

# How can we scale up great programs like Rain Gardens to The Rescue?

It would help to have more people who are trained as landscape architects or environmental engineers that can provide the technical knowledge needed for this endeavor. However, we are also working diligently to provide hands on training so that people who enjoy working with soil and plants can learn skills necessary to install rain gardens that will manage storm water and provide many co-benefits of planting native plants and beautifying an area.

Possibly the biggest barrier is cost. Due to the type of soil in Detroit (mostly clay) the soil must be amended to provide a healthy environment for the native plants to grow in. We use compost and sharp sand to amend the soil and then put mulch on the gardens after planting the native plants for weed control and to provide conditions for moisture. Native plants, compost, the sand and mulch provide the bulk of the cost for a rain garden. We are advocating for city-wide composting so that compost can be provided at no cost to residents (as in other communities) and we are advocating for growers in the city to consider growing native plants so that they are accessible and plentiful.

