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## To Mark Earth Day Department of Environmental Protection Encourages Property Owners to Install Green Roofs



**Streamlined Green Roof Funding Schedule will Speed Grant Program Approvals; Photos of Projects are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)**

### **A Map of Completed, Ongoing and Upcoming Green Infrastructure Projects is Available on DEP's Website**

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today encouraged property owners to go green by releasing a streamlined green roof funding schedule for its Green Infrastructure Grant Program. DEP is engaged in a citywide effort to soften the impervious urban landscape and is encouraging private property owners to install green infrastructure, which allows stormwater to be naturally absorbed into the ground. By keeping stormwater out of the City's combined sewer system, green infrastructure helps to reduce overflows into local waterways during rainstorms. Green roofs are an important part of achieving reductions in stormwater runoff, as rooftops account for a sizable portion of impervious area in New York City.

"Encouraging private property owners to build green infrastructure is essential to further improving the health of New York Harbor," said **DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. "By setting out a clear funding schedule with reimbursement rates, we anticipate additional property owners will see the value to a green roof and will help us achieve our shared goal of a healthy environment."

"In addition to helping manage stormwater, green roofs are an important and underutilized resource to increase the thermal mass of our buildings and thereby reduce energy consumption—using less energy to heat in the winter and cool in the summer," said **Mark Chambers, Director of the Mayor's Office of**

More Information

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<div><div>» <a href="#">Capital Projects</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Careers at DEP</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Environmental Reviews</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Interagency MOUs</a></div><div>» <a href="#">A to Z Index</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Contact Us</a></div></div>	<div><div><b>Sustainability.</b> “DEP’s work to make it easier to install green roofs citywide, shows vision and we value their continued partnership.”</div><div>“The Green Infrastructure Grant Program is a vital asset to our city’s health,” said <b>Congressman Joe Crowley (D-Queens, the Bronx), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.</b> “Our city’s roofs are an untapped resource in reducing stormwater runoff and making our homes more energy efficient. This program demonstrates how we can utilize every tool at our disposal to make New York as sustainable as possible.”</div><div>“Earth Day has been recognized around the world since 1970 as a day when we take proactive steps and reflect on ways to protect the environment and minimize health risks that will become more pronounced as our climate continues to change. When people think of climate change, they normally think of the environment, but they rarely consider the serious health risks or impact to our city’s infrastructure,” said <b>Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY-13).</b> “I commend DEP on today’s initiative to encourage property owners to go green by installing infrastructure that protects our environment and helps keep our communities healthy.”</div><div>“Green roof investments pay dividends not just for building owners, but for the city and the environment as a whole,” said <b>Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.</b> “Anything we can do to make it easier for property owners to green their properties, divert stormwater, reduce the heat island effect, and conserve energy is a worthwhile investment in a more sustainable future.”</div><div>“Green roofs are a terrific way for New York City to go green and reduce pollution in local waterways, such as the Gowanus Canal and Newtown Creek,” said <b>Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams.</b> “I encourage all property owners to investigate the possibility of utilizing a DEP green infrastructure grant to install a green roof and do your part to help protect the environment.”</div><div>“As the author of the first law in New York State that provided tax incentives to encourage the installation of green roofs, I am happy to partner with DEP to promote and motivate home owners in the Bronx and around the city to take advantage of the Green Roof Funding program,” said <b>Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.</b> “It is an innovative program that will accelerate affordability and is also a positive step towards improving the environment.”</div><div><b>Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Council’s Environmental Protection Committee,</b> said, “In honor of Earth Day, I join DEP in encouraging homeowners to go green by installing green roofs that absorb overflow water during rainstorms. Reducing the amount of stormwater in our sewer system improves our environmental health and the health of our waterways. I’m proud that DEP will be able to fast track applications for the Green Infrastructure Grant Program, which has already committed over \$14.5 million for more green roofs, rain gardens, permeable pavements, and other types of green infrastructure. Thank you to DEP Commissioner Sapienza for his leadership on helping to encourage more New Yorkers to go green.”</div><div>“I have had the opportunity to visit many new housing developments and community organizations in my district who are investing in green roofs and other creative solutions to improve the ecological health and sustainability of our great city,” said <b>State Senator Gustavo Rivera.</b> “I encourage every New Yorker, especially my fellow Bronxites, to help make a green roof happen on your own property or in your neighborhood as we work together towards a greener, healthier future.”</div><div>“New York is a city of water, so it’s vital that we do what we can to keep our waterways clean,” said <b>State Senator Liz Krueger.</b> “Green roofs are an effective way to ease the pressure on our aging sewer system, and bring some much-needed natural space into our communities. Even in the most densely built-up areas of the city, like my district, coop and condo boards and management companies can take advantage of DEP’s Green Infrastructure Grant Program to turn their roof into a part of the city’s living landscape.”</div></div>
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“Making the Green Infrastructure Grant Program more streamlined allows property owners a chance to turn their roofs into a green space,” said **State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.**, a member of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee. “The Green Roof program allows stormwater to be collected and used to make our city more green instead of going through the sewer system and potentially contaminating our waterways. I hope to see more people and businesses register to be part of this innovative program and do their part to make New York City as green and efficient as it can be.”

