

CITY OF SALEM
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ADMINISTRATIVE RULE
CHAPTER 109
DIVISION 300
WATERSHED PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

(Adopted May 13, 2024)

Introduction/Purpose

In 2001, the Salem City Council approved the development of the Watershed Protection and Preservation Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to community members to create projects that increase environmental awareness and stewardship; reduce human impacts to local waterways; and that protect, preserve and/or enhance natural resources in Salem. This grant program helps the City address multiple stormwater and surface water requirements associated with the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit and Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plan.

There are two types of projects (Small or Construction) that may be funded through this program. Small projects may include but are not limited to native vegetation and/or tree plantings, environmental education programs, and project planning. Construction Projects may include streambank restoration or erosion control using bioengineering techniques, and facilities to capture and treat stormwater runoff.

Authority

Salem Revised Code Chapter 70.065 gives the Director of Public Works the authority to develop and administer grant programs that will preserve natural areas as a benefit to the City's watershed and stormwater system, encourage water conservation, reduce inflow and infiltration into the wastewater system, or other specific programs that, in the opinion of the Director, will enhance the health and safety of the community and the environment.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for grant funding, the proposed projects or programs must occur within the City of Salem's water, sewer, or stormwater customer service area; have a direct impact on the City's drinking water supply; or directly affect the water quality of streams flowing through Salem. Grants can be awarded to government agencies, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations, businesses, and individuals.

Funding Amounts and Application Dates:

Public Works budgets a minimum of \$50,000 each year for the Watershed Protection and Preservation Grant Program. The maximum grant awards are \$10,000 for small projects and \$25,000 for construction projects. A minimum match of 10 percent is required for each project type (see Grant Match Funding

below). Applications can be submitted at any time and will be awarded on a first come, first served basis throughout each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

Grant Match Funding:

Grants require a minimum of 10 percent match, which can consist of in-kind volunteer time, technical assistance, materials, or other services provided by the awardee, or other funding sources.

Volunteer in-kind match will be correlated to current volunteer rate. Salem uses the “Value of a Volunteer Hour in the U.S.” provided by the Points of Light, a large organization dedicated to volunteer service volunteer, to determine the rate for volunteer services.

(See <https://www.pointsoflight.org/blog/updated-value-of-a-volunteer-hour-in-the-u-s/>.) Any volunteers with a specific specialty related to the project, such as volunteer contracted services, will be noted as in-kind based on the volunteer’s wage or salary. Volunteer consultant time will be valued at the volunteer’s normal billing rate.

Grant Agreement

Upon notice of the approval of funding, a Watershed Protection and Preservation Grant Agreement between the applicant and the City of Salem will clarify the final grant award received by the applicant, the conditions for funding, the grant payment process, and the project’s reporting requirements. The requirements and frequency for project reporting will be based upon the complexity of the proposed project and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Grant funds will be available to the applicant only after the project has been completed and the payment request forms with copies of invoices or bills have been submitted and approved by the City. In certain situations, pre-payment may be approved. If pre-payment is approved, then the grant awardee must follow the payment request outlined in Exhibit A: Grant Payment Process.

Eligible Project Types:

Watershed Protection and Preservation Program Grant funds are intended to encourage enhancements of waterways and natural areas within the City. These funds cannot be used for construction of stormwater facilities or other structures that will be owned or operated by the City.

The following are examples of projects that can be funded:

- Streamside and riparian restoration, including planting trees and implementing bioengineering techniques for erosion control.
- Environmental education programs.
- Removal of fish barriers.
- Removal of noxious and/or invasive vegetation in riparian areas with the replacement of native vegetation to prevent soil erosion and provide shade.
- Preservation and/or enhancement of wetlands.
- Preservation of watersheds by restoring and/or preserving upland green space and native vegetation.
- Inventories and assessment of natural areas, including identifying noxious weed and other invasive species.

- Design, construction, or improvement of private stormwater management facilities (e.g., bioswale, eco-roof, or pervious pavement) that serves more than a single property.
- Creation of conservation easements or purchase of environmentally sensitive lands that will be owned by a nonprofit organization.
- Match for other grants for eligible projects.

Ineligible Project Types:

Watershed Protection and Preservation Program Grant funds may not be used to address compliance issues or for any required improvement that is a condition of approval for a City land use decision. Exceptions to this may be considered for projects that involve a facility that exceeds the minimum requirements of a condition of development.

The following are examples of projects that are ineligible for funding:

- Constructed stream bank armoring.
- Constructing a new facility required as a condition of a local, state, or federal permit, order, or enforcement action.

Grant Applications:

Watershed Protection and Preservation Grant Applications (and detailed instructions) will be available on the City of Salem website. All applications shall include the following information:

- Applicant Information
- Project Information
- Project Budget
- Project Commitment
- Landowner Approval

Additional documentation, including project designs and maps, may be required depending on the overall scope of the project that is proposed.

Selection Process and Criteria:

Each application will be reviewed and scored by a grant selection committee that is composed of at least three staff members from the Public Works Department. The maximum score is 100 points per committee member. There are 25 available points from each of the following four categories:

- **Priority for the project type.** Projects that directly improve or preserve wetlands, stream channel condition and function, water quality, riparian areas, or native fish and wildlife habitat are a high priority.
- **Quality of proposal.** Comprehensive proposals will be scored higher than single-purpose proposals. A comprehensive proposal should identify, in detail, the work that will be done, provide an accurate and defensible budget, and include a scope of work that is commensurate with project's resources.

- **Proposed matching funds.** Proposals with a larger percent of matching funds will receive higher scores than proposals with only the minimum 10% match.
- **Experience and/or expertise.** Proposals will receive higher scores when the project coordinator has prior experience related to the proposed project or when a qualified advisor is involved, as evaluated by the selection committee.

An average score of 50 points based on the scores from all grant selection committee members is required to receive funding. Grants will be awarded until all the funds are committed or the fiscal year ends. Proposals meeting the minimum score, but not funded in the current fiscal year, may be resubmitted the following fiscal year.

Grant scoring criteria may be revised, as needed, based on the recommendation of the grant selection committee. Changes to the scoring criteria will require approval from the Public Work Director.