HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

LESS LAWN MORE SAVINGS

Transforming Thirsty Lawn into a Low Maintenance Refuge

Lavender *Lavandula spp.*

Project Snapshot

Hamilton Park HOA

LOCATION: Novato, Marin County

WATER UTILITY: North Marin Water District

SUPPORT: Cagwin & Dorward Landscape Contractors, Integra Planning + Landscape Architecture

NORTH MARIN WATER DISTRICT

Project Overview

Hamilton Park Homeowners Association in Novato, CA had over 22,000 square feet of high maintenance nonfunctional lawn. With support from the North Marin Water District Cash-for-Grass turf replacement incentive, the HOA was able to convert their nonfunctional lawn into cohesive, low-water use and low maintenance landscaping featuring colorful plants for year-round interest.

Working with Integra Planning + Landscape Architecture consultants starting in 2022, Hamilton Park HOA began planning to convert their 56 buildings (112 units) with high water use lawns to low-water use and low maintenance landscapes.

Cagwin & Dorward Landscape Contractors removed the lawns and installed the updated landscape, protecting existing healthy trees and planting additional trees. They also provide regular maintenance for the updated landscape.

"The homeowners are thrilled because there's not the lawn mower going around all the time and the blowing is really to a minimum. So it's really changed the dynamic here once a week when it comes to the maintenance."

Jen Adelman,
Hamilton Park HOA Board President

BEFORE

AFTER: *7 MONTHS AFTER INSTALLATION*

Garden Features

Over 22,000 square feet of nonfunctional lawn were converted to low-water use plantings in a cohesive palette across this 112 unit HOA. California native plants as well as other drought adapted plants from around the world were included to provide year-round color and interest while reducing water use and maintenance needs.

Project Highlights

PROJECT FEATURE	DETAIL
Lawn Removed	22,788 square feet of nonfunctional turf.
Plant Palette	Colorful, water smart shrubs, perennials, and groundcovers, adding seasonal color and texture. Mix of California native and other Mediterranean climate plants.
Water Savings	Estimated 70% water savings in lawn conversion areas.
Irrigation System	Sprinkler converted to drip irrigation with weather-based irrigation controller.
Installation Approach	Planning began in 2022 with a professional design consultant and a survey of residents. A commercial landscaping contractor completed the installation and provides regular ongoing maintenance.
Project Cost	Estimated $8-14 per square foot. Cost varies by project area, planting density and sizes, material choices, etc.
Funding Sources	North Marin Water District Cash-For-Grass Rebate, HOA Reserves
Community Benefits	Significant reductions in noise through reduced maintenance needs. Cohesive landscape with added flowers, seasonal interest and butterfly habitat. Drought adapted plantings that continue to look good in the dry summer months.
Return on Investment	Reduced maintenance and irrigation needs.

Get Started in Your Community

1. Create long-term goals for sustainability efforts.
2. Identify lawn areas with no recreational use; consider maintenance costs and water use.
3. Explore funding from your water agency and other progams, including any restrictions.
4. Pay attention to trees and value their shade. Make sure they receive adequate irrigation during the landscape transition.
5. Engage the community through education and events.

SONOMA - MARIN SAVING WATER PARTNERSHIP

SavingWaterPartnership.org

CALIFORNIA WATER EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP

NonFunctionalTurfCA.org