

City of Waukee Stormwater Grant Program

Stormwater in Waukee

Stormwater runoff is the portion of rainfall or snowmelt that does not soak into the soil or evaporate into the air, but flows from surfaces into nearby streams and storm sewer systems. Stormwater runoff can create drainage and flooding problems, and it picks up pollutants such as oils, grease, fertilizers, pesticides, litter, and metal. Typically, this runoff is not treated to remove pollutants. It is collected and conveyed by ditches, culverts, intakes, catch basins and storm sewers, and discharges directly into streams, rivers, and lakes. The contaminants in stormwater negatively impact the water quality of our local streams and lakes.

Federal laws regulating stormwater runoff require the City of Waukee to maintain a comprehensive stormwater quality management program to protect and improve water quality. To enable the City to manage stormwater, each customer of Waukee contributes a Stormwater Utility Fee. This Utility Fee pays for a portion of operations and maintenance costs of the stormwater management programs and facilities.

Intent of the Grant Program

The Stormwater Grant Program uses a portion of the Stormwater Utility Fees to assist with stormwater management on private property. These funds may be granted to property owners to improve drainage, improve stormwater quality, and repair stormwater facilities such as swales, streambanks, and drain tile. The Program does not cover repairs to homes or interior work; these funds are for exterior work only. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Installation of a drain tile in a wet yard.
- Measures to prevent erosion, including expense for a contractor to place bank reinforcement.
- Professional engineering services for the design of a storm water best management practice.
- Best management practices (BMPs) listed below (limited to a maximum of \$1,000 per each BMP or 50% of the total BMP cost, whichever is less).
 - Soil quality restoration (SQR)
 - Rain gardens
 - Bio-retention cells
 - Native Landscaping
- Rain barrels (Limited to \$50 or the total amount paid for the rain barrel, whichever is less).

The program does not cover maintenance, hard landscaping or other aesthetic improvements. The program does not include any items related to sump pumps, including the removal of sump pumps connected to a sanitary sewer main. The program does not cover the dredging of retention or detention ponds (any work below normal water level).

Who is eligible to request funding?

All properties located within the corporate limits of the City of Waukee that pay the Stormwater Utility Fee are eligible to apply for funding. The applicant(s) applying for the grant must own the property and the property must have had a full certificate of occupancy for at least one year. **If at any time the qualifications for funding are not met, the grant award may be revoked.**

Qualifications for Funding

City staff will review the grant submittal to verify the project meets the intent of the program. The property owner is highly encouraged to discuss the project's eligibility with City staff prior to the official submittal of the application. Depending on the magnitude of the project, engineering drawings or separate approvals or permits may be required (for example, City Council or Iowa DNR). All work associated with the project, including any additional engineering design or permitting, is the responsibility of the property owner. SQR funding is limited to only once per property. See below for additional guidelines on SQR grants.

Each grant request will be reviewed individually, taking into account the current conditions, anticipated conditions after work, and use of stormwater best management practices. The project must comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

A project that is started before the grant is approved will be ineligible for funding.

The only exception to this is a property owner who completed eligible work in conjunction with a neighbor's grant award. This property owner may submit for a grant for this work the following year, with the understanding that there is no guarantee of funding (this project will be subject to the same submittal and approval rules as other projects). Again, the property owner is highly encouraged to discuss this situation with City staff prior to beginning the project.

For the Grant Program, projects must be completed and all paperwork submitted for reimbursement by the end of the fiscal year it is approved (e.g. a project approved for construction in FY 2021 requires completion by June 30, 2021).

If a grant is approved, a hold harmless agreement will be required to be signed by all property owners associated with the grant; see the section below on the "Hold Harmless Agreement".

If a grant is approved, a single reimbursement will be awarded for eligible expenses at the completion of the project. The grant amount is a not-to-exceed amount; any additional funding needed to complete the project is the responsibility of the property owner.

The grant award is for the project plan and timeline presented in the application. The Applicant must immediately notify the Program Administrator of any changes by providing a detailed written explanation. Written approval from the Program Administrator must be received prior to making changes to the proposed work or schedule in order to keep the grant award in good standing.

