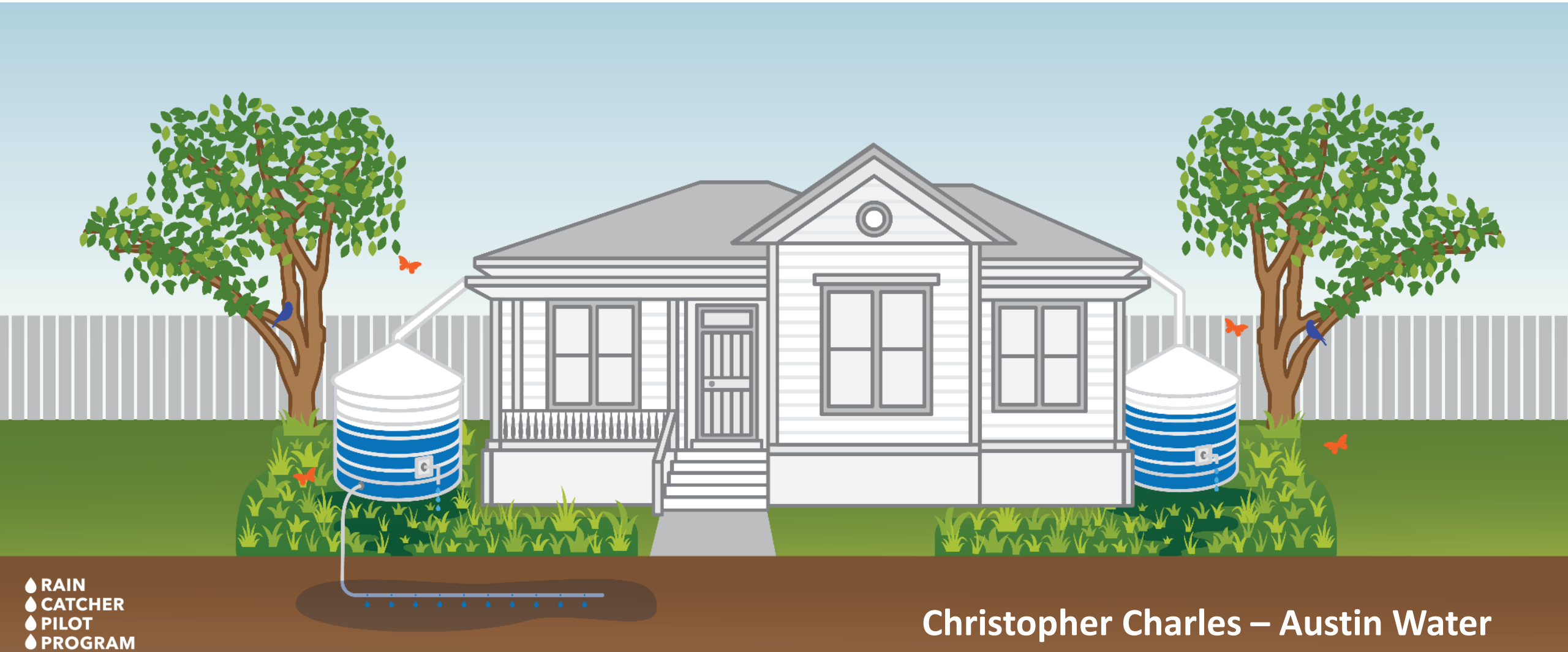


Stacked Incentives: Co-Funding Outdoor Water Conservation Programs

North Texas Regional Water Conservation Symposium – November 17, 2022



RAIN
CATCHER
PILOT
PROGRAM

Christopher Charles – Austin Water



Rain Catcher Pilot Program (RCPP)

The RCPP is a collaboration of city departments, non-profits and other partners, which offers technical assistance and financial incentives to eligible property owners to install rain gardens, rainwater irrigated trees, and/or cisterns that capture and slow down stormwater.

Pilot Timeframe: October 2018 - January 2024

of Properties: Approximately 1400

Location: Upper portion of Waller Creek Watershed (47% impervious cover, heavily residential, 1.08 sq. mile)

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PROGRAM



Why did Watershed Protection (WPD) create this program?

