

Stormwater Incentives

Frequently Asked Questions



Tree Trench and Pervious Pavement at The Radian Hotel

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Eligibility

1. Are non-profits eligible?

Yes

2. Are public and private schools eligible?

Yes

3. Are mixed use projects eligible? If so, would they be eligible 100% or with a ratio of commercial to residential?

Yes – Mixed use properties are 100% eligible for a stormwater grant. Mixed use properties are technically considered commercial. If there is any type of (legal) commercial use on a property, the City classifies it as non-residential. Therefore, 100% of the project is eligible.

4. Are residential development projects eligible?

No – The long term operation and maintenance of stormwater management systems is a difficult responsibility to place on residential customers. In addition, residential property owners currently pay a flat stormwater charge and are not eligible for credits at this time. Residential customers are encouraged to check out PWD's Rain Check program at www.phillywatersheds.org.

5. Are condos or multifamily buildings eligible?

Yes – Most apartment buildings and all condos are classified as non-residential and are eligible to apply for stormwater grants. Residential property is defined as property used exclusively for residential purposes with at least one and no more than four dwelling units.

6. Can a nonprofit organization apply for a SMIP Grant for a stormwater project that is located on City owned land (e.g. a park)?

No – PWD stormwater grants are aimed towards helping commercial customers. The Philadelphia Water Department plans on offering other opportunities to parties interested in working on City-owned land.

7. Is an organization with a long term lease on City-owned property (30 plus years) eligible to apply for SMIP grants?

Entities that have long term leases are encouraged to contact PWD before applying.

8. If an organization is doing a substantial renovation project (e.g. charter school construction or rehabilitation) that involves more than just a stormwater project, should it carve out the stormwater component for the grant application?

Yes – An applicant can only receive stormwater grant funding to support the stormwater component of the project. Additionally, the stormwater component of the project is only eligible for grant funding if it is not required under PWD's Stormwater Regulations or if the proposed system goes above and beyond the management requirements (please refer below to question 9).

9. What is the difference between a 'Retrofit Project' and a 'Development Project'? Are 'Development Projects' eligible for SMIP grant funding?

A 'Retrofit Project' refers to voluntarily modifying and updating a property solely for the purpose of managing stormwater.

A 'Development Project' refers to a construction project, for example building a new warehouse, apartment building or renovating an existing property. PWD's Stormwater Regulations can require certain Development Projects to manage stormwater. A Development Project is subject to PWD's Stormwater Regulations if it disturbs 15,000 square feet of earth or more, unless it is located in the Darby Cobbs or Wissahickon Watershed. If the project is located in the Darby Cobbs Watershed, a project is subject to the Regulations if it disturbs 5,000 square feet of earth or more. If the project is located in the Wissahickon Watershed, on-site stormwater controls may be required per the City of Philadelphia Ordinance for Environmental Controls for the Wissahickon Watershed.

Grants will not pay for stormwater management requirements triggered by Development Projects.

Grants will pay for components of a required system that go above and beyond the management requirements, e.g., if a detention system is over designed to handle street runoff, the SMIP grant could pay for the difference.

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Rain Garden at University of Pennsylvania

Process

10. What are concept design drawings?

A concept drawing shows the vision of the project. It outlines the proposed stormwater project and the areas of the property it will manage. It does not need to be a complete engineering design drawing, but likely needs to be prepared with the assistance of a design professional. The major points that need to be captured in the concept design drawing are:

- What is the stormwater management practice?
- How does it manage stormwater? (e.g. infiltration, detention, etc.)
- What areas of the property are being managed by the stormwater practice?

11. What entity will make award decisions?

PWD retains the sole discretion to evaluate proposals, make recommendations and provide grants. Eligible projects will be evaluated based on the criteria found in the Stormwater Incentives Grant Manual.

12. The Stormwater Incentives Grant Manual states that awardees will be notified at the close of each fiscal quarter. How long after notification will it take to receive grant funds?

After applicants are notified, successful awardees will then meet with PIDC to discuss the execution of the Subgrant Agreement and to establish milestones that must be met in order to release funds. The time frame for the release of grant funds will vary for each applicant.

13. What happens if a property owner eventually demolishes and rebuilds on a property which has SMIP Grant funded green stormwater infrastructure?

The property owner is legally obligated to operate and maintain the stormwater management system constructed with the grant proceeds for the duration of time specified in the Operations and Maintenance Agreement. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the volume managed on the site is maintained, so if redevelopment occurs the stormwater project will need to be replaced elsewhere on site.

14. Can the application be submitted via email or must the applicant submit the application on a CD ROM?

PIDC will not accept applications via email. Applicants must submit the application using a CD ROM or flashdrive.

Funding

15. Is there a minimum or maximum grant award amount?

No but applicants are urged to make grant applications as cost-effective for Philadelphia Water as possible.

16. Will grants be released during design and construction?

PIDC will disburse funds during the design and construction period on a reimbursement basis. Invoices and/or receipts must be provided to PIDC to document expenses.

17. Is a project more competitive if it diverts water from publicly owned streets in addition to the privately owned property?

Yes – Please refer to the Project Evaluation Criteria section of the Stormwater Incentives Grant Manual.

18. What is the relationship between grants and stormwater credits?

Grantees will be eligible for the stormwater credits program once construction is complete and the stormwater infrastructure has been approved by PWD. Grantees must complete a Stormwater Credit Application to receive credit. For more information about Stormwater Credits please visit www.phila.gov/water/wu/stormwater/Pages/default.aspx.