Welcome Center at Ryerson Woods

Lake County Forest Preserves
www.LCFPD.org

Goals:

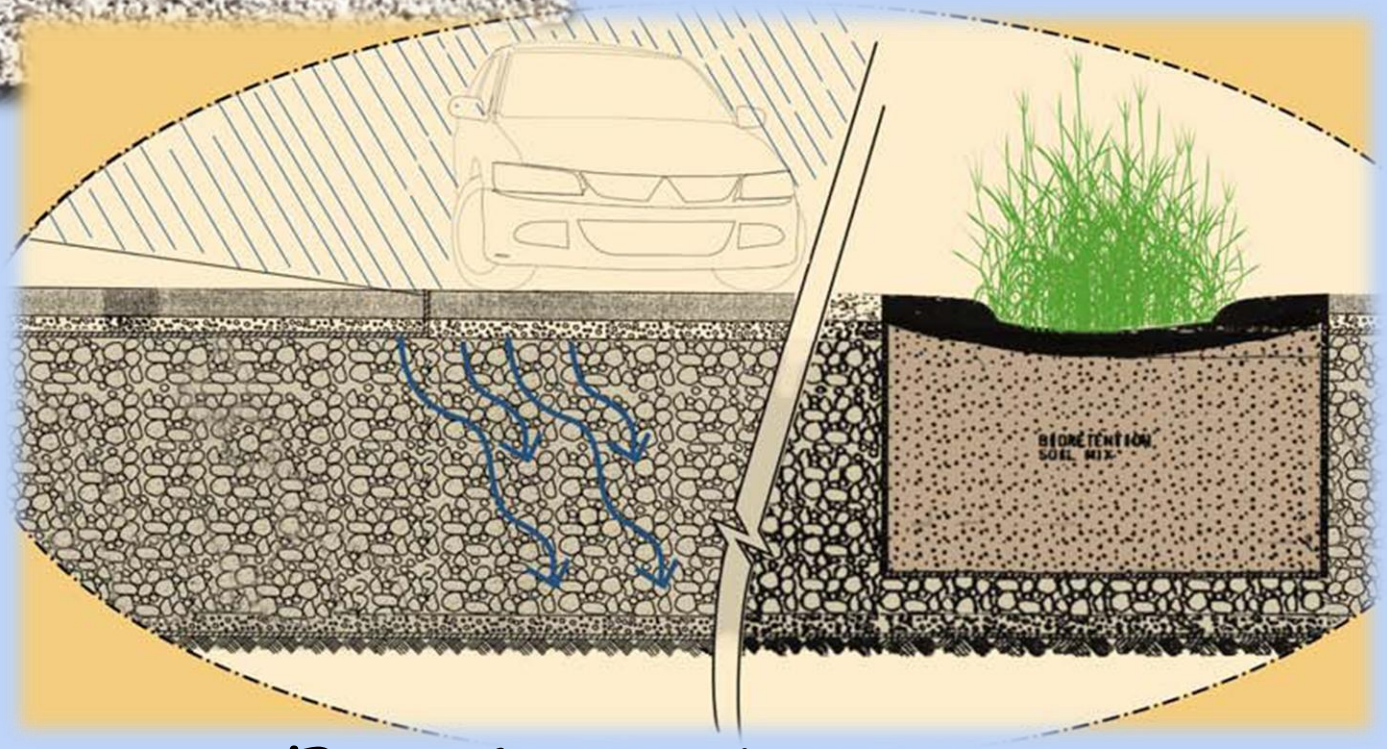
Highly energy efficient

Wise use of resources

Stormwater management

Rain Capture and Human Use

Rain Gardens



Porous Parking Lot

POROUS
ASPHALT
PAVEMENT

Project as a Teaching Tool

A Garden Ready for Rain

The wildflowers and other plants in the center of the driveway turn-around love water. In fact, the area is called a rain garden, and is created to collect rainwater and snowmelt from surrounding roadways, sidewalks and roofs. This garden collects water from a large area, but you can create a smaller version around your home.

Rain gardens are examples of a best management practice in handling stormwater. That is, a method of managing rainwater nad snowmelt that is cutting edge in the way it reduces non-point source pollutants. They allow water to move into the soil, replenishing groundwater supplies, instead of moving over land to rivers. This rain garden prevents stormwater from moving directly into the DesPlaines River.

The Pavement

The turnaround pavement is sloped to allow water to flow into the bowl shaped basin. In addition, some of the water from the roof of the Welcome Center is diverted to the rain garden through underground pipes. It will collect here and then slowly seep into the ground within 72 hours. This rain garden prevents stormwater, which picks up pollutants from the road, from moving directly into the DesPlaines River.

Native Plants

Native plants work best in rain gardens because of their long roots. They clean the water of pollutants and help it soak into the soil. Native plants can most easily handle seasonal water variations and will provide habitat for local insects, birds and other animals.

Your Own Rain Garden

Rain gardens are relatively easy to construct and once established are easy to maintain. A smaller rain garden on the south side of the Welcome Center is more the size that people might use around a home. Ask for information in the Welcome Center about constructing your own rain garden.

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

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Rain is grace;

rain is the sky condescending to the earth;

without rain, there would be no life.

John Updike