

LANDSCAPE LEVEL 2 GRANT GUIDANCE

PURPOSE

VLAWMO has 2 programs that assist property owners with implementing water quality projects. The Landscape Level 1 Cost Share Program is geared towards smaller projects and typically has been used by homeowners to install raingardens, restore their shorelines, and purchase rainbarrels. The Landscape Level 2 Cost Share Program is aimed at assisting landowners with implementing **larger** projects within the watershed. The program exists to provide assistance to public and private landowners for implementing projects that support one or more of the following:

- 1) Prevention of flooding or mitigation of drought
- 2) Water quality improvement or increase in watershed storage capacity
- 3) Preservation, protection, and restoration of native plant and wildlife communities, especially along lakes, rivers, and wetlands
- 4) Protection and preservation of groundwater quality and quantity
- 5) Preference given to projects which have high visibility or educational value and/or local citizen support, including neighborhood involvement.
- 6) Priority given to projects within targeted areas listed in the VLAWMO Watershed Plan or in Sustainable Lake Management Plans or other feasibility reports. These plans and reports are on the VLAWMO website.
- 7) Funded projects may address Goals and Policies identified in Chapter 4 of the VLAWMO Watershed Plan.

Past Recipients

Projects which have received this level of funding include:

- Green roof at White Bear Lake Public Works
- Streambank restoration on townhome association property in White Bear Township
- Large raingarden project at a middle school in North Oaks
- Prairie restoration project at a Montessori school in Gem Lake

FUNDING

The Landscape Level 2 Grant may provide funding for up to 75% of the total cost of a project, depending on available funds. There is a requirement of a 25% match by the applicant. This match can be met via cash and/or volunteer service towards the non-technical installation portions of the project. For example, if the project is a large raingarden, a qualified professional would be required to prepare the raingarden to ensure that will effectively capture and infiltrate stormwater. Volunteers could be utilized to install the plants and mulch as this does not require specific expertise. Volunteer hours may be counted as \$25/hour. The grantee will receive 85% of their grant allotment once a signed agreement and work plan is in place with a designer, engineer, or contractor for the project, or within 60 days of project installation. Each project is different and therefore the payment plan will be arranged once the specifics are known. The final 15% of the grant payment will be approved once the project is complete and a VLAWMO representative has conducted a site visit.

ELIGIBILITY

Grants are available for properties located within the boundaries of VLAWMO. Applicants can be residents, non-profit and religious organizations, government agencies, businesses and corporations, and public and private schools located within VLAWMO. Applicants may receive ONE grant per year per property. Therefore you may not receive a Landscape Level 1 AND a Landscape Level 2 Grant in the same year.

Examples of eligible projects include the following:

- Raingardens
- Redirect water runoff projects
- Volume reduction and runoff treatment projects (infiltration basins and trenches, cisterns, green roofs)

- Unique solutions for soil erosion and sediment control practices
- Native habitat restoration with priority given to waterways, lakes, ponds, buffers, and wetlands
- Purchase of rainbarrels to recycle rainwater
- Pervious pavement and pavers

Example of non-eligible projects includes the following:

- Aeration systems for ponds installed mainly for aesthetics with limited water quality benefits.
- Restoration work which the applicant has been required to complete.

The following conditions exist to meet eligibility requirements for expenses shared:

- Total project cost must be **at least \$5,000**.
- Projects completed or in progress are not eligible for funding.
- Matching funds must be from the applicant and cannot be from another grant source. You cannot use grant money to match funds from this grant.
- Materials eligible for reimbursement are those which stay on the property such as plants, erosion control blanket, mulch and top soil. The rental of necessary equipment is also eligible. Eligible labor costs must be contracted and are subject to approval by VLAWMO staff. Ineligible materials would include work gloves, shovels, tools and equipment used to implement the project but may be used again for future projects.
- Design, technical, and labor must be done by a professional familiar with the type of work being accomplished. VLAWMO reserves the right to review and approve who performs the technical and labor aspects of the project to ensure it is done correctly.
- If the project is a planting project, at least 50% of the plants must be native to this ecoregion.
- Submitted projects must be for items above and beyond VLAWMO's Development Standards.
- The Landscape Level 2 Cost Share Application and Landscape Level 2 Cost Share Agreement must be approved by VLAWMO and signed by both parties prior to commencement of work.
- Grantee is responsible for securing any and all permits for the project.
- Grantee must agree to maintain the project area for a minimum of 5 years. Maintenance includes weeding, watering, removal of invasive species, replacement of plants, repair of inlets/outlets, and other duties to ensure that the project is providing the intended water quality benefit. The site may be inspected by VLAWMO staff on an annual basis to ensure compliance.

Grantee must complete project and submit reimbursement request within one (1) year from date of grant approval.

SELECTION PROCESS

Applications are reviewed by the VLAWMO Technical Commission (TEC) at their monthly meetings, held on the 2nd Friday each month. They will make recommendations regarding approval to the VLAWMO Board of Directors which meets bi-monthly (February, April, June, August, October, and December). If the application is approved by the Board, the grantee will enter into an agreement with VLAWMO defining the obligations of each partner. This agreement includes, but is not limited to, responsibilities and terms for each party, use of funds, cost overruns, and cancellation. The agreement also allows VLAWMO access to the project area for evaluation and promotion of the project. The agreement must be signed by both parties prior to commencement of work on the project. Funding will only cover work done after the agreement is signed.

Applications can be submitted through the online form on the VLAWMO website, via email to Tyler Thompson at tyler.thompson@vlawmo.org or via US Mail to:

Tyler Thompson, VLAWMO GIS Watershed Technician
 Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
 800 East County Rd E
 Vadnais Heights, MN 55127