



Conservation Landscaping Reward Instructions and Design Guidelines City of Gaithersburg RainScapes Rewards Program

General Information

To be eligible for a rebate, projects must be installed at a single-family residential property, homeowners association, private education facility, nonprofits, and multifamily dwelling located in the City of Gaithersburg. To verify the property is within the city boundary you may review the city map here: gburg.md/StormwaterProgramFee.

Eligible properties can receive up to a total of \$5,000 per property owner in rebates. If an existing property owner received \$2,500 of rebates and sells the property, the new property owner is eligible for \$5,000 in rebates.

Property owners are encouraged to schedule a pre-application meeting with Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust) staff. This will ensure that all aspects of the project and application process are fully considered. Contact the Trust at gaithersburgrebate@cbtrust.org to schedule a meeting.

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. Program participants who follow application guidelines are eligible for a rebate of **\$6 per square foot (with soil improvement)** or **\$5 per square foot (without soil improvement)** for turf, impervious surface, or invasive species removed. A minimum of 200 contiguous square feet must be converted, and three-quarters of plants used must be native to our region.

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, please confirm at gburg.md/StormwaterProgramFee.*
- ✓ 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 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. **Review requirements and submit your application.** Review all requirements and Design Guidelines below. Then, complete the online application found at <https://cbtrust.org/grants/city-of-gaithersburg-rainscapes-reward-program/>. Have photos of the project area(s), approval letters, and other documentation ready to upload. Please allow at least 14 business days for application processing.
2. **Receive application pre-approval and sign Property Owner Agreement.** A pre-installation inspection site visit may be scheduled within 14 business days. Wait to receive pre-approval from the RainScapes Coordinator before purchasing or installing the project.

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 Guidelines for Project Eligibility.
4. **Submit your reimbursement form, receipts, and/or invoices.** Send your reimbursement form, itemized receipts, and/or final invoices. Scanned copies or photocopies are acceptable. Once the project is complete, upload all related receipts, final invoices, and photos of the completed project your online portal (<https://bbgm-apply.yourcausegrants.com/apply/applications>). A final inspection site visit may be scheduled within 14 business days.
5. **Final inspection.** At the final inspection, installation of the project will be verified, 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 Chesapeake Bay Trust within four (4) to six (6) weeks.

Conservation Landscape Design Guidelines

Issue Date 7/1/2025

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.

Written approval from the RainScapes Coordinator is required before you begin installation or construction. Projects installed before approval will not qualify for rebates.

Conservation Landscaping Requirements:

- ☐ Established area to be converted must be at least 200 contiguous sq. ft. installed for all property types
- ☐ A **planting plan** is required that includes:
 - ☐ Sketch of the area drawn at 1" = 10', 1/8" = 1', or 1/4" = 1'
 - ☐ Plant species, container size and quantities
 - ☐ Planting densities
 - ☐ Plant material source
 - ☐ Soil amendments (if any)
 - ☐ Maintenance plan
- ☐ Project area must not be in a right-of-away or easement area. Call 1-800-MISS-UTILITY (1-800-257-7777) before you dig!
- ☐ 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:
 - ☐ Montgomery County invasives of concern
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/Resources/Files/rainscapes/invasive-plants.pdf>
 - ☐ Center for Invasive species and Ecosystem Health & Maryland Cooperative Extension:
<https://www.invasive.org/species/list.cfm?id=110>
 - ☐ Any additional species identified by the City of Gaithersburg
- ☐ Guidelines for Soil Improvements:
 - ☐ Loosen the soil to a depth of 9-12 inches with a tiller, rake, or shovel.
 - ☐ If tree roots are present in the project area, loosening soil with a tiller is not recommended as this may damage roots.
 - ☐ Add 2 inches of compost to the soil.

Documentation Requirements:

To complete the application process, you will need to complete and submit the following:

Pre-Installation:

- ☐ A plant list that includes plant species, sizes, and quantities.

- ☐ A diagram of the planting area showing plant spacing and density.
- ☐ Photos of the project site (up to five).
- ☐ If applying as a homeowner within an HOA, condominium association, or non-profit, you will need to upload a project approval letter from your organization's board.
- ☐ If applying as a renter, you will need to upload a project approval letter from the property owner.
- ☐ Sign and submit the Property Owner Agreement.

Post-Installation:

- ☐ Submit itemized receipts (tax will be subtracted).
- ☐ Schedule and pass final inspection.

Additional Resources:

- My Green Montgomery Create a Conservation Landscape:
<https://mygreenmontgomery.org/project/create-a-conservation-landscape/>
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping, Chesapeake Bay Watershed: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/criticalarea/Documents/chesapeakenatives.pdf>
- Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council: <http://www.chesapeakelandscaping.org/>