

# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS FOR HOMES



## PILOT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### Introduction

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's (SFPUC) Pilot Residential Green Infrastructure Grant Program (Pilot Program) will provide funding for the installation of approved stormwater management facilities on residential properties in San Francisco. The goals of the Pilot Program are to motivate residential customers to collect stormwater on their properties using green stormwater infrastructure technologies, improve the performance of SFPUC's sewer system by reducing the amount of stormwater runoff entering the system, educate San Francisco residents about the City's sewer system and stormwater management goals, and reduce the stormwater portion of customers' sewer service charge.

The SFPUC intends to use the Pilot Program to test out a variety of green infrastructure facility types at the residential scale, and gather information on the costs, technical barriers, and administrative structure to inform the implementation of a future, full-scale, city-wide program. The Pilot Program will fund construction of green infrastructure facilities, including rain gardens, rainwater harvesting cisterns, permeable pavement, and infiltration trenches at homes in San Francisco. The locations of projects during the Pilot Program will be evenly distributed between westside neighborhoods (residential properties located in the Inner Sunset, Outer Sunset, or Parkside neighborhoods, zip codes 94122 or 94116) and eastside neighborhoods (residential properties located in the Bayview, Sunnyside, or Visitacion Valley neighborhoods, zip codes 94124 or 94134).

### PILOT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

An eligible program participant must be a owner of residential property that meets the property eligibility criteria below. Property owners of eligible renter-occupied properties may participate in the Pilot Program with the approval and consent of both the property owner and tenant(s).

### PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the Pilot Program, the project must be located on a residential property in the City and County of San Francisco that meets the following criteria:

- The property must be located within the (4) Eligible Zip Codes: **94122, 94116, 94124, or 94134.**
- The property must be a single family home or small apartment with **6 or fewer units** with a total parcel size of **6,000 sq. ft. or less.**
- You must have an active residential **SFPUC service account.**

The SFPUC may consider residential properties with more than six dwelling units on a case-by-case basis. The project must be located on the residential property itself and may not be located in the public right-of-way. The SFPUC reserves the right to approve or exclude any property at the discretion of the SFPUC.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please visit [sfpub.org/programs/grants/green-infrastructure-grants-homes](https://sfpub.org/programs/grants/green-infrastructure-grants-homes) where you will find Residential Design Guidance, and other program materials. If you have questions, please contact us at [Glhomes@sfgwater.org](mailto:Glhomes@sfgwater.org).



**Transform  
the Storm**

# WHAT IS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

*IN SF, WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS*

Each year, more than 10 billion gallons of rain falls on our city, enough for each resident to shower twice a day for an entire year. That's a lot of water. But with climate change, heavy storms (such as atmospheric rivers) means much of this water hits our city's landscape at once.

Storms wash pollutants like motor oil, street litter, and pesticides into our city's mostly combined sewer system. They mix with sanitary sewage (i.e. from toilets, showers, and sinks) before getting sent to treatment plants for cleaning and release back to the Bay or ocean. Thanks to innovative system designs and upgrades from the Clean Water Act, our surrounding waters are cleaner than they've been in generations.

But more intense storms mean a greater risk of overwhelming the sewer system. That's where green infrastructure comes in. Green infrastructure is a set of stormwater management tools that capture, slow down, filter, infiltrate, and/or reuse stormwater to help reduce the burden on the city's sewer system. Some examples of green infrastructure include rain gardens, permeable pavement, rainwater harvesting cisterns, and infiltration trenches.

Green infrastructure can also provide a variety of social and environmental co-benefits in addition to reducing the amount of stormwater runoff that enters the sewer system. For example, rain gardens take advantage of the natural processes of soils and plants in order to slow down and filter stormwater to keep it from overwhelming our sewer system, while also incorporating vegetation and trees that can provide urban habitat and help cool our city during heat waves. Rainwater harvesting cisterns capture rainfall during the wet season that can be reused for irrigation during the dry season, which helps reduce the amount of drinking water we use.

For more information on the types of green infrastructure, refer to the Residential Green Infrastructure Design Guidance available at [sfpu.org/programs/grants/green-infrastructure-grants-homes](https://sfpu.org/programs/grants/green-infrastructure-grants-homes) and [Appendix A of the San Francisco Stormwater Management Requirements and Design Guidelines](#).

