



Spring Deadline = April 1st; Fall Deadline = August 1st

Unity Gardens is excited to announce that, due to the ongoing generous support from Anne Arundel County, we are able to continue to offer our grants for native plants program! **In addition to our regular grants up to \$1,000 for native perennial gardens we also offer super grants up to \$3,000 for projects which include at least 75% native trees and shrubs and (NEW in 2026) meadow grants up to \$2,000.**

****Please see [Funding Restrictions](#) section for more information about our super grants.****

About Unity Gardens: Unity Gardens supports the building of community partnerships through its grassroots grants program. We fund volunteer-led native gardening projects in Anne Arundel County such as rain gardens, erosion control projects, and pollinator gardens, which use the power of plants to address issues like stormwater runoff and pollution. Unity Gardens envisions a world where common citizens are the first step toward environmental change.

We offer two annual funding cycles. Our Spring Grant deadline is April 1 (applications available February 15). And our Fall Grant deadline is August 1 (applications available June 15). Funds may be used for native trees, shrubs, and plants and limited materials that support the life of these plants, such as mulch, soil amendments, tree protection, etc).

Eligibility

- Projects must be organized by a nonprofit community-based organization (ex. HOA, PTA, faith-based congregation, scout or other volunteer or non-profit organization) and be volunteer run.
- Projects must be located in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. (Funds for Annapolis City projects are generally available but might be limited).
- Projects must be installed on nonprofit organization-owned or public property (i.e school or library grounds, stormwater management areas, parks) with documented permission from the property owner.
- A minimum of 80% of the funding must be used for plant material.* Up to 20% may be used for plant survivorship materials such as mulch, soil amendments, tree protection, etc. or educational signage, considered on a case-by-case basis.

- If applying for a Super Grant (up to \$3,000), 75% of the plants must be native trees and shrubs. If applying for a Meadow Grant (up to \$2,000) the perennials/grasses (or sedges) mix should be about 50-50%.
- Unity Gardens will only provide funding for native plants. No annuals or non-native species will be funded and substitutions will be requested if your plans do not comply.
- The project must use plants that are native to the Coastal Plains eco-region since the vast majority of Anne Arundel County falls into this geographic classification. If you aren't certain, please refer to the following resources:
 - Primary Source - [Anne Arundel Native Plant List](#)
 - Secondary Sources - 1) [MD Dept. of Agriculture Best Native Plants](#), 2) [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping \(Chesapeake Bay Watershed\)](#) or 3) the online version of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service publication available through the [Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay](#). NOTE that these secondary resources contain plants found in ALL of Maryland's eco-regions. The vast majority of Anne Arundel County is in the Coastal Plains eco-region, with a small portion of the northern tip falling into the Piedmont eco-region. Please plan accordingly!

Visit <http://unitygardens.org/grant-information/native-plants/> for more information on native plants.
- The applying organization must have a business (not personal) bank account in the name of the grantee organization for accepting the grant funds.
- An organization may not receive a Unity Gardens grant more than once in a 12 month period.
- The project must be undertaken on a voluntary basis (mitigation and violation remediation projects cannot be funded).

Requirements Following Approval

- Each grantee will be required to:
 - Confirm a start date of the project
 - Notify Unity Gardens of any changes to the original proposal (i.e. plants, dates, remaining funds, etc)
 - Inform Unity Gardens of any press releases, events, or publicity around the planting.
 - Acknowledge Unity Gardens in all promotional material, on social media, and post Unity Gardens sign (to be provided to grantee).
 - If permits are required, the permit must be obtained before the project begins. The applicant is responsible for checking with the appropriate local jurisdiction to determine if any permits are required.
 - Projects are to be completed within the grant cycle for which the grant is awarded (Spring or Fall) unless an extension has been granted.

