

City of Madison Policy for Terrace Rain Garden Installation

2/27/14

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines in the site selection for potential terrace rain gardens and outline the fiscal responsibilities for both the City and the participating property owner.

Participating in the Terrace Rain Garden Program is voluntary. City Engineering staff review streets scheduled for resurfacing or reconstruction to determine if there is adequate space for rain gardens, if the topography of the street supports rain gardens from a stormwater management perspective (i.e., it is not too steep, and it is not located at the top of a hill).

Site suitability criteria include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Terrace is at least 10 feet wide;
- There is at least 15 feet of space for the length of the garden;
- The edge of the garden is at least 10 feet from the base of any nearby tree and 3 feet from a driveway or a sidewalk at the end of a block (for site considerations);
- The elevation of the sidewalk cannot be lower than the elevation of the curb so any stormwater overflow drains into the street and away from the house.

If there are suitable locations for rain gardens in the terrace along a street project, property owners in the project area are notified by mail of the opportunity to participate in the program.

Rain garden construction costs are divided between the City and the property owner. The property owner shall be assessed \$400 or 25% of the total cost of installation (including all materials, plants, and labor) whichever is less. The City of Madison Storm Water Utility will pay the remainder of the cost to construct and plant the rain garden. Prior to the work beginning the property owner shall sign a waiver of special assessment for their portion of the costs.

The City has a number of planting plans property owners can select from, which differ primarily based on plant sun preference. If the property owner chooses to plant the rain garden on his/her own, they must follow general guidelines provided to them with regards to plant height. In a case where the property owner decides to complete the planting on their own, the assessed cost will be reduced to \$350 or 25% of the total costs of construction, whichever is less.

Once the rain garden is planted, all maintenance shall become the responsibility of the property owner. Should a rain garden fall into disrepair, the City shall notify the property owner and if no restorative action is taken within 30 days, the City shall either order the rain garden be repaired or removed in accord with MGO 37.05(7)(b)(8).