Qualifying expenses could include cost of materials, required permit fees, engineering fees for design work, and contractor costs for installation. Reimbursement for the property owner's labor/time will not be allowed, only actual out of pocket expenses including materials and equipment rental will be reimbursed. Project expenses that are not eligible for funding should be clearly itemized in the application and invoices.

Grant Funding Limits

The grant will pay 50% of the qualifying expenses up to a maximum contribution per project as noted below. The grant program receives \$50,000 in funding each fiscal year, pending approval by the Waukeee City Council.

Standard Grant Funding Maximum Limits:

- \$1,000 for SQR, per property (see more details below).
- \$1,000 per BMP listed on page 5.
- \$5,000 per individual single-family or townhome property, inclusive of any funds for SQR or other BMPs.
- \$20,000 per Home Owners' Association.
- \$5,000 for commercial properties paying up to 5 ERUs per month. An additional \$1,000 would be allowed for each additional ERU, up to a maximum of \$20,000 per project. For example, a property with 8 ERUs would be eligible for \$8,000; 20 ERUs or greater would be eligible for \$20,000.
- \$20,000 maximum for any project, regardless of number of applicants or size of property. Adjacent property owners could work together to create a larger project; for example, tiling several rear yards. In this case, the grant limit increases by \$5,000 with each additional property owner to a maximum of \$20,000 per project.

Soil Quality Restoration Funding Limits:

SQR for a lawn can improve the organic material in the topsoil and increase the absorption of storm water to reduce runoff and improve lawn health. The process typically involves aeration then application of compost, followed by watering as needed. The grant will pay up to 50% of SQR. The maximum funding available for single-family residential property is \$1,000. For larger SQR treatments (over 10,000 sf) on commercial properties, industrial properties, or outlots owned by Home Owners' Associations, funds may be awarded up to \$5,000 per property. A Hold Harmless is not required for an SQR-only project.

Grant Application Information Required

1. Use attached template, and attach additional information as needed.
2. Contact information for applicant(s) to include, name, address, phone number, and email address. If multiple properties are involved, the main contact person is to be designated.
3. Detailed project description including location and sketch of the project.
4. Construction schedule.
5. Estimated project cost, including a breakdown of qualifying expenses and the grant amount being requested.

6. The Hold Harmless (except for SQR-only grants) Agreement and W-9 forms are required but do not need to be submitted with the application; these will be required after the grant is awarded and prior to reimbursement.

Application Submittal

Applications will be accepted year round until all grant funds are allocated. To apply for the grant, use the attached Application Form.

Funding Reimbursement

Approved grants may submit for reimbursement starting July 1st of the grant year. In order for a property owner to be reimbursed, the property owner will be required to provide itemized receipts with proof of payment for the qualifying work. The City will review the work, including a site visit and a follow-up with the contractor, to verify it was installed in compliance with the grant application. Projects must be completed and reimbursements submitted within the timeframe described above in “Qualifications for Funding”. Reimbursements that are requested after this time may be denied, as the funds may have been re-committed to other projects. When a Stormwater Grant is awarded, the property owners shall be required to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement. A sample Hold Harmless Agreement is attached to this document. As a condition of the grant, the City will, in some cases, need to issue an IRS form 1099 to the grant recipient. Therefore, the recipient of the reimbursement monies must provide a completed a W-9 form, including a valid Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number, to the City upon approval of the grant application. The W-9 form will be provided by the City to recipients.

- The applicant would be responsible for all costs. The City would reimburse after the final costs and receipts have been incurred.
 - Itemized and dated paid invoices must accompany the rebate application.
- The project must be completed within the fiscal year that it is approved.
- The City would require access to private property for evaluation of the BMP application, prior to construction, during construction and during the final inspection of the BMP.
- Implementation of an approved project will be the sole responsibility of the property owner.
- The City will not be liable for personal injury or property damage resulting from said work.
- Projects approved for funding carry no implied warranty by the City.
- The funded BMP must be maintained for a minimum period of three years. All maintenance costs will be the responsibility of the property owner.
- The applicant will be responsible for obtaining all applicable permits. The application approval will not constitute a permit. This includes the required notification of Iowa One Call before digging.
- Notify the City when the project is complete and ready for a final inspection.
- Rebates are subject to the availability of funds.
- Rebate checks will be issued to utility account-holder unless otherwise established prior to submission of application.
- This program is subject to change or cancellation without notice.

