



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. Are non-profits eligible?
A. Yes
2. Q. Are public and private schools eligible?
A. Yes
3. Q. Are mixed use projects eligible? If so, would they be eligible 100% or with a ratio of commercial to residential?
A. Yes – Mixed use properties are 100% eligible for a SMIP 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. Q. Are residential development projects eligible?
A. 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 rate 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. Q. Are condos or multifamily buildings eligible?
A. Yes – Most apartment buildings and all condos are classified as non-residential and are eligible to apply for SMIP Grants. Residential property is defined as property used exclusively for residential purposes with at least one and no more than four dwelling units.
6. Q. Can a nonprofit organization apply for a SMIP Grant for a stormwater project that is located on City owned land (e.g. a park)?
A. No – The SMIP Grant is aimed towards helping commercial customers. The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) plans on offering other opportunities to parties interested in working on City owned land.
7. Q. Is an organization with a long term lease on City-owned property (30 plus years) eligible to apply for SMIP Grants?
A. Yes - Entities that have long term leases for City-owned property are eligible for the SMIP Grant.
8. Q. 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?
A. Yes – An applicant can only receive SMIP 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. Q. What is the difference between a 'Retrofit Project' and a 'Development Project'? Are 'Development Projects' eligible for SMIP Grant funding?
A. 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.

The SMIP Grant will not pay for stormwater management requirements triggered by Development Projects. The SMIP Grant 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.
10. Q. Are stormwater retrofit projects eligible if the design and/or construction are currently in progress?
A. Yes – However, the project must still go through the application process and will be judged against the same program criteria as all other applicants. There is no guarantee the project will be awarded grant funding. If a project is under construction prior to the SMIP Grant application deadline, then the applicant will have to develop an Economic Opportunity Plan (EOP) that is satisfactory to the City of Philadelphia's Office of Economic Opportunity (see page nine of the SMIP Grant Manual). Normally, SMIP Grant applicants will have an approved Economic Opportunity Plan before construction is commenced and, in some circumstances, before the design work is undertaken.



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11. Q. What are concept design drawings?
 - A. A concept drawing shows the vision of the project. It outlines the proposed stormwater mitigation measure 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 practice?
 - How does it manage stormwater? (e.g. infiltration, detention, etc.)
 - What areas of the property are being managed by the stormwater practice?
12. Q. What entity will make award decisions?
 - A. PWD retains the sole discretion to evaluate proposals, make recommendations, and provide grants. Eligible projects will be evaluated based on the criteria found on page six of the SMIP Grant Manual.
13. Q. Is there a minimum or maximum grant award amount?
 - A. No – There is no set minimum or maximum award amount. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis.
14. Q. How much funding is available for SMIP?
 - A. PWD anticipates that there will be \$5 million available for SMIP Grants.
15. Q. Will grants be released during design and construction?
 - A. 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.
16. Q. The SMIP Grant Manual states that awardees will be notified no later than July 1st. How long after notification will it take to receive grant funds?
 - A. After applicants are notified, successful awardees will then meet with PIDC to discuss the execution of the Grant Agreement and to establish milestones that must be met in order to release funds. Therefore, the time frame for the release of grant funds will vary for each applicant.
17. Q. Is a project more competitive if it diverts water from publicly owned streets in addition to the privately owned property?
 - A. Yes – Please refer to the Project Evaluation Criteria section of the SMIP Grant Manual.
18. Q. What is the relationship of the SMIP Grant to PWD Stormwater Credits?
 - A. Grantees will be eligible for PWD's 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 http://www.phila.gov/water/Stormwater_Where.html.
19. Q. What is the ramification if a property owner eventually demolishes and rebuilds on a property which has SMIP Grant funded green stormwater infrastructure?
 - A. The grant recipient will be legally obligated to operate the stormwater management system constructed with the grant proceeds for the duration of time specified in the grant agreement and deed restriction. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the volume managed on the site is maintained, therefore, the SMP may need to be renovated, updated, and rebuilt over time. If a site is redeveloped, it will need to manage minimally the same volume as the original practice.
20. Q. Can the application be submitted via email or must the applicant submit the application on a CD ROM?
 - A. PIDC cannot accept email versions of the application. Applicants must submit the application using a CD ROM or flashdrive.