo of Site Facing Park (UpstreamPgh)

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East Hills Park and Park Hill Drive

A park redesign is an ideal opportunity for GSI and to encourage adjacent parcels to manage water similarly.

Site Opportunity Proposal

- Water release point
- Water collection point
- ←

Primary water flow
- ⚡

Secondary water flow
- ⦿

Priority intersections
- Above ground infrastructure
- Underground infrastructure

- Base Map
- Building footprint
- ▨

Tree canopy
- Contour lines
- Street centerline
- Municipal blocks



East Hills Park is an active community amenity and is currently undergoing a park redesign. The site’s upslope catchment area is large, but the adjacent properties are owned and maintained by a single entity that appears to manage its drainage infrastructure adequately. Even so, opportunities exist to improve stormwater management within and around the park.

- The park’s GSI can be structured with on-site storage and as a micro network that captures water from off-site. Distinct receiving areas across the park and adjacent housing sites provide varying capacities for stormwater management, reflecting differences in topography, land use, and infrastructure.
- Residential parking: on-site capture and storage
 - Park entry: PROW capture and storage
 - Amphitheater: onsite capture and storage
 - Walkways: onsite capture and storage
 - Field: onsite capture and storage
 - Spray park: onsite capture and storage
 - Court: onsite capture and below-grade storage
 - Abandoned play area: onsite capture and storage
 - East Hills housing: onsite capture and storage
 - Valley: potential bioswale / open channel
- PROW investment will be needed to maximize capture volume. The community identified the need for another entry and the desirability of coming off Robinson Boulevard to increase the park’s visibility and public presence.

Subshed Structures

- Subshed Structure Area
- Nodes
- Connections
- N
- 0.1 Miles

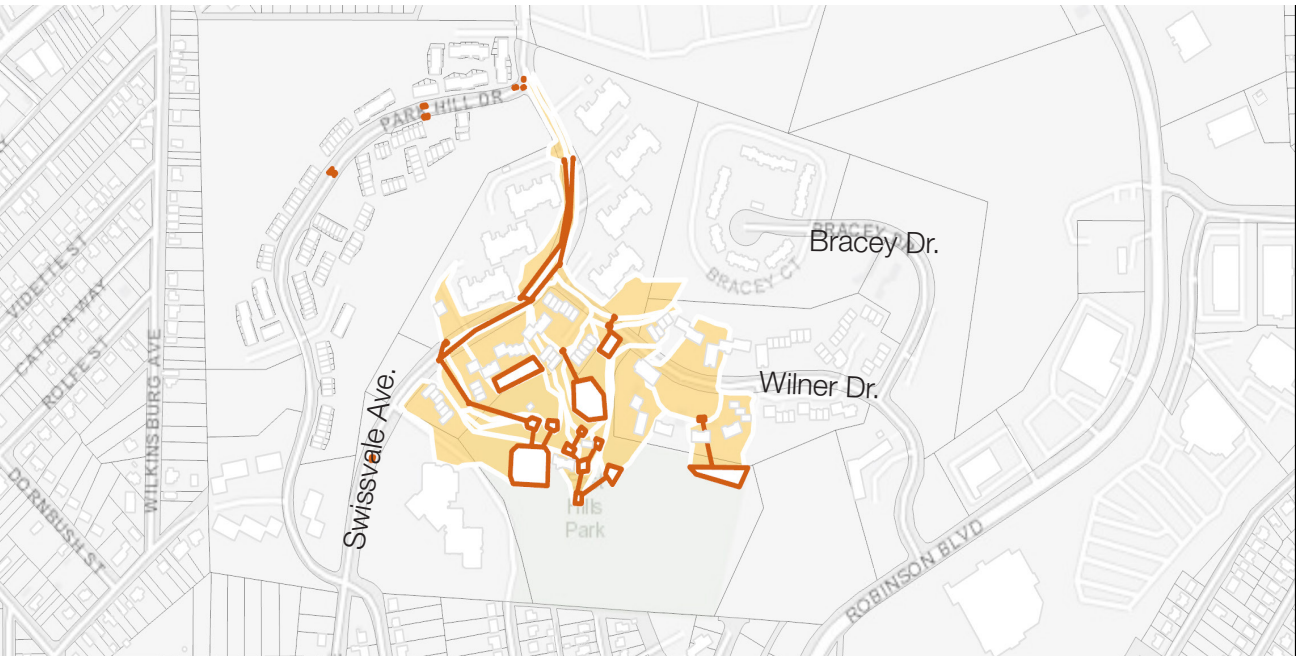
565,473 cubic feet captured
161,487 cubic feet bypassed

Water Capture Opportunities within a 5-minute walk of this project

11 Vacant lots	1 Parks
613,631 Impervious area (sqft)	0 Parking lots
5,976 Streetscape (ft)	4 Parcels in Public Ownership

Environmental Justice Considerations within a 5-minute walk of this project

23% % Employed	2,079 # of Residents
65.8% % Renter	4.9% % of Area Historically Redlined
\$13,771 Median Income	31.9% Cost Burdened



Imani Christian Academy is a strong candidate for stormwater improvements due to its sloped topography and extensive impervious surfaces. On-site capture and storage should be prioritized before directing runoff to the adjacent park. The former playground area could be repurposed as a community learning space—receiving both stormwater and students—and used to demonstrate stormwater management practices in an educational setting.

Integrating green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) into the public right-of-way—such as along streets and intersections—can improve safety, system performance, and neighborhood character. In this location, traffic volumes are extremely low, consisting primarily of local circulation, which reduces the need for large-scale infrastructure improvements. The site’s geometry also limits opportunities to capture runoff from surrounding areas, making off-site water management impractical. As

a result, on-site stormwater capture and storage were the primary focus. The park is maintained by the City of Pittsburgh’s Department of Public Works (DPW). Implementing GSI will require new maintenance practices that differ from DPW’s current routines. Because the City already faces challenges in maintaining existing infrastructure, long-term operations and maintenance planning must be built into any approved GSI design.