The following Stormwater BMPs have been approved by the City of Waukeee for the Stormwater Grant Program:

Rain gardens are landscaped depressions that capture rain water runoff from roofs, driveways/sidewalks, streets or compacted yards. The rainfall runoff captured in a rain garden is temporarily ponded, before infiltrating/percolating down through the soil. The installation of a rain garden helps restore a landscape's ability to manage water more sustainably by allowing rainfall to be absorbed through the soil to recharge groundwater and minimize runoff.

Bio-retention cells may be needed if the selected site does not allow for adequate percolation of the soil for the installation of a rain garden. Bio-retention involves the capture and infiltration of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces to reduce water pollution and stabilize stream flows. Bio-retention cells have an engineered and constructed subgrade, due to altered and compacted soil conditions. The subgrade ensures adequate percolation of captured runoff by using a perforated drain pipe in a rock bed covered by a sandy soil mixture. A limiting factor for placement of a bio-retention cell may be the lack of an outlet for the subdrain. An outlet is necessary to ensure proper drainage. The subdrain often outlets into the storm sewer or can discharge down gradient of the bio-retention cell.

Soil Quality Restoration (SOR) is a process of improving soil health on new or existing lawns. The process uses tillage, aeration and compost to increase infiltration and organic matter content. Soil quality restoration leads to healthier, more functional soils and to landscapes that can absorb more rain and shed less runoff.

Native Landscaping is planting Iowa native plants and grasses with deep root systems, which create open space in the soil below and allow for rainfall to percolate into the ground. Native plants are adapted to Iowa's climate and tolerate weather extremes. Strategically placing native plants will enhance the landscape's ability to infiltrate and manage stormwater. In residential settings, this may consist of dense bands of prairie or woodland plants on the downslope side of the property to filter and absorb rainfall and runoff.

- A minimum area of 100 sf is required for reimbursement.
- Examples of approved native plants and seed mixes can be found at <https://iowastormwater.org/rainscaping/native-landscaping/>
- Provide a maintenance plan for the first three years after installation.

Rain barrels are used for the collection and storage of rainwater from rooftops by capturing water from a downspout. The water collected in a rain barrel may then be used at a later time for watering plants, lawns and gardens. In addition to being a BMP that provides reduction in stormwater runoff, rain barrels are a practice that introduces water conservation and education to customers regarding the amount of stormwater that is shed from impervious surfaces.

This portion of the program would provide a rebate for Stormwater Utility customers purchasing a rain barrel. The rebate will be for the purchase price, provided by receipt, up to a maximum amount of \$50, on a one-time basis per customer.

- Purchase a new rain barrel with a minimum capacity of 50 gallons.
- Rain barrels previously used as rain barrels or individuals who have previously received a rebate will not be eligible.
- Installation of the rain barrel will be the sole responsibility of the property owner. The City will not be liable for personal injury or property damage resulting from said installation.
- The rain barrel must be installed prior to submission of an application. All rebate payments are subject to verification of installation.
- Itemized and dated invoices must accompany the rebate application.
- Applications must be submitted within 30 days of installation of the rain barrel unless otherwise established prior to submission of the application.
 - Rebate checks will be issued to utility account-holder unless otherwise established prior to submission of application.
 - Incentives paid will not total more than the cost of the rain barrel purchased.
- Rain barrels may be subject to random inspection.
- Rain barrels receiving rebate would be prohibited from sale for profit. Rain barrels sold for profit may be subject to a charge to the account holder's utility bill equal to the rebate received.
- Rebates will be subject to the availability of funds.
- This program will be subject to change or cancellation without notice.

New methods included in the Iowa Stormwater Management Manual (ISWMM) may be added to the approved list of BMPs upon review by the Program Administrator.