



# RainScapes Rewards



## Conservation Landscaping Rebate Application

### Application for Large-lot (greater than .5 acre) HOAs, Private Education Facilities, Nonprofits, and Multifamily Dwellings

Conservation landscaping is the removal of turf grass, impervious surface, and/or non-native invasive species and replacement with plant species that have more extensive, deeper root systems. Along with a layer of mulch, conservation landscaping slows the flow of stormwater runoff, helps recharge groundwater, and reduces the chemical and nutrient pollution entering local streams. Native plants also require less water for irrigation and fewer inputs like fertilizers and pesticides.

#### **Rebate Terms**

Program participants who follow application guidelines are eligible for a rebate of **\$1 per square foot** of turf, impervious surface, or invasive species removed, with a **maximum rebate of \$1000 per property**. A **minimum of 500 square feet** must be converted, with **at least 250 contiguous square feet** per plot, and **three-quarters of plants used must be native** to our region.

Gaithersburg's Rainscapes program also offers rebates for **rainwater collection**, as well as **rebates for single family residential and small-lot** (less than .5 acre) HOAs, private education facilities, nonprofits, and multifamily dwellings. For more information regarding Gaithersburg's Rainscapes Rewards program, please visit [www.gaithersburgmd.gov/environment](http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/environment).

#### **Eligibility**

- To participate, the subject property must be located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Gaithersburg. *If you are unsure about the location of your property, contact Environmental Services at [environment@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:environment@gaithersburgmd.gov) or 301-258-6330.*
- Projects are not eligible if they are associated with permit approval requirements for new building construction, additions, or renovations.
- Projects that are partially or completely finished before approval will not qualify for rebates.
- All requirements as outlined below, in the application, and in the Design Criteria and Guidelines for Project Eligibility (attached) must be met. All decisions are final and at the sole discretion of the City of Gaithersburg.
- ***This program does not supersede any zoning requirements.***

#### **Application Process and Requirements**

- 1. Submit your application, property owner agreement, and "before" photos for approval.**  
*The application is available online or at City Hall. Completed applications can be submitted to [environment@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:environment@gaithersburgmd.gov) or mailed to 31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg MD 20877.*
- 2. Receive application approval from Rainscapes Rewards Program.**  
*Wait to receive project approval before purchasing materials or beginning the project. Projects must be completed within three (3) months of approval.*

**3. Purchase materials and complete your project.**

*You must retain and submit itemized receipts and/or invoices for all project costs. Documented costs must equal or exceed the rebate amount requested. The project must adhere to the most recent Design Criteria and Guidelines for Project Eligibility.*

**4. Submit your reimbursement form, receipts, and/or invoices.**

*Send your reimbursement form, itemized receipts, and/or final invoices to Environmental Services. Scanned copies or photocopies are acceptable.*

**5. Final inspection.**

*Contact Environmental Services at [environment@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:environment@gaithersburgmd.gov) or 301-258-6330 to schedule a final inspection. The final inspection will verify project installation, and the project area will be photographed.*

**6. Receive reimbursement check.**

*Once all requirements are met, the rebate will be approved, and a check will be issued by the City of Gaithersburg's Department of Finance within three (3) to six (6) weeks.*

Please mail or email the completed application with required information and **wait to receive approval** from the City of Gaithersburg. If you have any questions, please contact Gaithersburg Environmental Services at [environment@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:environment@gaithersburgmd.gov) or 301-258-6330.

**City of Gaithersburg – Environmental Services Division  
Rainscapes Rewards Rebate Program  
31 South Summit Avenue  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
[environment@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:environment@gaithersburgmd.gov)**

*Gaithersburg would like to thank Montgomery County's Rainscapes Rewards Program for sharing their curriculum and program materials. Although Gaithersburg residents are ineligible for the County rebate, much of the Gaithersburg program is modeled after Montgomery County's program. Feel free to reference their website for any additional information.*

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rainscapes](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rainscapes)



## Design Guidelines and Criteria for Project Eligibility

Revised March 2013

*\*\*These guidelines and criteria will be periodically updated to ensure currency with the latest technical information and best practices – please verify that you have the latest version.\*\**