## RESIDENTIAL RAIN GARDEN

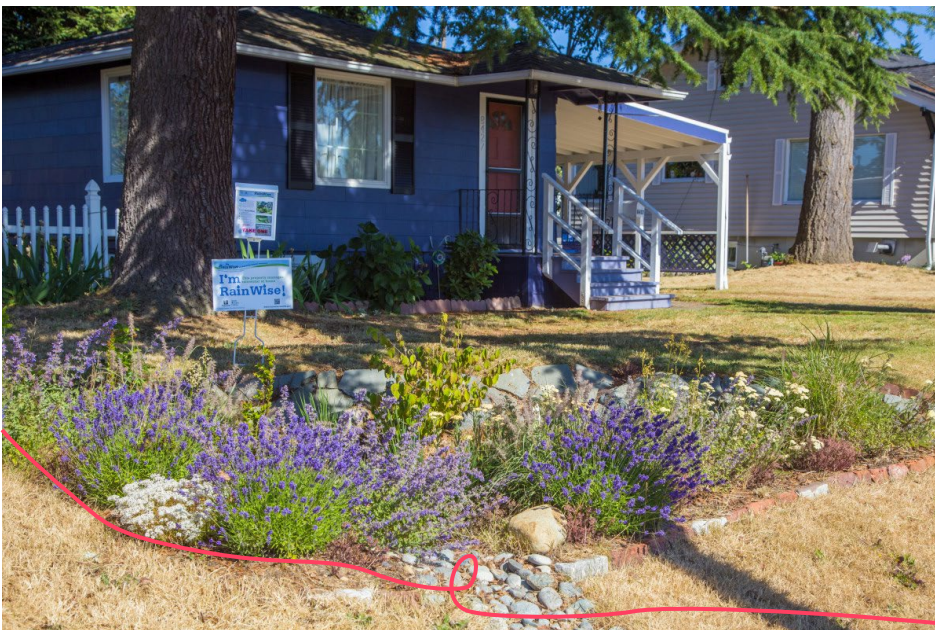


Photo Source: Seattle Public Utilities, RainWise Program



# PILOT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## Pilot Program Overview

The SFPUC has hired a Program Administrator, Greenprint Partners to support the implementation of the Pilot Program. Greenprint Partners (or Consultant) will support the Pilot Program through outreach and participant recruitment, conducting residential property assessments, managing grant funds and issuing payments to participants, and overall program management. Program participants will be required to enter into a Sub-Grant Agreement with Greenprint Partners.

Cumulative payments to homeowners under the Pilot Program will not exceed \$150,000. If the first two years of the Pilot Program are successful and at the discretion of the SFPUC, the SFPUC may choose to extend the Program duration and to scale up the Program by increasing funding for additional green infrastructure projects on residential properties.

The SFPUC will accept applications and award grants through a rolling, first-come-first-serve basis, subject to available funding. To receive funding under the Pilot Program, an applicant must satisfy the Program Eligibility Criteria, as set forth below. After Pilot Program funds have been exhausted, interested homeowners will be added to an outreach list and will be contacted if/when additional funding becomes available and SFPUC launches a future full-scale, city-wide program.

The following types of green infrastructure facilities are eligible for the Pilot Program. Additional facility types may be considered on a case-by-case basis and with the approval of the SFPUC. Green infrastructure facilities should be sized to meet the Stormwater Performance Requirements outlined below.

