Create a Budget for Landscape Retrofits

RESOURCES FOR LANDSCAPE RETROFITS
Design ideas, professional assistance, incentives and financing

For residential programs, classes, incentives and more, go to WaterSmartSD.org.

WaterSmart Gardens
There’s nothing like experiencing the beauty, texture and scents of WaterSmart gardens in person. Several neighborhood nurseries and regional gardens across San Diego County are dedicated to showcasing climate-appropriate plants and landscapes. Take advantage of tours, classes and one-on-one design consultations offered by these resources. Great places to start are:
- The Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College
- TheGarden.org
- San Diego Botanic Garden
- SanDiegoBotanicGarden.org

Create a Budget for Landscape Retrofits
Know what you can afford with your landscape before you start

Of all the water-efficient upgrades homeowners can make, landscape retrofits are the most expensive. However, in the long run, replacing turf with a water-efficient landscape saves water, reduces maintenance and increases your home’s value.

But do your landscape ideas match your budget? According to the Association of Professional Landscape Designers, homeowners should budget 5 to 10 percent of their home’s market value for the installation or renovation of the entire landscape and expect up to a 200 percent return on the investment. However, resourceful homeowners can find ways to get a quality landscape for less. A budget will help you decide which of your design ideas stay, which don’t, and which need tweaking.

It Pays to be WaterSmart!
Visit WaterSmartSD.org to learn about incentives and discounts, including rebates on high-efficiency irrigation equipment. The site also lists free landscaping classes offered around the San Diego region.

COST ESTIMATES

LandscapingNetwork.com, a California-based source of landscaping information for homeowners and professionals, can help you get a handle on project costs. Most prices are based on national averages, and Southern California prices may be higher. Call local designers, contractors or supply centers to discuss pricing.

Designer or Architect $500 - 16,000

Fencing, linear ft; professionally installed
- Chain Link $12-14
- Wood (6 feet high) $13-19
- Wrought Iron $22
- Vinyl $25

Plants (price per plant)
- Perennials (1 gallon) $4-6
- Shrubs (5 gallon) $20-25
- Trees (1.5 gallon) $35-50
- Trees (36-inch box) $150-350

Sprinkler $1,000; Drip $650-750

San Diego Botanic Garden
Sustains a $245 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents of the San Diego region.

The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a $245 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers wholesale water supplies to 24 retail water providers, including cities, special districts and a military base.

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Stretch Your Budget
Here are a few ideas to make your new garden more affordable.

1. Do It Yourself
Do what you are capable of yourself. Take advantage of no-cost or low-cost classes, design workshops and one-on-one design consultations.

2. Use Less-Expensive Materials
Reduce the quantity or size of plant material. Divide existing plants onsite and replant them throughout the project. Go with gravel instead of flagstone; use rocks you find on your property to make a fire pit; and shop estate sales for outdoor furniture and give your found treasure a new coat of paint.

3. Upgrade Your Irrigation
Avoid the cost of installing new irrigation pipe by keeping your existing irrigation zones and upgrading your sprinklers. Upgrades can be as simple as replacing spray nozzles with rotary nozzles and drip emitters, and adding a smart controller.

4. Go Zone by Zone
Instead of tackling your whole property at once, create your new garden one irrigation zone at a time and spread the cost over two or three years.

REAL PROJECTS, REAL BUDGETS

1. Example A
Where did the budget go?
The homeowners saved money by doing much of the work themselves and using cuttings from plants on site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plants/Mulch</th>
<th>Hardscape</th>
<th>Irrigation</th>
<th>Demo/Soil Prep Supplies</th>
<th>Design Assistance</th>
<th>Labor</th>
<th>Other (i.e., lighting)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1,600 Sq. Ft.
$3/Sq. Ft.

2. Example B
Where did the budget go?
The use of boulders adds a unique, no-water-use element. Homeowners designed the landscape themselves. Expect to pay a landscape designer about $800 for a project of this size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plants/Mulch</th>
<th>Hardscape</th>
<th>Irrigation</th>
<th>Demo/Soil Prep Supplies</th>
<th>Design Assistance</th>
<th>Labor</th>
<th>Other</th>
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</thead>
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<td>9%</td>
<td>43%</td>
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</table>

630 Sq. Ft.
$13/Sq. Ft.

3. Example C
Where did the budget go?
Winding pathways and adaptive native plants resistant to drought create a park-like setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plants/Mulch</th>
<th>Hardscape</th>
<th>Irrigation</th>
<th>Demo/Soil Prep Supplies</th>
<th>Design Assistance</th>
<th>Labor</th>
<th>Other</th>
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</thead>
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<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,923 Sq. Ft.
$10/Sq. Ft.