

9.7 Cost-Share Program

The Cost Share Program provides funding and technical assistance for projects that protect and conserve water resources and increases public awareness of the vulnerability of these resources and solutions to improve them. The program seeks to decrease barriers to - and incentivize the implementation of - best management practices, and shift cultural norms toward making these practices common-place. The Cost Share Program supports several of the District’s Goals and Strategies as listed in **Table 9-5**.

Table 9-5 Goal and Strategies Supported by the Cost Share Program

Goal	Strategy
EO3 (Education & Outreach)	EO S9. The District will continue to implement its cost-share program to provide incentive for residents, businesses, institutions and local governmental units to implement watershed best management practices.
WQual1, WQual2, & WQual3 (Water Quality)	<p>WQual S1. The District seeks to minimize the negative impacts of erosion and sedimentation through the District’s regulatory, education and outreach, and incentive programs.</p> <p>WQual S3. The District encourages cities and developers to seek opportunities to incorporate habitat protection or enhancement into development and redevelopment projects.</p> <p>WQual S6. The District will seek opportunities to establish and preserve natural corridors for wildlife habitat and migration.</p> <p>WQual S7. The District will promote the use of natural materials and bioengineering for the maintenance and restoration of shorelines and streambanks where appropriate.</p> <p>WQual S11. The District recognizes the multiple benefits of vegetated buffers and promotes the use of vegetated buffers around all waterbodies.</p> <p>WQual S12. The District will assist and cooperate with cities, MPCA, MDNR, MnDOT, other watershed and other stakeholders in implementing projects or other management actions based on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s Twin Cities Metro Chloride TMDL.</p> <p>WQual S13. The District will continue to minimize pollutant loading to water resources through implementation of the District’s capital improvement, regulatory, education and outreach, and incentive programs.</p> <p>WQual S15. The District will cooperate with other entities to investigate treatment effectiveness of emerging practices.</p>
Ground1 (Groundwater)	Ground S1. The District will promote the conservation of groundwater resources through its education and outreach program and will work with cities to encourage conservation practices (e.g. water reuse).
WQuan2 (Water Quantity)	WQuan S1. The District will preserve and enhance the natural function of the floodplain and maintain floodplain storage volume.

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Goal	Strategy
	<p>WQuan S2. The District will promote strategies that minimize baseflow impacts.</p> <p>WQuan S3. The District will continue to promote infiltration, where feasible, as a best management practice to reduce runoff volume, improve water quality, and promote aquifer recharge.</p> <p>WQuan S7. The District promotes/encourages cities and developers to implement Low Impact Development (LID) practices and will work with cities to reduce regulatory barriers to LID practices.</p> <p>WQuan S9. The District will work with cities and other stakeholders to encourage conservation practices (e.g. water reuse) to protect creeks, lakes and wetlands.</p>

The cost-share program is organized into three tiers by stakeholder group:

1. Local Government and Commercial Facilities – aimed at building capacity for installation of water-quality improvement practices in conjunction with projects such as municipal street reconstruction, stormsewer retrofits, school property improvements and commercial property projects.
2. Lake Associations, Homeowners Associations and Nonprofits – designed to tap into the knowledge these organizations have regarding opportunities and priorities for stormwater-management in their areas, and their potential to ensure installation of shoreline and streambank restorations, rain gardens, filter strips, pervious surfaces and restoration of wetlands and habitat.
3. Single-Family Residential Projects – designed to support community member interest in protecting clean water through restoration of residential shorelines and streambanks, installation of filter and buffer strips, restoration of wetlands and habitat, construction of rain gardens and use of pervious surfaces.

Participants contribute in-kind (labor or materials) and/or monetary resources to their projects and commit to long-term maintenance. They sign a funding agreement detailing the location and specifications of the project. The District provides technical assistance in review of project design and inspection to help ensure that best practices are properly and effectively constructed.

Applications for cost-sharing will be accepted on an ~~annual~~ regular basis. After being awarded a grant, participants have one year to complete the project or request an extension. Funds are disbursed to participants after documented completion of the project to the specifications

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detailed in the funding agreement. The District will annually assess outcomes of the cost-share program to determine whether alterations or additions to the focus areas is warranted.

9.7.1 Available Funding

The District will fund its cost-share programs from the *ad valorem* property tax levied annually on property within the watershed, as well as through other funding sources such as regional, state or federal grants. The budget for the program in 2018 will be \$200,000. The Board of Managers will annually set the budget for the cost-share programs in a manner that meets program needs and prudently aligns with the District's overall financial capacity.

9.7.2 Eligibility Criteria for Disbursing Funds

Applicants are eligible for one cost-share grant per property per year. Applications are reviewed and ranked based on their potential to contribute to the goals of the program:

- improve watershed resources
- foster water resource stewardship
- increase awareness of the vulnerability of watershed resources
- increase familiarity with and acceptance of solutions to improve waters

Projects must be located within the District. Funding will not be awarded for work required as part of a permit requirement, but may be awarded toward the incremental cost of BMPs that will provide water quality treatment beyond permit requirements.

The Board of Managers will review and approve all cost share applications above \$10,000, and delegate review and approval of cost share applications for grants of \$10,000 or less to the Administrator. Prior to approving a cost share award in excess of \$20,000 for capital construction, the Board of Managers will hold a noticed public hearing according to Minnesota Statutes section 103B.251.