- Rain Garden
- Rainwater Harvesting Cistern
- Impervious Surface Removal and Replacement with Permeable Pavement
- Infiltration Trench

### *RESIDENTIAL RAINWATER HARVESTING SYSTEM*



## Minimum Pilot Program Deliverables:

Because this is a Pilot Program, the SFPUC intends to test out a variety of green infrastructure facility types in a variety of neighborhoods with different property characteristics. The following distribution of project types and locations must be achieved through the Pilot Program. If an applicant proposes a project type that would result in the Pilot Program failing to achieve the following distribution of project types, then the application would be ineligible. The applicant will be asked to either revise the application or choose to be contacted if/when additional funding becomes available and SFPUC launches a future full-scale, city-wide program:

- **Location of Projects:** Equally distribute pilot projects on residential properties between westside neighborhoods (residential properties located in the Inner Sunset, Outer Sunset, or Parkside neighborhoods, zip codes 94122 or 94116) and eastside neighborhoods (residential properties located in the Bayview, Sunnydale, or Visitacion Valley neighborhoods, zip codes 94124 or 94134).
- **Project Types:** At least three (3) unique eligible green infrastructure project types on residential properties located in the Inner Sunset, Outer Sunset, or Parkside neighborhoods (zip codes 94122 or 94116). At least three (3) unique eligible green infrastructure project types on residential properties located in the Bayview, Sunnydale, or Visitacion Valley neighborhoods (zip codes 94124 or 94134). One facility type, or multiple facility types may be installed per property. Green infrastructure facility types requested by homeowners beyond those in the eligible facilities list may be considered on a case-by-case basis and are subject to approval of the SFPUC.

If the Consultant is unable to recruit property owners located in the designated zip codes after a best faith effort, proposed installations on eligible residential properties in adjacent or nearby zip codes within the City and County of San Francisco may be considered on a case-by-case basis and with approval of the SFPUC.

### Example Scenario to Meet Minimum Pilot Program Deliverables:

| Westside Projects (zip codes 94122 or 94116): | Eastside Projects (zip codes 94124 or 94134):                        |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (2) Rain Gardens                              | (1) Rain Garden                                                      |
| (1) Rainwater Harvesting Cistern              | (2) Rainwater Harvesting Cisterns                                    |
| (1) Infiltration Trench                       | (1) Impervious surface removal and replacement with permeable pavers |



## Stormwater Performance Requirements

All green infrastructure facilities should strive to capture stormwater runoff from the 90th percentile storm (the design storm), equivalent to a 0.75-inch total depth over the Drainage Management Area (DMA). There is no minimum DMA that must be achieved per residential property, however the contractor selected by the property owner should make their best effort to maximize the DMA of each project and strive to capture a minimum DMA of 500 square feet of impervious surface (i.e., roof, pavement, or other hardscape).

The facility sizing requirement is consistent with the stormwater performance requirement of the SFPUC's large-parcel Green Infrastructure Grant Program (GIGP). The GIGP Performance Calculator can be used as a tool to establish the minimum sizing for various green infrastructure facility types per DMA and soil type. The GIGP Performance Calculator can be downloaded at the following link (<http://sfpuc.org/gig-application>).

## Maximum Grant Award per Property

Cumulative payments to homeowners under the Pilot Program will not exceed \$150,000. The maximum cost of construction services for any individual residential property shall not exceed \$40,000. The average cost of construction services for all completed projects should be less than \$19,000 per individual residential property.

If the first two years of the Pilot Program are successful and at the sole discretion of the SFPUC, the SFPUC may choose to extend the Program duration and to scale up the Program by increasing funding for additional green infrastructure projects on residential properties.

*RESIDENTIAL-SCALE RAIN GARDEN*



*Photo Credit: Philadelphia Water Department, Rain Check Program*

## Eligible Grant Costs

Grant funds may only be used to cover the cost of construction services incurred by the property owner's selected contractor(s) as defined by the SFPUC-approved contractor's bid. All project costs related to the construction of the proposed green infrastructure facility are eligible for grant reimbursement. Grant funds cannot be used to pay for non-green infrastructure project elements, such as furnishings or decorative items.