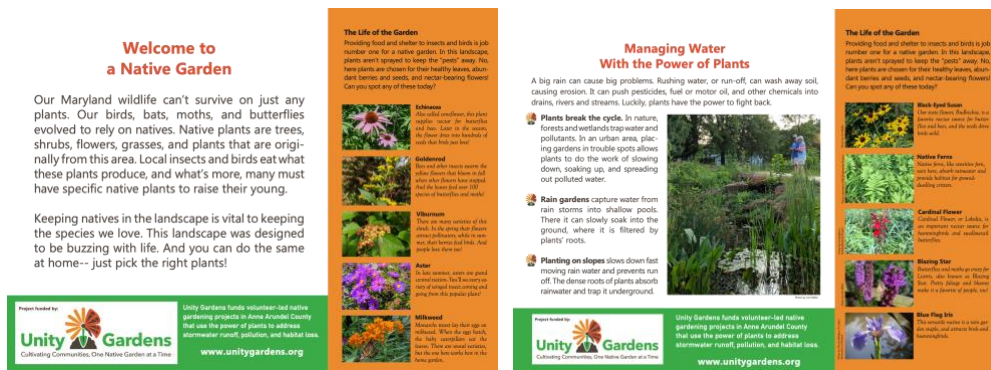
- A final report will be due by July 15th for Spring grants or by November 15th for Fall grants. It must include:
 - A summary of the project as implemented.
 - A complete and accurate spreadsheet of the funds received and expenses incurred under the grant, plus all receipts.
 - Remaining funds or those that cannot be accounted for with receipts must be returned to Unity Gardens.
 - Copies of news releases and photos, including before and after photos.
 - The project lead is responsible for both informing participants that photos may be utilized by Unity Gardens on our website and in promotional materials, and ensuring verbal or written permission from individuals depicted in submitted photos as described in the grant agreement.
 - Outline of a plan on project site maintenance after installation, including designation of a maintenance supervisor. After project completion, the Grantee agrees to maintain the project in good condition and repair or replace damaged or dead plants for a minimum of 2 years.
- Upon approval of the Final Report, Grantee will provide recognition to Unity Gardens by installing a Unity Gardens sign (provided to grantee for free) or including the Unity Gardens logo on educational signage at the project site.
- The proposal funded by Unity Gardens belongs to the organization requesting the grant and not any individual member or volunteer of the organization.

SIGNAGE:

Each grantee will be given a 12 x 16 aluminum sign to post at their grant project. There are two signs available, and both include some plant descriptions. It is recommended, but not required, that you include some or all of the plants depicted on the sign you wish to receive.

Welcome to a Native Garden includes information about the following plants: Echinacea, Goldenrod, Viburnum, Aster, and Milkweed.

Managing Water with the Power of Plants includes Black-eyed Susan, native ferns, Cardinal flower, Blazing Star, and Blue Flag Iris.



Both signs are also available in Spanish upon request at no additional cost.

One Do Not Mow/Do Not Spray sign is also available for free to grant recipients. These signs are helpful in letting maintenance and ground crews know that the area is intentionally planted thereby reduce the risk of inadvertent trimming and unwanted application of chemicals.

Grantees may request extra signs for a fee that covers our costs - \$40 for the 12 x 16 inch signs; \$16 for the 8 x 12 inch No Mow signs - by emailing unitygardensaa@gmail.com.

Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Whether or not the application meets all of the project eligibility requirements listed above.
- Whether or not the application includes all required components, specifically:
 - A complete Unity Gardens Application Form (submitted online or via email).
 - Photos of the site
 - Detailed Sketch of the planting plan (using only Maryland Coastal Plains Natives)
 - Detailed Maintenance plan (what will be done, when and by whom)
 - A Letter of Support from the property owner (required for ALL projects)
 - Proposed Budget using Unity Gardens' Budget Spreadsheet template only – budgets submitted using alternative formats are not accepted. The formulas cannot be changed.
- The level of volunteer participation and development of community leadership.
- Potential benefit to the community and the environment. Projects that address environmental issues such as erosion, stormwater management, or habitat protection.
- Feasibility of project plan, including goals, timeline, budget, and breakdown of plant and other materials.
- Detailed budget, proof of fiscal responsibility, and financial need.
- Soundness of long term plan for maintenance and sustainability.
- Projects with a financial match by the requesting organization will be looked upon favorably.
- First priority is given to first-time grantees meeting or exceeding all eligibility requirements.
- Second priority is given to repeat grantees in good standing, as funds allow.
- Projects with 100% of funding going toward native plants are preferred.

Funding Restrictions

- Only native trees, shrubs, and perennials will be funded. No annuals or invasive species will receive funding.
- **The standard grant is for up to \$1,000. To qualify for a super grant up to \$3000, 75% of your plants MUST BE native trees and/or shrubs. To qualify for a meadow grant up to \$2000 your project must include an approximately equal mix of native perennials and grasses/sedges.**
- **20% of your total grant may be used for maintenance and sustainability items such as compost, soil, and mulch.**

- Unity Gardens grant funds may not be used for hardscape, equipment, snacks, or delivery fees.
- Grant funds may not be used on private property (other than private property owned by a nonprofit or community association).
- Mitigation or violation remediation projects cannot be funded.
- Unity Gardens will require a refund for the cost of materials not funded in our guidelines or for items without an invoice/receipts.

Award Notification

All applicants will receive an email notice of Unity Gardens' decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, Unity Gardens will email a grant agreement with grant conditions. Have it signed by the head of the organization, then scan, and return the signed agreement. Unity Gardens will mail the check to the Grantee following Unity Gardens' receipt of the signed agreement.

Applications are accepted in good faith. Unity Gardens Inc shall be held harmless in the event of changes in leadership or structure of organizations receiving grant funds.

Unity Gardens, Inc is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization.

Updated May 2026