- 2011 - WPD created a Green Stormwater Infrastructure Team
- 2012 – City adopted, “Imagine Austin” comprehensive plan with green infrastructure as a priority area
- 2017 - completed national benchmarking of residential green stormwater infrastructure incentive programs & local survey
- 2017 – 2018
 - Relationship building
 - Approval
 - Funding



Program Progression

- Oct 2018 – Sept 2019 Phase 1
- Feb 2020 – January 2021 Phase 2
- Feb 2021 – January 2022 Phases 3
- Feb 2022 – January 2023 Currently in Phase 4
- Feb 2023 – January 2024 Phase 5



Pieces of the Puzzle

- Watershed Protection
- Austin Water
- Urban Forestry – Development Services
- Urban Patchwork – Third Party Contractor



Watershed Protection

City of Austin

- Provides
 - Pilot program administration
 - Ambassadors
 - Funding for non-profit partner
 - \$1 per gallon
 - Drainage Charge Discount
 - Associated scientific and sociological studies
- Focus
 - Include community members in the solution
 - Strengthen “one water” concept and collaborations
 - Improve urban hydrology - (Increase base flow in creeks, reduce erosive events)
 - Increase enrollment in the Drainage Charge Discount



Austin Water

City of Austin

- Provides
 - Expertise –doing rainwater focused incentives since the 1990s
 - Administers existing rebate programs
 - Funding for existing rebate programs including:
 - Rainwater Harvesting – up to \$5,000 for equipment to capture rainwater
 - WaterWise Landscape – up to \$1,750 to convert turf grass to native plant beds
 - WaterWise Rainscape – up to \$500 for landscape features that hold rainwater
 - Mulch and Hose Timer rebates
- Focus
 - Conservation – Reduce use of potable water for landscapes



<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/rebates-tools-programs>

Urban Forestry

City of Austin

- Provides
 - \$1,000 towards a combination of front yard cistern that passively waters a street tree + \$350 for additional rainwater irrigated trees
- Focus
 - Increase the number of street trees
 - This geographic area is within their target area to increase urban canopy cover



Urban Patchwork

501(c)(3) non-profit

- Provides
 - Streamlining of the process
 - Free rainwater focused site assessment
 - Connects participant with a contractor
 - Inspects installed systems
 - Completes rebate applications
 - Gathers data and submits reports to the City
 - Contractor training
- Focus
 - Ecologically restorative landscaping
 - Private residential property and public space
 - Turning a patchwork of underutilized spaces into a quilt of common good



Urban Patchwork highlighted one of the completed residential projects during the 2021, "Outdoor Living Tour."



