This toolkit will get you on your way to a greener yard and less flood-prone city. If you have questions about the information, run into difficulties, or need help finding a service provider, contact us and we will be happy to help.

The Urban Conservancy provides this toolkit for informational purposes only and property owners should engage in due diligence before entering into a contractual relationship with vendors or service providers. Before you complete the application for the Front Yard Initiative program, read, understand, and accept the Front Yard Initiative’s Terms and Conditions, the Process Guidelines and the Design Requirements.

### The Front Yard Initiative Homeowner Toolkit

Review the design considerations below then choose the levels that apply to you in each category. Then open this booklet to choose design elements that match your selections to help design your new yard.

#### Your Yard

- **Yard Size**: Larger lots can accommodate larger trees and shrubs while medium and smaller yards may rely more on grasses, ground cover, and small shrubs.

- **Sun Exposure**: Note the direction your lot faces and any existing trees or structures providing shade. Select appropriate plantings for sunny, partially sunny or shady conditions.

- **Activity / Privacy**: Some planting strategies can provide physical and visual barriers to your property. However, some owners may want to encourage more outdoor activity with more open spaces for seating and gathering. Design to accommodate your preferences.

- **Function**: Do you want to see pollinators, a sea of flowers, a citrus tree or a simple green yard out your window? Your plant selection will determine how your yard will function.

- **Flood**: Do you currently have a lot of standing water during and after storms or a little? This can help you decide on flood tolerant planting and the level of perviousness and water storage needed in any new project.

#### Your Lifestyle

- **DIY?**: Costs, know-how and time should factor in. As noted, most FYI recipients leave the paving work to the professionals and some recipients plant and seed their yards on their own.

- **Cost**: FYI recommends planning to spend an amount equal to your reimbursement at a minimum. Estimates range from $1,000 to $10,000. Consider leaving the concrete removal and any paving work to the professionals.

- **DIY?**: Consider the do-it-yourself work to the professionals and some owners may want to do it on their own.

- **Construction Barriers**: Don’t forget to look up and down! Note any water valves or sewer lines in your yard and be aware of any power lines overhead. Each can affect plant selection and layout. Call before you dig (DIAL 8-1-1) and leave sidewalks safe and ADA accessible.

- **Maintenance**: Are you a green thumb with time on your hands, a plant-it-and-forget-it type, or somewhere in between? Consider this when selecting plants.

#### Your Toolkit

**Toolkit designed by**: Eckaw + Dumez + Ripple

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STORMWATER RETENTION
If you have issues with flooding in your yard or street, these solutions help to reduce the load on both your property and the city's stormwater system.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE
Suspended pavement systems allow for large volumes of water to infiltrate below the hardscape and provide ample stormwater management. A cost is similar to characteristics.

RAIN GARDEN
A rain garden is a shallow planted depression with deep rooted native plants. Maintenance includes mulching and plant care and they are better for larger areas as typical garden sizes are 100+ sf. Plantings help further hold and filter stormwater.

PLANter BOX
Raised planter boxes can be moved from place to place. They can also be tied into downspouts to store rainwater with water-loving plants.

RAIn BARReL
A Rain Barrel is a tank used to collect and store rainwater. It reduces flooding and provides water for landscape use. They are great for nearly any size area and are located close to downspouts. Note that they do require some regular sediment removal and cleaning. Typically 24" diameter - for larger needs, consider a cistern.

INFILTRATION TRENCH
An infiltration trench filled with gravel helps clean stormwater before it reaches the city sewer while allowing a substantial amount to more slowly percolate into the soil.

SWALE
A swale is a manly depression to catch detain rainwater. It is a relatively low maintenance solution and offers ample stormwater holding.

PERMEABLE PAVING
Unlike typical concrete, permeable paving allows water to pass to the soil below instead of running off into the street and directly into the city storm sewers. Where paving is needed, permeable is preferred and can generally work in small, medium or large yards.

GRASS CONCRETE PAVERS
Grass concrete pavers have larger open areas than permeable paving but function similarly. They allow an even larger volume of water to percolate into the soil below.

OPEN GRID PAVERS (TRUE GRID)
Open grid pavers with a plastic grid of open cells that can be filled with gravel/crushed stone / or grass are a great way to blend stormwater management and pathways / driveways. Maintenance is low though the system usually sits atop 6" - 12" of crushed stone.

PERMEABLE PAVERS
Traditional stone or bricks pavers set in a bed of sand (not mortar). One often can't tell between traditional and permeable paving however the open joints allow water to flow through to the ground below. For even better water storage, permeable paving can be used with a deep gravel bed.

GRAVEL
Gravel has the lowest cost and is a permeable solution. Since gravel shifts over time with walking and driving it will require occasional filling and grading. A variant is the plastic grid - a grid that increases cost but can decrease maintenance over time as it holds the gravel in place.

INFRILTRATION TRENCH
An infiltration trench filled with gravel helps clean stormwater before it reaches the city sewer while allowing a substantial amount to more slowly percolate into the soil.

STEPPING STONES
Stepping stones are an economical way to increase stormwater management on your site if a continuous walkway is not necessary.

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Grass concrete pavers have larger open areas than permeable paving but function similarly. They allow an even larger volume of water to percolate into the soil below.

DRIEveway STRIPs
Driveway strips are a cost effective solution to a fully-paved driveway. Existing concrete can be partially removed and replaced with gravel or grass.

SHADING TREES
Larger trees provide overhead canopy and shade or gathering. They do require some space - above and below and the ground. The large root system requires they not be placed near foundations. And of course - avoid planting them near overhead utility lines.

Ground COVEr
Various varieties exist though they are usually an alternative to turf grass and often more hearty. Maintenance is low in comparison to other plantings (though some weeding will be in your future). It's not great to walk on but can be good for filling in between stepping stones, driveway strips, and other small areas. Some varieties can survive in full shade under trees too.

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