



3rd & Norris Playground

About *Green City, Clean Waters*

The *Green City, Clean Waters* plan is the City of Philadelphia's 25-year initiative to improve the quality of our waterways by installing green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) in our neighborhoods, coupled with traditional infrastructure like collection, pumping, and wastewater treatment plant enhancements. This plan is regulated and a direct result of the goals set forth by the Clean Water Act. Since the start of GCCW, we have constructed thousands of GSI systems throughout the city. These GSI projects consist of public investments along streets and in parks, private property incentives, and development regulations, which showcase multiple successful pathways toward cleaner local waterways.

About Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)

GSI combines vegetation (flowers, grasses & trees) and engineered systems (inlets & piping) to capture and collect stormwater runoff flowing from hard surfaces, such as streets and sidewalks. Vegetation and trees are planted on the top of a GSI system to soak up water while the stone bed underground is used to store as much stormwater runoff as possible. The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) maintains all functional aspects of all public GSI systems. Due to site constraints, PWD could not use plants here, and instead installed a large subsurface trench to manage stormwater runoff from local streets and sidewalks. Here the shape of the basketball court is about the same size as the underground basin. This basin uses inlets and piping to bring water in, is lined with a special 'geotextile fabric' to retain stormwater, and is filled with stone. This allowed PWD to provide a system with the dual benefits of stormwater management and upgraded recreation space.



Completed Basketball court at 3rd & Norris

Project Information

Address

263 W Norris St, Philadelphia, PA 19122

Neighborhood

Norris Square Neighborhood

Date Completed

July 2026

Watershed

Delaware

Council District

District 7 - Quetcy Lozada

Project Number

50346

Estimated Gallons of Stormwater Diverted from Combined Sewer System

1.02 million per year

Stormwater Management Practices

Subsurface Trench

Partners

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation (PPR), Council District 7 Office, Friends of 3rd & Norris Playground

Project Page URL

<https://water.phila.gov/projects/p50346/>



Top Left: Site prior to construction; **Top Right:** The site in active construction

Bottom Left: Completed basketball court adjacent to upgraded playground

How the Project Came To Be

PWD & PPR work together as often as projects and sites allow. In this case, these two city agencies partnered here because it presented a unique opportunity to manage local urban stormwater runoff to help PWD meet regulations, provided a chance to efficiently renovate the basketball court for recreational users, and allowed two city agencies to work together, alongside the community, to improve a valued recreational space.

Process & Funding

By combining agency resources, PWD & PPR were able to divide this site's needs between the two organizations and create an improved space for the community. PWD funded the design of the stormwater management features, including the subsurface trench, all associated piping and structural work, and also funded the basketball court's surface and the hoops, which totalled approximately \$800,000. PPR funded the upgrade of the adjacent playground, including new equipment and fencing. PWD plans to install GSI signage at this location soon, helping the community understand what is happening underground at this space.

Thank You

The PWD 3rd & Norris Playground project was a collaborative effort and would not have been possible without our partners. Thank you to Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, Councilmember Lozada's Office, and the 3rd and Norris Playground Friends Group for your efforts, your coordination, and your support.