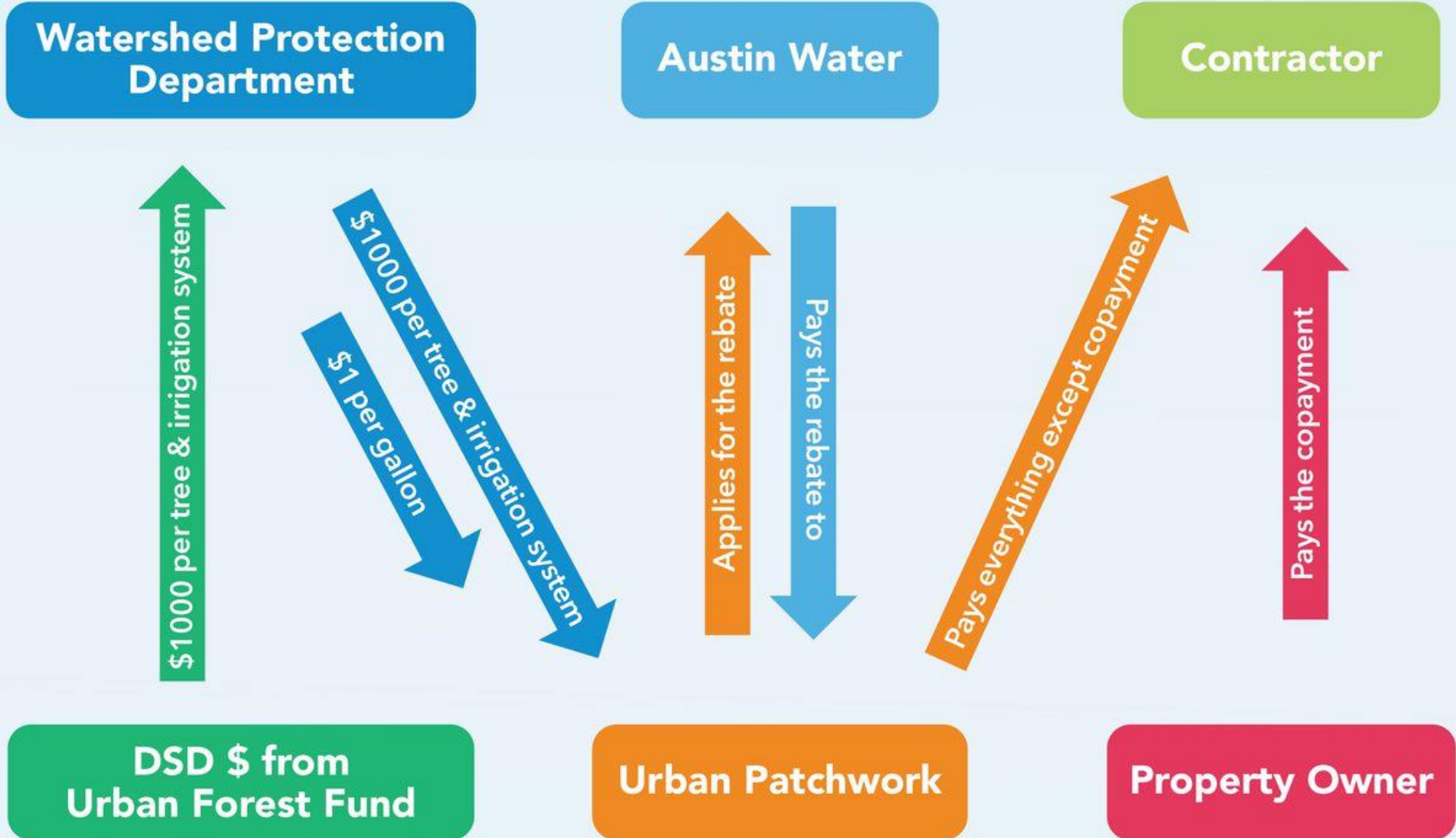
One hour site assessment and design recommendations.