“Earth Day is a great opportunity to bring awareness about the importance of environmental sustainability,” said **State Senator Roxanne J. Persaud**. “It also gives us a moment to reflect on the need for all of us to take responsibility for our planet. We depend on the environment for everything we need to survive. I commend DEP for this initiative to support the installation of ‘green roofs,’ and for making the funding easily accessible to New Yorkers.”

“Let’s Go Green” with the NYC Green Infrastructure Grant Program,” said **Assistant NYS Assembly Speaker Felix W. Ortiz**. “Everyone should support this effort to “go green” and permit stormwater to naturally seep into the ground. Our environment is fragile and every effort must be taken to maximize our ability to replenish the earth.”

“We must protect our Earth. While Earth Day marks a special day of tribute to our world and brings awareness to the importance of its preservation, there are things we can do every day to make it a better and healthier place. Our concrete jungle has so many negative effects on our Earth, especially with respect to storm water. Luckily, Commissioner Sapienza and DEP are making great progress in reducing the harmful effects of storm water runoff, while also creating new urban green spaces. I applaud DEP’s efforts and encourage all my constituents to take advantage of their generous Green Infrastructure Grant Program,” said **Assembly Member Joseph R. Lentol (D-North Brooklyn)**.

“A green roof is an innovative, cost-effective and simple way to protect the environment and enhance our green infrastructure” said **Assembly Member David I. Weprin**. “By offering additional funding to private property owners seeking to install a green roof, DEP takes another step towards a healthier New York.”

“Creating platforms to increase resiliency and sustainability efforts throughout the city is essential to combat the impacts of climate change throughout New York City,” said **Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick**. “I applaud the DEP’s initiative to streamline green roof funding opportunities. This is a great way to reduce stormwater runoff, alleviate the heat island effect and expand biodiversity in New York City.”

**Assembly Member Daniel O’Donnell, Chair of the Parks and Tourism Committee**, said “Rooftop space is undoubtedly the most underutilized real estate in the whole city, despite being a perfect location for initiatives like renewable energy and green roofs. The city’s sustainability and resiliency plans rely on the implementation of these programs, so incentives like the Green Infrastructure Grant Program are a great way to encourage participation. I want to thank DEP Commissioner Sapienza, Council Member Costa Constantinides, and all others involved for advocating passionately for our environment, and I wish everyone a happy Earth Day.”

“I think it is a great idea that DEP is providing property owners with access to go green by engaging them in the Green Infrastructure Grant Program,” said **Assembly Member Clyde Vanel**. “Stormwater can be an issue to get rid of at times, creating problems that home owners do not need. So putting this system into play would not only help the environment but also lessen the burden that home owners have to deal with. The idea of water being consumed into the ground to help with overflows in certain areas, is a great idea. This is a step forward into a cleaner New York and providing residents with a better quality of life.”

