



# NATICK HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT

## Protection from Future Flooding in Natick

**Climate change isn't coming—it's here.** Precipitation during heavy rain events increased by 55% between 1958 and 2016 in the northeastern United States. And, as our climate continues to warm, we are **expecting even more severe storms.**

**What does this mean for our watershed? More flooding.** And, in our highly urbanized watershed that is home to over a million people, that means homes, businesses, critical infrastructure, roadways, and more are vulnerable to flood damage.

### WORKING TOGETHER FOR REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Formed in 2019, the **Charles River Climate Compact (CRCC)** is a collaboration of twenty-eight cities and towns, led by CRWA, working together to adapt to climate change. In 2021, the team developed the **Charles River Flood Model (CRFM)** which shows when and where flooding will occur as our climate changes and tests out the impact of potential flood reduction solutions.

Through this collaborative effort, the CRCC has identified several potential flood solutions, including a high-priority flood storage and wetland restoration opportunity at Natick High School.



**NATICK HIGH SCHOOL** is located on the banks of Dug Pond in West Natick. Low-lying, the location is vulnerable to present-day and future flooding. Additionally, water quality in nearby Dug Pond is significantly degraded, with bacteria or cyanobacteria often impacting safe recreation at Memorial Beach.

**By the Numbers:**

**2+** MILLION GALLONS

OF FLOODWATERS STORED ON SITE

**24,500** sq.ft.

OF WETLANDS CREATED TO TREAT STORMWATER

**3.5** acres

OF ADDITIONAL FLOOD STORAGE IDENTIFIED



*This project is possible thanks to the critical support of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant Program and Community Funded Project grant sponsored by Congresswoman Katherine Clark.*

### FLOOD STORAGE AT NATICK HIGH

The proposed project will **significantly increase flood storage capacity** at Natick High School to protect this critical facility and surrounding areas, and restore the adjacent wetlands to improve water quality and habitat. The project was selected for its flood mitigation impacts, local community support, benefit to environmental justice populations, and water quality improvements.

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## Three Nature-based Solutions for Natick High:

### 1 UNDERGROUND STORAGE AT THE ATHLETIC FIELD

Redesign of the athletic field could incorporate underground storage to **hold floodwaters during extreme weather** and slowly return water to the groundwater, with no impact on recreational facilities.

### 2 WETLAND RESTORATION

A little-used, auxiliary parking lot could be converted into a constructed wetland to **renaturalize the space and store floodwaters**. Additionally, this will build habitat and biodiversity, reduce stormwater pollution, and improve water quality in nearby Dug Pond.

### 3 ADDITIONAL GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Natick High School already has several rain gardens and rainwater harvesting surrounding the school. Enhancements to existing green infrastructure could **store additional floodwaters, further improve water quality, cool surrounding areas, and serve as an educational opportunity for students**.



## THE OPPORTUNITY

Making projects a reality takes funding and considerable community support and partnership. The project is currently at the concept design stage and under review by the community, including Natick High School students. Natick will seek to leverage additional state and federal funding for construction, and if completed, this project could serve as a model for other cities and towns exploring similar approaches to climate change.

**QUESTIONS?** Contact Climate Compact Director Julie Wood, [jwood@crwa.org](mailto:jwood@crwa.org).