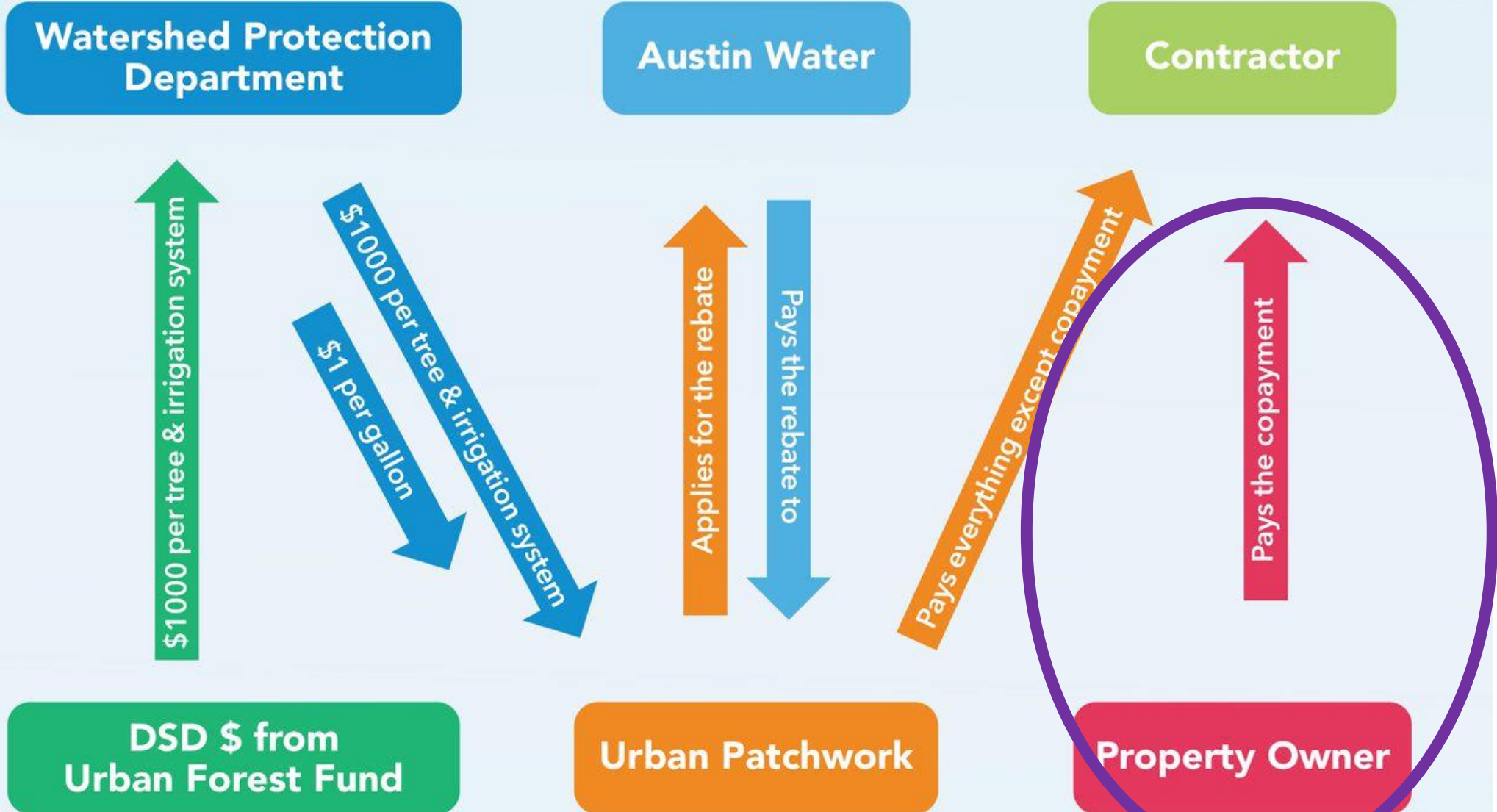


Urban Patchwork will streamline the design, installation, and payment processes for program participants.