| Eligible Costs:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Ineligible Costs:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Materials and labor for construction of Green Infrastructure facilities (surface and subsurface):</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Labor</li><li>- Soil</li><li>- Plants</li><li>- Trees</li><li>- Aggregate</li><li>- Permeable surfaces</li><li>- Concrete</li><li>- Excavation</li><li>- Grading</li><li>- Underdrains</li><li>- Overflow devices</li><li>- Irrigation</li></ul></li><li>• Replacement in-kind, if applicable</li><li>• Disconnection and/or modification of roof downspouts</li><li>• Regrading of surfaces draining to green infrastructure facilities</li><li>• Impervious surface removal</li><li>• Non-construction activities:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Construction and Project Management</li><li>- Planning</li><li>- Permitting</li><li>- Environmental Review (CEQA)</li><li>- Design</li><li>- Plant palette selection</li><li>- Geotechnical investigations</li><li>- Structural investigations</li><li>- Engineering surveys</li></ul></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On-going maintenance (including any contractor maintenance period)</li><li>• Non-green infrastructure components, including but not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Decorative items</li><li>- Benches</li><li>- Play equipment</li><li>- Lighting</li><li>- Amenities</li></ul></li><li>• Monitoring or research</li><li>• Land costs</li></ul> |

# APPLICATION PROCESS

## Application Review

The SFPUC will accept applications and award grants on a first come, first serve rolling basis. Grant applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received, and will be awarded based on whether the applicant satisfies the Program Eligibility Criteria, subject to availability of funds and all City budgetary requirements.

## Residential Property Assessments and Concept Development

The Consultant will schedule and conduct residential property assessments with interested property owners. For each property assessment, the Consultant will complete the site assessment checklist, provided by the SFPUC, to document the potential drainage management area, the available space for eligible stormwater management facilities, roof downspout configurations, property owner preferences for facility types, and property-specific constraints or opportunities for green infrastructure facilities. The Consultant will provide recommendations for the most appropriate stormwater facility type from the list of eligible facilities, if any. In some cases the site assessment checklist may reveal that the site is not eligible or that the construction of green infrastructure facilities on the property is technically infeasible.

The Consultant will work with property owners to develop recommended project concept proposals that demonstrate the proposed projects meet the Program Eligibility Criteria. The Consultant will review proposed project concepts with each property owner for their approval.

## Contractor Bid Solicitation and Selection

Once a project concept is developed, the property owner will solicit a qualified contractor(s) to install approved green infrastructure facilities. Property owners should make a best faith effort to obtain three (3) bids for the construction of each project. Construction services must be performed by a licensed contractor. The SFPUC will provide a Green Infrastructure Vendor Resource List of contractors that offer design and construction services to serve as a resource for program participants. The contractor(s) will be responsible for meeting all legal, permit and insurance requirements as well as perform high quality work. The Consultant will not be permitted to perform construction services, enter into construction contracts with contractors or homeowners, or direct the contractors' means and methods. The inclusion of a contractor in the Green Infrastructure Vendor Resource List is not a warranty or representation as to the contractor's responsibility, skills, or experience. Owners are responsible for independently vetting their contractors regardless of whether they are included in the Green Infrastructure Vendor Resource List.

## Application

The Consultant will be responsible for submitting recommended project packages to the SFPUC for review and approval, including project location and concept-level design, stormwater performance estimate, the fully-negotiated contract between homeowner and selected contractor ready for signature, construction schedule, and contractor's bid. The Consultant will respond to all SFPUC comments on submitted project proposals. The SFPUC will issue approval of each project proposal before the project is initiated. Following SFPUC approval, the Consultant will facilitate the signing of a Sub-Grant Agreement between the Consultant and homeowner.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## Grant Disbursement

The Consultant will manage \$150,000 in grant funds on behalf of SFPUC. Following SFPUC's approval of each project, the Consultant will issue upfront payments to homeowners to pay for construction services. The Consultant will review each construction invoice submitted by the homeowner and provide upfront payment to the homeowner for all eligible costs, as outlined in the Program Eligibility Criteria. Cumulative payments to homeowners under the Grant Agreement will not exceed \$150,000.

Construction funding will be disbursed by the Consultant to homeowners in two payments, subject to the documentation requirements set forth below:

- First per project grant payments will be 50% of the amount of the approved contract between the property owner and its selected contractor.
- Second per project grant payments will be the remaining 50% of the amount of the approved contract between the property owner and its selected contractor.

