

Truman Drive Greenway Project  
SWIG Watershed Grant

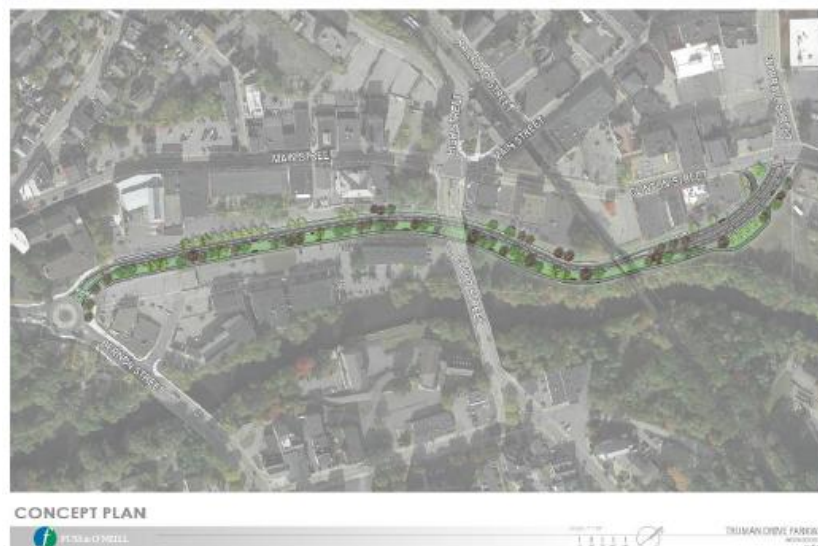
Final Report Abstract

Truman Drive was an underutilized, multi-lane road located between historic Downtown Woonsocket's Main Street and the Blackstone River. Previously, there were large parking areas on either side of the road with a bikeway on the southernmost lane guiding users out of the downtown area. Now, residents and visitors can enjoy spending time walking or riding the bike path next to a beautiful green space and be guided up to Main Street to embrace everything the city has to offer. The Truman Drive Greenway Project, funded by the 2023 SWIG Watershed Grant, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, and Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, transformed Downtown. The once underutilized roadway has been transformed into a safe two-way street, with effective green infrastructure along the bike path, easing pedestrian and bike access to Main Street.

City of Woonsocket  
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Truman Drive was once an underutilized multi-lane road, increasing runoff pollutants into the Blackstone River and guiding visitors out of downtown. Today, the transformed Truman Drive has changed landscape by reducing lanes, constructing a linear park serving as green infrastructure, and creating pedestrian access for individuals to enjoy Main Street from the greenway bike path. Between public engagement, city collaboration, and substantial grant funding, this project has exceeded expectations.

Prior to any groundbreaking construction activities, the Truman Drive Green Infrastructure Project underwent a series of design renditions, public comment feedback, and engineer consulting. These early stages produced a thorough green infrastructure plan to effectively treat stormwater runoff, preventing flow from directly entering the Blackstone River. The impervious surfaces linked to Truman Drive and its surrounding parking lots contributed to fecal coliform, enterococcus, total phosphorus, and soil erosion according to the RIDEM 303(d) findings addressed in the Total Maximum Daily Load Analysis (TMDL) for the Blackstone River Watershed final report<sup>1</sup>. Green infrastructure mitigation for this site not only addresses pollutant runoff but beautifies the Downtown landscape.



Beautifying downtown Woonsocket has had substantial benefits to the socio-economic status of Woonsocket residents, particularly for those living downtown. The bike

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur861/files/programs/benviron/water/quality/rest/pdfs/blackstn.pdf>

*Truman Drive Greenway Project is supported by Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Watershed Grants. SNEP Watershed Grants are funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through a collaboration with Restore America's Estuaries (RAE). For more on SNEP Watershed Grants, see [www.snepgrants.org](http://www.snepgrants.org)*

path has always connected neighboring towns through the City of Woonsocket, the only difference now being the beautification. It has become a safe and enjoyable path to travel on, and far more inviting to park the bike to enjoy a stroll on Main Street. Woonsocket residents can take pride in this linear park and collectively feel the benefits of visitors staying for genuine quality time, rather than a pass-through bike trail. Greenspace encourages physical activity, improving mental health and reducing stress. This growing urban park will improve property values and business growth, overall transitioning the desirability of Woonsocket.



In addition to boosting Woonsocket's socio-economic stability, Truman Drive's successful construction transformation now serves as an environmental restoration site. The linear green park has engineered infrastructure to remove known pollutants from stormwater runoff before it reaches the Blackstone River. Truman Drive was previously listed as a known point-source pollutant to the Blackstone River, as many former mill towns are. Restoration for the Blackstone Watershed will not happen overnight, but transitioning into a well-designed green infrastructure park will certainly reduce the concentration of pollutants from entering the waterway.

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Construction began in summer of 2024, and has been substantially completed as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the same year. This rapid transformation was successful due to the continued use of Engineering Firm, Fuss & O'Neill, who had completed the necessary permitting, public outreach, design renditions, and engineering scope for construction. Fuss & O'Neill then became responsible for the necessary bidding process to get a construction company selected, Manafort Brother's Inc, and oversaw all construction progression. Bi-weekly meetings were held at Woonsocket City Hall to ensure quality of Truman Drive construction was progressing as planned without any major challenges.



The \$3,000,000 Truman Drive Greenway Infrastructure Project would not have been possible without the support of grant funding. Three major grantors for the construction



element of this project from Southern New England Program Watershed Implementation Grants (SNEPWIG 2023), Rhode Island Department of Transportation's Stormwater Improvement Partnership award with Northern Rhode Island Conservation District, and the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank Municipal Resiliency Program Grant. It was collaboration and dedication among

these funders who made Truman Drive transform into the beautiful greenspace, environmentally restored, and socio-economic improvement success it is today.

Spring of 2025 will bring thriving foliage through establishment of strong rooted trees, floral architecture along the hillside, a punch list of final tasks to complete the landscape, and an incredible greenway visitors and residents can truly enjoy. The City of Woonsocket is committed to following through with the Operations and Maintenance of the infrastructure to meet quality control and longevity of the hard work completed this past year.

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