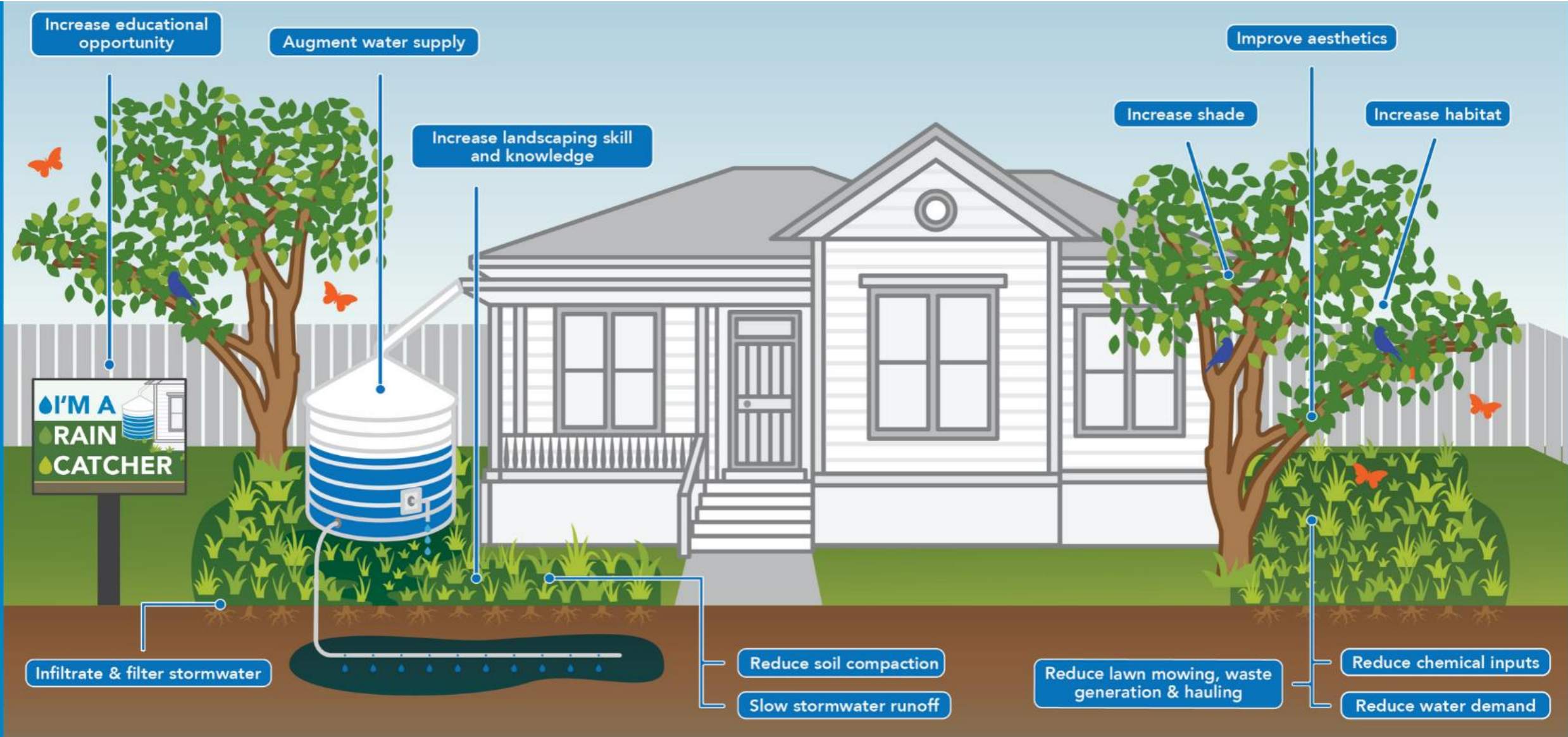


- **Reduced drainage charge**
- **Existing Rainwater Harvesting and Rainscape Rebates**
- **\$1,000 per tree with passive irrigation system.**
- **PLUS an additional \$1 per gallon.**





Benefits from the RCPP Program



More Community Benefits

- **Health**
 - Overall Environmental Health (air, water, soil quality)
 - Mental & Physical Health Benefits
 - Bringing people and organizations together
 - Gardening
- **Green Job Creation**
 - Park Ranger Cadets
 - Small and Minority Owned Businesses
 - National Green Infrastructure Certification Program
- **Resiliency from extreme weather/nature events**
 - Drought
 - Reduced water quality due to sediment from floods or zebra mussels
 - Winter Storm Uri – (Alternate water supply)



In mid-February 2021, Winter Storm Uri aka Snowpocalypse, incapacitated Central Texas




Examples from the RCPP Program



City-Wide Future

- City-wide Marketing and Behavioral Study
 - Contract with:
 - Asakura Robinson
 - University of Texas at Austin
 - Equity Framework
 - Agent-Based Modeling
 - Structural Equation Modeling
 - Timeline:
 - 2 Years Total
 - 4 Phases
 - Understand
 - Design
 - Sample
 - Analyze

RAIN
CATCHER
PILOT
PROGRAM



**RAIN
CATCHER
BEHAVIORAL STUDY**

PROJECT
MANAGEMENT
PLAN

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT AUSTIN

ASAKURA
ROBINSON

TEXAS
The University of Texas at Health

More Info & Contacts

Links

- www.RainCatcherAustin.org
- www.AustinTexas.gov/RainCatcherPilot
- Social Media
 - [Instagram.com/raincatcheraustin](https://www.instagram.com/raincatcheraustin)
 - www.facebook.com/raincatcheraustin

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