### Conservation Landscaping Requirements:

- Written approval** from Gaithersburg Environmental Services is required before you begin installation or construction. Projects that are partially or completely finished before approval will not qualify for rebates.
- A **minimum area of 500 square feet** of turf, impervious surface, or invasive plants must be converted to conservation landscaping, with **at least 250 contiguous square feet per plot**.
- A **planting plan** is required that includes:
  - Sketch of the area drawn at 1" = 10', 1/8" = 1', or ¼" = 1'
  - Plant species, container size and quantities
  - Planting densities
  - Plant material source
  - Soil amendments (if any)
  - Maintenance plan
- At least **three-quarters (75%) of the plants must be native** plants or cultivars to this ecoregion.
- A **two-inch mulch layer** is required to inhibit weed growth, prevent soil loss, and retain moisture.
- The plan **must not include any species** from the following invasive species lists:
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas:  
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/pubs/midatlantic/>
  - Maryland Invasive Species Council – Terrestrial and Aquatic Plants lists:  
[http://www.mdinvasivesp.org/list\\_terrestrial\\_plants.html](http://www.mdinvasivesp.org/list_terrestrial_plants.html) or  
[http://www.mdinvasivesp.org/list\\_aquatic\\_plants.html](http://www.mdinvasivesp.org/list_aquatic_plants.html)
  - Any additional species identified by the City of Gaithersburg
- No plastic sheeting** (impermeable weed barrier) will be permitted in the conversion area.

### Additional Resources

Montgomery County Conservation Landscaping Design Manual:

<http://www6.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/dep/downloads/Rainscapes/MocoConservationLandscaping.pdf>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping, Chesapeake Bay Watershed

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/Chesapeake/toc.htm>

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake/pdf/chesapeake natives.pdf>

Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council

<http://www.chesapeakelandscape.org/>



# RainScapes Rewards



## Rebate Application – Conservation Landscaping

Application for Large-lot (greater than .5 acre) HOAs, Private Education Facilities, Nonprofits, and Multifamily Dwellings

### Applicant Information and Eligibility

Name/Property Owner (please print)

Address

City

State

ZIP

Property Address (if different than above)

Phone

Email

Yes  No Is this property part of a Homeowners Association (HOA)?

Yes  No If yes, has the HOA approved the design and placement of the conservation landscape? Please attach documentation of HOA approval.

#### THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET:

Yes  No Is this property a single family residential or small-lot (<.5 acre) HOA, private education facility, nonprofit, or multifamily dwelling?

Yes  No Is this property within the jurisdictional boundaries of Gaithersburg?

*\*Please note: A zip code or mailing address does not indicate the property is located within the jurisdictional boundaries of Gaithersburg. If you are unsure of your property, contact Environmental Services at [environment@gaitthersburgmd.gov](mailto:environment@gaitthersburgmd.gov) or 301-258-6330.*

### Conservation Landscaping Project Details

1. Please describe the conservation landscaping project location, project goals, sequence of construction, access for maintenance, sun exposure, etc.:

2. What is the size of the area to be converted (sq. ft.)? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are the dimensions of the area to be converted? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the current land cover of the existing area (e.g. turf, impervious, invasives)? Please list the percentage of the total of each type being removed (e.g. 15% impervious, 80% turf, 5% invasives).

5. What percentage of the total existing turf/impervious area does the project convert? \_\_\_\_\_

### Planting Plan Details

Please attach a detailed plant list including species, spacing, sizes, and plant density. Include a sketch of the area (drawn at 1" = 10', 1/8" = 1', or 1/4" = 1'). **SUBMIT PRIOR TO BEGINNING WORK** – work can begin only **AFTER** receiving approval.

6. Where will you obtain your plants? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Who will install your conservation landscape?

- Do-it-yourself                       Contractor  
 Watershed group                       Do not know

8. What guidance documents or resources are you using to plan your landscape?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. How will you dispose of the removed material? \_\_\_\_\_

### Project Cost Information

10. Please estimate your conservation landscaping costs, including mulch and any other supplies needed (itemized receipts are required upon project completion):

Estimated total cost: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Please estimate your requested rebate amount. You may request **\$1 for every square foot converted, up to \$1000.**:

Estimated rebate amount: \_\_\_\_\_

### Contractor/Installer/Watershed Group (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor/Group Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City

State

ZIP

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone

Email

\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor/Installer Signature

Date

### Outreach (Optional)

1. How did you hear about the Rainscapes program? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you received a rebate from the City of Gaithersburg's Rainscapes program in the past? If yes, which program were you rebated under – rainwater collection or conservation landscaping?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Will you allow reasonable access to the Rainscapes project site for periodic public tours organized by the City of Gaithersburg? (Advanced notice will be given by the City of Gaithersburg).  Yes  No

4. Are you interested in helping with public outreach efforts related to your conservation landscape installation and participation in the Rainscapes Rewards program? For example, you could act as a neighborhood mentor.  Yes  No

**Project Site Photos (Before Shots)**

Please attach, either digitally or hard copy, photos of the project site. (Max 6)

**Signature/Agreement**

Yes, I have read and agree with all Rainscapes Rewards rebate program requirements.

