



Colorado Turf Replacement Program Update

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Developing Colorado’s Turf Replacement Program

In response to the ongoing drought in Colorado, the General Assembly passed *House Bill 22-1151* to promote the efficient and maximum utilization of Colorado’s water resources by decreasing the amount of irrigated turf within the state. The bill required the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) in the Department of Natural Resources to create a turf replacement program that incentivizes the voluntary replacement of nonessential irrigated turf across the state.

The development of the program, including information about nonessential turf, funding, and program eligibility, is summarized in a previously published *Issue Brief*.

What is the status of the Turf Replacement Program?

CWCB officially launched the Turf Replacement Program and opened the application process for eligible entities on January 25, 2023 for the first round of

funding. The first round closed on March 31, 2023. The second round of applications for funding opened on July 1, 2023 and closed on August 31, 2023. There are currently no plans for additional rounds of funding.

Application Process

Eligible entities, which included local governments, certain special districts, 501(c)(3) nonprofits, and federally recognized tribes, were required to submit an application to CWCB. CWCB then evaluated each project based on eligibility, compliance with program requirements, and merits of the project.

Project Approval & Contracting

In order to be awarded a contract through the program, applicants were required to include a dollar-for-dollar match to the state funds. Qualifying applications were also required to submit tax information, budget, schedule, and other required documents, and to complete a scope of work. Given the competitiveness of the program, applications that focused on the following were favored:

- improving soil;
- applying efficient irrigation;
- limiting turf to high traffic, essential areas;
- utilizing low water demand plants;
- applying mulch;
- long-term maintenance plans; or
- educational benefits.

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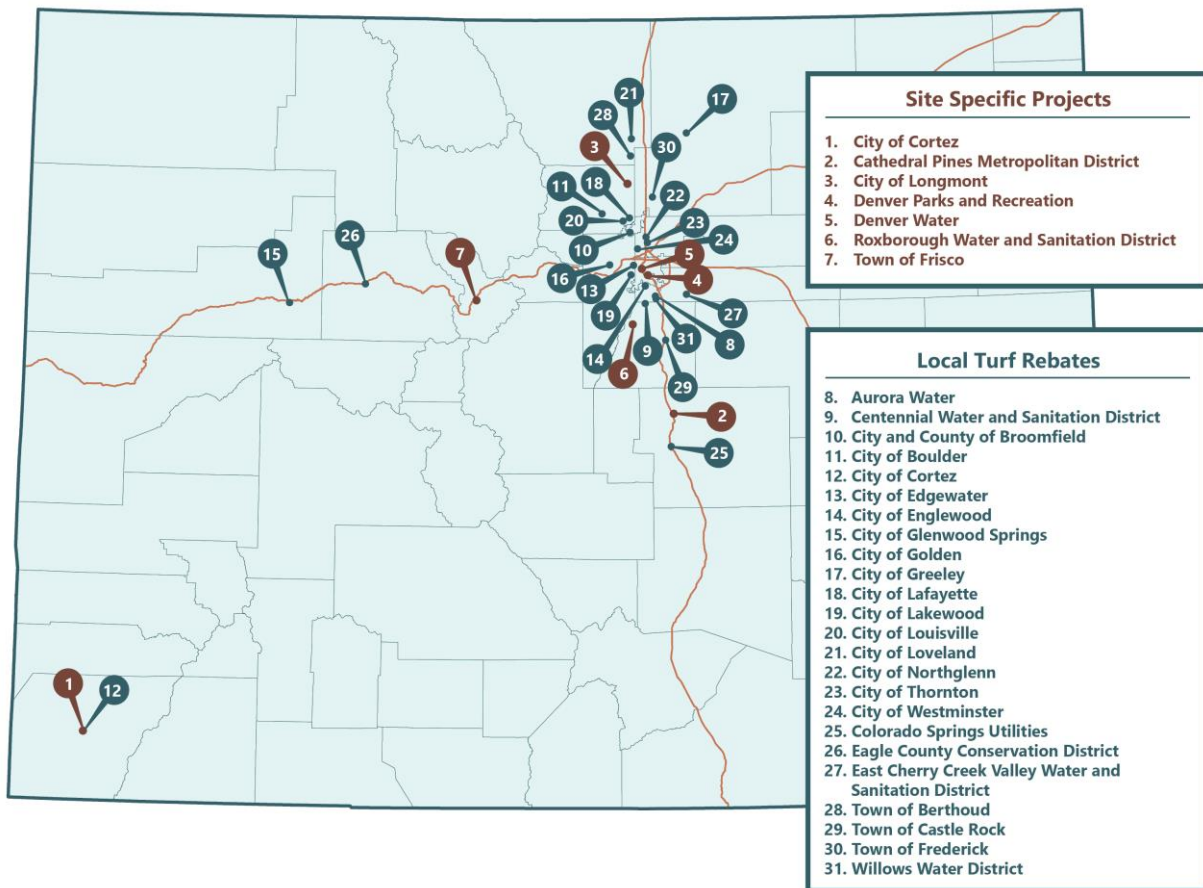
A total of 30 projects across Colorado have been funded to date

According to CWCB, 37 eligible entities have applied to the program, and 30 individual entities have had projects approved and completed contracting.¹ The two main types of funded projects include site-specific projects and local turf rebates. Site-specific projects will replace turf in identified, high-water use areas. Most entities set up a

local turf rebate program in their regions. The individual programs have varying requirements, so individuals may wish to contact their local municipality or water provider to inquire about available rebates.

Figure 1 shows the various locations across Colorado where projects have been funded. Individual markers show the entities with contracted projects through the Turf Replacement Program.

Figure 1. Map of Funded Projects



Source: Data from CWCB.

¹ Turf Replacement Program Funding Summary (CWCB).