SFPUC will reimburse the Consultant on a monthly basis for upfront payments for construction services. Requirements for the reimbursement of each per project construction payment are documented as follows:

| Payment Number | Required Documentation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Payment 1      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Completed Request for Funds (Appendix C), including copies of paid invoices for upfront payments for construction expenditures, or written request for advanced payment to be paid by Grantee no more than 30 days after the disbursement</li><li>2. SFPUC Project Approval Letter</li><li>3. Signed Contract between Owner and Owner's Contractor</li><li>4. Owner's Approved Contractor Bid for Construction</li><li>5. CEQA Determination or Exemption</li></ol> |
| Payment 2      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Completed Request for Funds (Appendix C), including copies of paid invoices for all construction expenditures and proof of payment of previously disbursed grant funds</li><li>2. SFPUC Project Completion Notification</li></ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



## Taxes

A grant counts as income and therefore may be taxable. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to determine whether a tax liability exists. The Consultant will be responsible for documenting tax obligations and for documenting the transfer of tax liability to the homeowners, as appropriate.

The Grant Agreement between SFPUC and the Consultant contains additional requirements related to taxes, insurance, and other matters.

## Permits and Environmental Review

All projects must comply with applicable local, state, and federal permit requirements. The SFPUC will disburse grant funds for the construction of each individual project only following the SFPUC's review and consideration of the completed review of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). The City retains sole and absolute discretion to, among other things, (1) modify each project to mitigate significant environmental impacts or (2) determine not to proceed with the disbursement of grant funds for construction of the project based upon information generated by the environmental review process.

## Sub-Grant Agreement

Following SFPUC approval, the Consultant will facilitate the signing of a sub-grant agreement between the Consultant and homeowner. The Sub-Grant Agreement includes the following terms, but not limited to: contractor insurance and license requirements, grant payment and submittal requirements, eligible uses of grant funds, tax documentation requirements, releases of liability of City and the Consultant, maintenance obligation of the homeowner, and grant SFPUC reasonable access to the property to periodically inspect the green infrastructure facility.

A copy of the Sub-Grant Agreement template can be found at [sfpuc.org/programs/grants/green-infrastructure-grants-homes](https://sfpuc.org/programs/grants/green-infrastructure-grants-homes). This document is subject to change, and the homeowners (Sub-Grantees) must sign the forms of these agreements as they exist at the time of execution to participate in the Pilot Program.

*PERMEABLE DRIVEWAY*



# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

## Construction

During construction the homeowner will grant the Consultant, sub-Consultants, and SFPUC permission to enter the construction site and inspect the project at reasonable times to be arranged in advance by mutual agreement. The Consultant will be responsible for tracking critical construction milestones related to the installation of the specific stormwater management features proposed at the site. The Consultant and sub-Consultants will be available to observe installation of each green infrastructure facility and document key construction activities. The Consultant will track project schedules and facilitate project progress. The SFPUC and the Consultant shall not assume any liability for errors or omissions in the construction. The property owners' sole remedies shall be against the contractor and other persons and/or entities the property owner procured to design and/or perform the work.

Once construction is complete, the Consultant and homeowner will schedule a final walkthrough of the project with SFPUC to ensure that all stormwater management features were built as agreed upon in the SFPUC Project Approval Letter. If the project is determined to be complete, the SFPUC will issue a Project Completion Notification to the homeowner and Consultant.

# POST-CONSTRUCTION

## Maintenance

The homeowner will be responsible for all operations and maintenance of the project. The Consultant will provide an in-person maintenance training for each project. The Consultant will educate homeowners on how to maintain their green infrastructure once it is constructed. Maintenance training materials will be provided by the SFPUC and will be adapted by the Consultant to fit the needs of individual projects.

## Inspections

The homeowner will grant SFPUC permission to enter the property at reasonable times to be arranged in advance by mutual agreement to inspect the project. If the stormwater management function of the project is found to be impaired, the SFPUC will issue a notice to perform in writing to the homeowner to complete all required maintenance activities.

## Stormwater Credits

As part of the proposed 2023-2024 rates package, the SFPUC is also proposing a Stormwater Credit available to customers that capture stormwater on their property using green infrastructure to help improve the performance of the sewer system. If adopted, customers that have green infrastructure on their property will be eligible for a monthly credit on their Stormwater Charge. SFPUC will post updates at [www.sfpuc.org](http://www.sfpuc.org) as information becomes available and approved.