“Sometimes going green literally means adding more green to our urban landscape—in this case, our roofs,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin**. “I’ve been a huge champion of green roofs for a long time. Ever since I learned of how they can reduce ambient temperature and help mitigate harmful CSOs, I’ve been on board. I fully support DEP’s stewardship of our environment and I encourage all property owners to go green this Earth Day.”

**Council Member Peter Koo** stated, “The future of urban conservation must lie with green infrastructure, and a critical component of that will be the green roof program. This program is a win/win for private property owners and the City of New York. By incentivizing individuals and families to beautify their communities and expand their green footprints, the city relieves the tremendous burdens on our overwhelmed sewers. Thank you to DEP, the green advocates, and especially the forward-thinking New Yorkers who choose to take part in this important program.”

“I am thrilled that DEP is redoubling its efforts to get NYC property owners to install green roofs. In a city of asphalt and concrete, we need to be creative about how we limit rainwater runoff into our sewers and waterways—and turning our roofs into green spaces is also a terrific way to cool our city. By streamlining the Green Infrastructure Grant Program, DEP is building on its great work to ensure a sustainable future for New York, perfect for celebrating Earth Day,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal (Manhattan, District 6)**.

“Green roofs help protect NYC’s environment and infrastructure,” said **Council Member Daniel Dromm**. “I encourage all home owners to consider installing one. I applaud DEP for highlighting this important program and making it easier to access. This is an impactful way of observing Earth Day.”

“I applaud DEP for encouraging resident participation in green infrastructure programs,” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso**. “The city’s environmental health is a collective responsibility; it will take a concerted effort on the part of city agencies, elected officials, environmentalists, and residents to achieve a more sustainable city. By offering a streamlined funding schedule, DEP is now making it easier than ever for residents to participate.”

“Financial incentives for green roofs help building owners make a smart investment in their properties and New York’s future,” said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca**. “DEP’s grant program for Green Roofs will be especially welcome in areas like Red Hook and Gowanus where storm water controls are a key factor in public safety and long-term community resilience.”

“Green infrastructure creates healthy communities,” said **Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson**. “I commend DEP for celebrating Earth Day by streamlining the Green Infrastructure Grant Programs and making it even easier for building owners across New York to bring green roofs to their communities. Local changes really can have a big impact and I encourage everyone learn more about the green roofs program.”

“Every New Yorker should be a part of the effort to keep our harbors healthy and in good shape,” said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. “By working with and financially incentivizing private property owners to install green roofs, New York City is making a great investment that will pay back huge dividends toward the sustainable health of our coastline and our local economy.”

“The idea to GO GREEN doesn’t just consist of energy-efficient appliances for the home but includes green roof systems, which are eco-friendly décors beneficial to homeowners, their wallets and the local landscape,” said **Council Member Andy King, 12th District/Bronx**. “I applaud DEP for updating the Green Infrastructure Grant Program in order to speed up the grant approval process. This will encourage more home-owners to GO GREEN with green roofs.”

“I am thrilled that DEP is encouraging private property owners to install green roofs,” said **Council Member Andrew Cohen**. “The City’s has a history of problems with combine sewer overflow and creating new green rooftop spaces is another tool we have to combat this serious problem.”



“Green roofs are an important component of New York City’s environmental protection tool kit,” said **Council Member Fernando Cabrera**. “The reduction of stormwater runoff into our sewers and rivers, lessening of the urban heat effect especially in low income communities and increased visual attractiveness of neighborhoods, make green roofs a great investment for homeowners and the entire city. Streamlining the funding schedule and making information readily accessible to property owners will increase utilization of the Green Infrastructure Grant Program. DEP is making great strides to fund more projects for the greater the benefit of all New Yorkers.”

