



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How will my application be evaluated?

The Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS) and the Sustainable Tacoma Commission (STC) will evaluate applications on a quarterly bases on the scorecard requirements as well as the following considerations:

- Will the project bring multiple benefits to the community?
- Will the project bring long lasting benefits to the community?
- Will the project provide measurable results?
- Will the project address the causes or impacts of climate change?
- Is the project innovative or does it attempt to address a persistent problem in a new but effective way?
- Does the organization demonstrate a clear need for financial assistance?
- Does the organization and project align with Tacoma's sustainability vision? (*In Tacoma, we strive to achieve an exceptional quality of life for every generation and leave a legacy of stewardship. We work together to achieve lasting and equitable prosperity; build safe, healthy, vibrant communities; and minimize our negative impacts in order to conserve the natural resources that sustain us.*)

### When will my Sustainability Small Grant be awarded? How soon can I expect funds?

Sustainability Small Grant applications are reviewed on a quarterly bases. Applications are due on the last day of the quarter, and award notices will go out 30 days from that date.

Awarded grant money will be given as a reimbursement at the end of the project, 30 days after approval of the Final Report. Final Reports and invoices are due within 60 days of project completion.

### Can I as an individual apply for and receive grant funds?

Yes, anyone interested in doing an eligible project may apply. However, as an individual be aware that the money you receive must be claimed on your yearly taxes. The City suggests partnering with a 501(c) (3) nonprofit group or other fiscal agent and have them accept the money on your behalf.

### How many applications can I or my organization submit?

The City encourages everyone to apply with as many projects/events as they would like, however, individuals, groups or organizations may not win more than one grant in a 12 month period.

Environmental Services Department | 326 East D Street | Tacoma, WA 98421-1801 | (253) 591-5172



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## What can grant money be spent on?

Grant money can be applied toward costs that are identified in the approved project budget. This includes transportation and materials. Up to 10 percent of the grant may be spent on food. Grant money can cover up to 20 percent of overhead or general administrative costs. Please keep your receipts for the invoice template.

The grants cannot fund computers, digital cameras, video cameras or other portable electronic equipment. Grants also cannot fund mandated or required activities (such as permit requirements) and cannot fund activities that could be construed as a private benefit to an individual or organization. See the [Grant Overview](#) document for more details about ineligible activities.

## What does it mean for a project to benefit Environmental Services' three utilities (Surface Water, Solid Waste, and Wastewater)?

Projects that benefit one or more of the three utilities help protect and restore natural resources or keep our city clean, safe and livable.

Surface Water benefits are those that help to keep pollution from flowing from the built environment untreated into lakes, streams, rivers and Puget Sound. Solid Waste benefits include reducing waste generation or increasing landfill diversion through recycling, composting, or other means. Wastewater is what goes down our drains and needs to be treated before re-entering the natural environment. Wastewater benefits help ensure that our sewer systems are properly cared for and that only the correct items find their way down the drain.

## What does it mean for a project to address climate change?

Projects that address climate change either help our community adapt to the impacts or mitigate the causes of climate change. Most projects that address environmental sustainability issues in our community do have a connection to either climate adaptation or mitigation.

Adaptation projects are ones that help our community prepare for the current or future impacts of a disrupted climate. Climate impacts that will be felt by our community include increased rainfall intensity, flooding, more extreme heat, drought, sea level rise and other impacts described in Tacoma's 2016 Climate Risk Assessment. Project examples include installing rain gardens to reduce the risk of flooding, and planting trees to reduce the urban heat island effect.

Projects that mitigate climate change either directly or indirectly reduce the amount of climate-disrupting emissions released into our atmosphere. Climate-disrupting emissions come from sources like burning gasoline, oil and diesel. Project examples include providing bus passes to encourage taking transit as a form of sustainable transportation instead of driving, and educating businesses about options to switch from natural gas to electric heating.

For more information about this and other environmental grants, visit the [Grants and Sponsorship webpage](#) or contact the City of Tacoma's Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability at (253) 591-5172 or by email at [sustainability@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:sustainability@cityoftacoma.org).

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