



Green infrastructure is a way to collect and clean rainwater where it falls. It can reduce flooding, clean and conserve water, and provide recreational and other benefits to the community. Below are some examples of green infrastructure projects that have benefited communities in New Mexico.



Santa Fe Railyard Park

La Citta Vita, "Design, Railyards Park" (from flickr), licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0. Cropped from original.

Thousands of community members participated in developing the project.

Old Railyard in Santa Fe Turned into Community Space

An old polluted railyard in downtown Santa Fe was turned into a vibrant space for the community. Since the site was an old railyard, it was polluted and needed to be cleaned up. After it was cleaned up, it was turned into a park and plaza.

The site benefits the community in many ways. One way is helping to manage rainwater. For example, the park includes community gardens and many native plants. These help reduce the amount of rainwater that runs off of the site. There are also below ground storage tanks and a water tower that collect and store rainwater from the site. This water can then be used in the park later on.

Another benefit is that the site provides a place for the community to gather. The park has community gardens, an area for children to play, and places to picnic. The plaza is used for performances, a farmers' market, and food vendors.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, City Green: Innovative Green Infrastructure Solutions for Downtowns and Infill Locations (2016), 50-54; available at www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-06/documents/city_green_0.pdf.



Bioswales are planted areas that slow and clean rainwater.

South Valley Park Helps Manage Rainwater

The Ambassador Edward L. Romero Park was built in 2009 to help bring neighboring communities together in South Valley. One important benefit of the park is that it helps to manage rainwater in the area. It does this in different ways.

For example, it uses **bioswales**. These help drain rainwater from the roads. When there is a low flow of water, the bioswales absorb the water. When there is a high flow of water, the bioswales bring the water to a wetland in the park.



Aaron Volkening, "Milw_Pabst_Bioswale2" (from flickr), licensed under CC BY 2.0. Cropped from original.

An example of a Bioswale

Permeable concrete is a type of pavement that allows water to flow into the ground.

The park also has **permeable concrete** in the entrance and parking stalls. This reduces rainwater from the park.

Another important benefit is the park provides much needed green space. The park has playgrounds, an area to picnic, and walking trails for the community.

Sources: Middle Rio Grande Low Impact Developments: Projects for Storm Water Management (4th ed.) (2016), 6; available at www.xeriscapenm.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Arid-Lid-small.pdf; V. Sicaras, Public Works, "A county park unites residents of disparate housing developments" (Jul. 13, 2010), available at www.pwmag.com/facilities/grounds-parks-urban-forests/community-builder_o.



Center for Neighborhood Technology, "Conservation Design Forum Project" (from flickr), licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0. Cropped from original.

An example of Permeable Pavement and Bioswales

Vacant Lot in La Mesa Transformed into Community Park

A vacant lot in the La Mesa neighborhood was turned into a community park. The park has native trees and shrubs, a garden, and seating areas. One benefit is that the park helps to manage rainwater. For example, there are basins that capture rainwater from the park. The park also has the added benefit of providing a place for community members to gather.

Source: Querencia Green, <https://querenciagreen.org/2014/02/06/la-mesa-neighborhood-garden-park-a-green-infrastructure-demonstration-project>; <https://querenciagreen.org/2014/03/25/designing-to-dig-la-mesa-garden-park>.

