



Landscape Design Templates – FAQ

1. What is this Community Engagement Session about?

The purpose of this meeting is to review and provide feedback on eight landscape design concepts which will result in eight front yard landscape design templates that are structured to streamline the standard permitting process for your rebuild. Our focus is to get your feedback on the conceptual plans.

2. Who is funding this work and why?

The Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership is funding this project to promote sustainable, vibrant and water efficient landscapes. The Partnership is coordinating with the City of Santa Rosa to support property owners in the rebuilding process by creating front yard Landscape Design Templates that are designed to meet Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) requirements, and be allowed to go through an abridged, streamlined permitting process for single family homes in the fire rebuild areas.

3. Is use of these templates required?

No. Residents may use the front yard Landscape Design Templates or develop their own planting and irrigation plans that meet the standard MWELO requirements along with the normal, unabridged permitting process. The front yard Landscape Design Templates will be the only plans allowed through the streamlined process.

4. Can I use any of the eight designs?

Yes. Any of the Landscape Design Templates may be used. Homes located in the Wildland Urban Interface area (WUI) will be limited to using the front yard Landscape Design Template that meets WUI requirements. While we encourage you to design and install your entire yard, the Landscape Design Templates for single family residences includes front yards only. Each front yard Landscape Design Template can be scaled to fit a landscape area up to a maximum of 2,500 square feet (excluding areas such as driveways, walkways, patios, etc.).

5. Why should I use these templates?

Use of these templates will streamline and expedite your permitting process. They will provide residents with a process to simplify plant selection and layout, irrigation design, and landscape aesthetics, which will save time and money in the long-run.

6. What are the benefits?

The benefit these templates offer is beyond saving time and money. By providing additional optional design specifications for environmentally friendly features such as downspout and hardscape disconnection from the storm drain system, rainwater capture and greywater reuse, residents can choose how they rebuild to save water, clean and recharge groundwater, and reduce storm water runoff. The plant selection will be based on four main themes and can be matched to any building style: Contemporary, Cottage, Native/Adaptive, and Edible Ecology. These templates will also incorporate water-wise, habitat providing, canopy replacement and fire safer plantings and design.

7. What is MWELO?

The State of California adopted the first Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) in 1992. Most recently Governor Brown's Drought Executive Order of April 1, 2015 directed the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to update the State's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance through expedited regulation. The California Water Commission approved the revision on July 15, 2015. The local land use planning agencies (City of Santa Rosa and County of Sonoma) adopted the updated ordinance, per the State regulations.

For the fire rebuild, a simplified, prescriptive compliance option will be accepted for landscape areas less than 2,500 square feet when using the Landscape Design Templates. Sites with a landscaped area greater than 2,500 square feet will be required to comply with the local MWELO requirements applicable to the landscape location and size.

Resources

City of Santa Rosa

Resilient City Permit Center & Rebuilding Information – (707) 543-4649

rebuild@srcity.org

County of Sonoma

Sonoma County Resiliency Permit Center – (707) 565-1788

rebuild@sonoma-county.org

Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership – www.savingwaterpartnership.org

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