“So many areas in Queens have dealt with chronic flooding conditions,” said Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik, Chair of the City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation. “I am pleased to see New Yorkers making use of the available funding for green roof projects, and I encourage those with appropriate properties to consider green infrastructure options.”

“Untreated water, bypassing the city’s sewage filtration system and flowing into our city’s waterways, is a disturbing thought to consider,” said **Council Member Karen Koslowitz**. “Yet, it is something that happens during a particularly heavy rainfall. I applaud DEP for developing this “green” initiative to address this critical sewage overflow problem.”

“As we celebrate Earth Day, it is important we remind ourselves of the ways we can help contribute to a healthier planet,” said **Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.** “The Green Infrastructure Grant Program provides a way for property owners in New York City to make a positive impact on the environmental health of our city, particularly New York Harbor. I commend DEP for streamlining the funding process for this important initiative to make it even more accessible to property owners, and encourage individuals considering installing green roofs in their buildings to take advantage of this excellent initiative.”

“The Green Infrastructure Grant Program is an initiative we know works, that improves both the quality of life for New Yorkers and our environment,” said **Council Member Francisco Moya**. “We should be taking every measure available, including expanding this program, to create a healthier and greener New York.”

“Whether designing a new project or a renovation, New Yorkers should jump at the opportunity to build green roofs,” said **Council Member Kalman Yeger**. “New York City offers unprecedentedly generous funding to encourage homeowners to help our community. Green roofs help keep our waterways clean, provide fresh air, and incredible learning and recreation opportunities for our children. This is yet another way New York City is leading the nation in managing the challenges of climate change.”

Community Board 11 has been an advocate for increased storm water absorption to prevent combined sewer overflow events. Through DEP’s streamlined green roof funding schedule for the Green Infrastructure Grant Program, property owners in the Bath Beach and Bensonhurst communities can play a role in our resiliency, increased permeability and sustainability, said **Marnee Elias-Pavia, District Manager of Community Board 11**.

“Green Roofs make our city a greener and healthier place to live. I urge every homeowner to apply today,” said **Theresa Scavo, Chairperson of Brooklyn Community Board 15**.

“We have long advocated for Green Infrastructure as the best way to mitigate the negative consequences caused by stormwater runoff,” said **Laura Spalter, Chair of Bronx Community Board 8’s Environment and Sanitation Committee**.

“This push to increase the number of green roofs is a win-win for consumers and the environment.”

“DEP’s Green Roof program diverts rainwater and increases green space, keeping our rivers cleaner,” said **Russell Unger, Executive Director of Urban Green Council**. “And now the program is easier for applicants. So much to like here!”

“As a scientist researching some of the first and earliest green roof installments in New York City years ago, it is gratifying to see the funding schedule and fast track review that will further accelerate the adoption of these superior roofing systems by private building owners,” said **Stuart R Gaffin, Ph.D., Research Scientist, Center for Climate Systems Research, Columbia University**. “In addition to stormwater benefits, potential owners should also realize the potential building energy benefits in both warm and cold seasons, the reduction in the urban heat island effect, visual amenity value and the expected doubling or more of roof service lifetime.”

“Rooftops are an untapped resource in a space-constrained city, and The Nature Conservancy applauds DEP’s efforts to transform these spaces to better serve our communities,” said **Emily Nobel Maxwell, New York City Program Director at The Nature Conservancy in New York**. “According to research undertaken by The Nature Conservancy, buildings make up 20 percent of the city’s land cover, and though not all roofs are suitable for green roofs, there is huge potential for improvements as less than one percent of all roofs are green. Investments in green roofs, especially in the most vulnerable neighborhoods, will increase the city’s overall resilience by helping to manage stormwater and mitigate extreme heat; improve energy efficiency and save property owners heating and cooling costs; improve harbor water quality; and increase refuges for birds, pollinators and other important wildlife.”