Name/Signature

Date

# Gaithersburg Rainscapes Rewards Property Owner Agreement

between  
City of Gaithersburg, Maryland  
and

Property Owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

This Agreement is between City of Gaithersburg, Maryland (the "City"), a municipal corporation of the State of Maryland, and \_\_\_\_\_ ("Participants" or "Property Owners"), owners of the property located at \_\_\_\_\_ in Gaithersburg, Maryland (the "Property"). This Agreement becomes effective once the designated representatives of both the Participant(s) and the City (collectively, the "Parties") have signed it.

The purpose of the Agreement is to specify the general terms and conditions of the Property Owner's participation in the City of Gaithersburg's Rainscapes Rewards Program (the "Program").

## Definitions

**Rain barrel** means a container that holds at least 55 gallons or more of precipitation for landscape irrigation or other non-potable uses.

**Cistern** means a container that holds at least 55 gallons or more of precipitation for landscape irrigation or other non-potable uses.

**Conservation Landscaping** is the removal of turf grass, impervious surface, and/or non-native invasive species and replacement with plant species that have more extensive, deeper root systems.

## Background

1. The Mayor and City Council has authorized the creation of a rebate program to be administered through the Environmental Services Division (ESD). The purpose of the rebate program is to provide financial and other appropriate incentives to property owners to encourage the use of environmentally sensitive, low-impact stormwater runoff control techniques to reduce the impact of uncontrolled stormwater runoff and improve stream water quality in Gaithersburg.

2. Under the Gaithersburg Rainscapes Rewards Program, the City makes rebate payments available to owners of properties that do not currently have on-site stormwater management controls, and who utilize approved stormwater management techniques as outlined in the Design Guidelines and Criteria for Project Eligibility included in the Rainscapes application packets.

3. The Property Owner(s) has met all applicable eligibility requirements, qualifications, and project standards and criteria as outlined in the Gaithersburg Rainscapes Rewards Application and the associated application has been approved by ESD on \_\_\_\_\_.

## Mutual Agreements:

The Parties agree as follows:

1. The Property Owner shall be responsible for all maintenance associated with any project receiving funding through the Program (the "Project(s)").

2. The Property Owner shall allow representatives of the City to enter the Property to inspect the Project(s) at all reasonable times.
3. The Property Owner shall comply with all applicable regulations, criteria, guidelines, and equipment warranties associated with the Project(s), including obtaining any necessary permits and approval of Homeowners Associations (HOAs).
4. The City may make public the results of any program evaluation or data collection, including any photographs, images, or recordings, undertaken by the City in connection with the Program.
5. The Participant must promptly notify ESD of any change in ownership of the Property after the Parties have executed this Agreement.
6. The Property Owner, by participating in the Rainscapes Rewards Program, hereby releases the City of Gaithersburg and its agents, officers, directors, employees, or any other persons acting on its behalf from any liability for damages or injuries resulting from its participation in the Program. The Property Owner agrees to indemnify and hold The City of Gaithersburg harmless for any injuries, damages, or claims arising from the Program.
7. The Parties further agree that the City and other interested persons may, after reasonable notice to the owner(s), enter the premises cited above for the limited purpose of demonstrating the Project(s) to those interested in pursuing a similar project elsewhere in the City.

**Total Cost of Project:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount of Rainscapes Rewards rebate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**For Property Owner(s)**

**For City of Gaithersburg, Maryland**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Property Owner Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Property Owner Signature]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





# RainScapes Rewards



## Rebate Reimbursement Form – Conservation Landscaping

### Rebate Recipient (Check will be made payable to this name)

Name/Property Owner (please print)

Address

City

State

ZIP

Property Address (if different than above)

Phone

Email

Number of square feet converted

Amount of total receipts

Rebate amount requested

#### Applicant checklist

- Application and “before” photos were submitted and approved
- Signed Property Owner Agreement, itemized receipts, and/or final invoices were submitted

### TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF ONLY:

Date of final site visit

- Photographs of completed project taken by City staff
- Project APPROVED as conforming to design criteria
- Project DENIED as not conforming to design criteria

Details/Comments:

#### Design Criteria

- At least 500 sq. ft. converted; 250 contiguous per plot
- Planting plan with required information submitted
- Three-quarters of plants are native species
- Two-inch mulch layer
- No invasive species included
- No plastic sheeting used

### CHECK REQUEST

Date Requested

Reason for Request

Charge to Account Number

Instructions for Processing

Date Needed

Amount Requested (\$)

PO/Res. No.

Printed name of requestor

Signature of department head or designee

Signed name of requestor