

# Landscape Level 2 Grant Policy



The Landscape Level 2 (LL2) Grant Program is a reimbursement program to partner with communities to install practices that improve water quality, manage stormwater, and conserve water within VLAWMO.

VLAWMO may fund 25-75% of the total cost of a project, or up to 90% for large-scale or highly beneficial projects that significantly improve water quality, increase flood storage, conserve water, or provide regional benefits. VLAWMO reserves the right to adjust requested funding levels based on funding availability and estimated benefits.



## Eligible Projects:

- Water quality treatment projects
- Stormwater rate and volume control projects
- Water reuse
- Smart irrigation controllers
- Flood storage projects
- Stormwater retrofit or reconstruction projects that exceed permit or VLAWMO water management standards

## LL2 Program Goals:

- Reduce stormwater rate and volume
- Stabilize and restore actively-eroding shorelines/streambanks
- Reduce nutrient loading and improve water quality.
- Protect groundwater quality and quantity
- Increase flood storage
- Address goals and policies identified in the VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan
- Provide educational value and highly visible projects

## Ineligible Projects:

- Landscaping and decorative projects for recreational or aesthetic purposes
- Chemical treatment of aquatic vegetation (excluding alum or spent lime)
- Projects necessary to meet minimum permit requirements or VLAWMO water management standards
- Projects that have received funding from other VLAWMO grant programs in the same year
- Maintenance of awarded grant projects

## Application Process:

LL2 Grant funding is available to landowners including but not limited to municipalities, public agencies, private businesses, homeowner's associations, or nonprofit organizations. Projects within targeted areas listed in VLAWMO's Watershed Management Plan, stormwater retrofit/subwatershed analyses, or other feasibility reports will be prioritized. Applications may be subject to VLAWMO scoring to determine funding eligibility and approval by the VLAWMO Technical Commission (TEC) and Board of Directors.

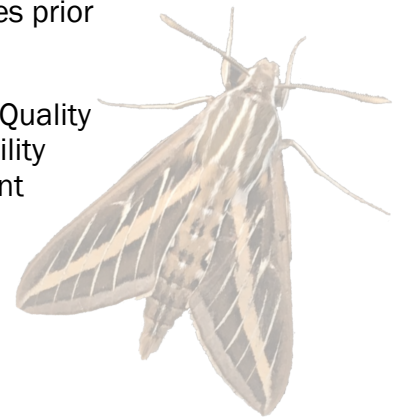
1. Contact staff to **schedule a pre-application meeting** to discuss project before submittal of a grant application.
2. **Schedule a site visit** with staff to review the proposed project area.
3. **Complete a grant application** and submit to staff listed on the grant application.
4. Applications are reviewed and scored by staff and/or consulting VLAWMO engineer if necessary.
5. Complete applications that meet the minimum criteria will be **presented** at the next VLAWMO TEC meeting and Board of Directors meeting per their meeting schedule.
6. VLAWMO will **notify applicant** of application status and next steps, including execution of a grant agreement.

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## Grant Funding Agreement:

Each grantee must enter into a grant agreement with VLAWMO defining the obligations of the grantee and VLAWMO, and expectations for project maintenance. The agreement also allows VLAWMO access to the project area for inspection and promotion of the project. The grant agreement must be signed by both parties prior to starting work on the project.

If the project is funded with a State of Minnesota grant, additional Technical Quality Assurance grant agreement standards may be necessary to fulfill state eligibility requirements. Where VLAWMO's policies differ from state standards, the grant agreement requirements with the state agency shall prevail.



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## Reimbursement Steps:

1. Execute grant agreement with VLAWMO.
2. After the project is complete, contact VLAWMO staff to request a final inspection of the project for verification it meets the approved plans. This must occur within 1.5 years from the date of grant approval.
3. Submit all **paid, zero remaining balance** invoices and receipts of project expenses for VLAWMO review. Final grant award amounts will be based on the completed work and total paid project amount.
4. If the above steps are completed and approved by staff, VLAWMO will mail a reimbursement check per the VLAWMO TEC's monthly meeting schedule.

## Program Details: Planning for Success

<b>Start &amp; Finish</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Projects started prior to VLAWMO approval are not eligible.</b> A grant application must be approved for funding, and the grant agreement must be signed by the applicant and VLAWMO prior to starting work.</li> <li>• Eligible project costs are those only directly related to the proposed project, such as those associated with design and engineering, construction materials, labor, and drainage structures. Purchased tools and equipment are not eligible. Eligibility of materials is subject to VLAWMO approval.</li> <li>• Grantee is responsible for securing any and all required permits, easements, and approvals prior to the start of the project.</li> <li>• Grantees must complete their approved project and submit a grant reimbursement request within 1.5 years from date of approval unless the project is extended with VLAWMO approval.</li> <li>• Grantee must agree to maintain the project area for a <b>minimum of 10 years</b>. The site may be inspected by VLAWMO staff during this time period to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Labor &amp; Plant Specifics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart irrigation controllers to be used on pilot/test sites and enhanced street sweeping and chloride reduction technology are eligible project costs.</li> <li>• Work associated with design, installation, and labor of crucial infrastructure must be performed by an experienced professional. Final plans may be subject to professional review and approval by consulting VLAWMO engineer to ensure design standards, specifications, and outcomes meet program goals.</li> <li>• VLAWMO may cover design costs through the Ramsey County Soil &amp; Water Conservation Division depending on the project.</li> <li>• At least 2 bids for construction of proposed projects must be submitted with the application. VLAWMO reserves the right to reject a project design or submitted bid for any reason.</li> <li>• Erosion control projects must utilize natural erosion control material (i.e. non-plastic).</li> <li>• For all projects, at least a 50% plant coverage must be native to Minnesota. VLAWMO encourages all vegetation used to be native species and adopts BWSR's <i>Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines</i> by reference.</li> </ul>
<b>Admin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VLAWMO reserves the right to withdraw or withhold funding for any project not completed in accordance with these guidelines or the terms of its executed grant agreement.</li> <li>• The VLAWMO Board of Directors may shift grant funding amounts between Landscape Grant Program budgets.</li> <li>• Any submitted information (applications, designs, cost estimates, bids, permits, studies, reports, and proof of expenditures) becomes part of the public record.</li> </ul>