“We have been building green roofs financed by these DEP grants since 2012, and this improvement to the program is a welcome change that will help expand green roofs to more buildings throughout the city,” said **Gwen Schantz, Chief Operating Officer, Brooklyn Grange**. “The grant program is currently the only source of public financial support for green roofs in New York, and we look forward to continuing to work with DEP to make the city a greener and healthier place.”

“Through the several awarded projects we have designed and installed, we have seen the positive impact green infrastructure has had on the city, the community, and the overall environment,” said **Eric Dalski, Founder and Partner, Highview Creations**. “DEP has worked closely with industry professionals, private building owners, and community organizations to promote and develop projects that will benefit NYC waterways, local ecologies, and the overall health of our city.”

To date, DEP has committed over \$14.5 million to 35 projects through the Green Infrastructure Grant Program. Not-for-profit organizations, private property owners and businesses are eligible for funding for projects that use green infrastructure to reduce or manage stormwater on private property. DEP accepts applications on a rolling basis, year round. Consideration will be given to projects that are cost effective, provide matching funds or other contributions, and include training and workforce development.

Green roofs have been a popular request from the Grant Program since it was initiated in 2011, making up 60 percent of funded projects to date. DEP is hoping to encourage more proposals and increase awareness of the funding available for private property owners. There are no restrictions on types of plantings; sedums, native plants, and vegetables, for example, are all eligible. The new funding schedule sets reimbursement rates for green roof projects based on planted area and depth of the growing medium.

The new funding schedule and project guidelines provide applicants with an upfront understanding of DEP’s cost-effectiveness criteria for green roof projects, and eliminates uncertainty over how much funding may be available. By providing this information to applicants in advance, DEP is able to fast track green roof grant applications, with anticipated design approval within 90 days from the submittal date.

The highest funding rate of \$30 per square foot (SF) is available for projects that include 3,500-20,000 SF of planted area and that have 4 inches of growing media depth, with reduced rates available for projects with shallower depths. For projects

larger than 20,000 SF, funding is also available, see table below. For those projects meeting the requirements for \$30/SF, this is the highest green roof incentive in the nation.

Interested applicants can find more details on DEP's Green Infrastructure Grant Program webpage: [nyc.gov/dep/grantprogram](http://nyc.gov/dep/grantprogram), or email [gigrant@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:gigrant@dep.nyc.gov) with questions.

Reimbursement Rates (\$/SF) for Green Roof Projects

Soil Depth (in.)	3,500-20,000 (SF)*
1.5–1.99	\$10
2.0–2.99	\$15
3.0–3.99	\$25
4.0+	\$30
* The reimbursement rate for SF of planted area over 20,000 SF is calculated using 50% of the rate shown above	

Like many older urban centers in the United States, New York City is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where stormwater that falls on impervious surfaces such as rooftops and streets, and wastewater from homes and businesses, are carried through a single sewer pipe to treatment plants. During heavy rainfall, the amount of stormwater entering the sewers can exceed the capacity of the system and a combination of stormwater and wastewater—called a combined sewer overflow (CSO)—can be discharged into local waterways. Over the last decade, DEP has invested more than \$10 billion in upgrades to wastewater treatment plants and related efforts to reduce CSOs and today New York Harbor is cleaner and healthier than it has been in more than a century. However, CSOs remain the city's top harbor water quality challenge.

In 2010, the City launched the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan, an alternative approach to reducing CSOs and improving water quality that combines traditional infrastructure upgrades with cost effective green infrastructure installations that capture and retain stormwater runoff before it ever enters the sewer system and can contribute to overflows. Through 2030, DEP is planning for \$1.5 billion in public funding for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as an estimated \$2.9 billion in cost-effective grey infrastructure upgrades, to significantly reduce CSOs. The Green Infrastructure Grant Program is one part of the Green Infrastructure Plan.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing approximately 1 billion gallons of high quality drinking water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.5 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$18.9 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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