

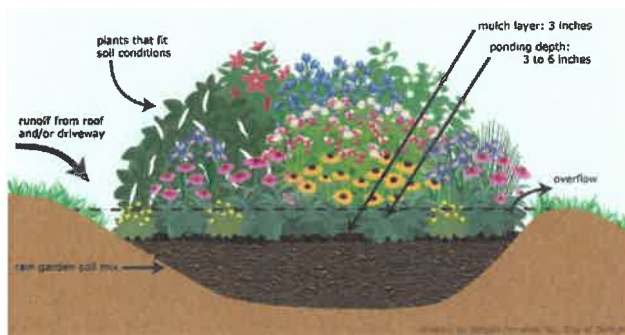


LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

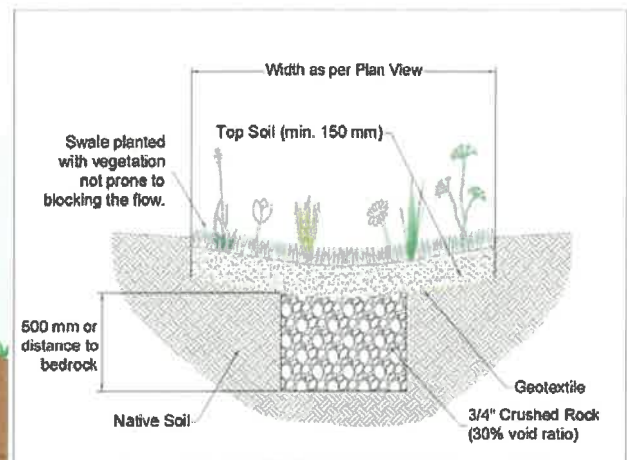
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Rain-Ready Landscapes Program

- **Purpose:** establish a cost-share program for landowners within the District (outside City of Lincoln) to implement best management practices that will improve water quality of storm runoff
- Open to any property within the District but outside the City of Lincoln
 - We already provide matching funding to the City of Lincoln's program—find it here at <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/ltu/watershed/grant/landscape.htm>.
- **Funding amount:** 50% cost share, up to \$2,000 per project
- **Types of projects:**
 - Rain garden
 - Vegetated bioswale
 - Flow-through or infiltration planter/basin
 - Others on a case-by-case basis
 - Rain barrels and trees are eligible components of projects, but not eligible for stand-alone cost share (maximum of 2 per project)
- No set application period—applications accepted until all funding is allocated for that fiscal year
 - Project must be completed within one year of signing agreement with NRD
 - Deadline may be extended with NRD approval
- Offers the opportunity to partner with individual communities that wish to take an active role in promoting the program or starting their own



Rain garden
(image by City of Durham, NC)



Bioswale
(image by City of Charlottetown, PEI, Canada)

**Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Program Guidelines**

Rain-Ready Landscapes Program Guidelines

The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District's (LPSNRD or District) Rain-Ready Landscapes Program (RRLP or Program) provides cost-share to landowners with property within the District, but outside the City of Lincoln, to implement best management practices (BMPs) for improving water quality of storm runoff before it enters storm sewers, ditches, and streams.

Program Goals

- Improve quality of surface water in our District by capturing and filtering storm runoff to reduce pollutants and sediment loads.
- Provide an opportunity for landowners across the LPSNRD to implement small-scale stormwater best management practices through cost-share partnerships.

Project types

The LPSNRD will accept the following BMPs as part of the RRLP:

- Rain garden
- Vegetated bioswale
- Infiltration or flow-through planters or basins which do not connect directly to municipal stormwater infrastructure
- Other practices which may be considered on a case-by-case basis

Add-ons—these can be a component of a proposed project but will not be funded on their own; maximum of 2 per project)

- Rain barrels
- Trees (suitable for eastern Nebraska, according to the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum)
 - Up to \$300 per individual tree (excluding installation)

Who can apply?

Any property within the LPSNRD may be eligible for the RRLP, EXCEPT that a project proposed as part of a District or state permit requirement or to correct a violation of District rules will not be eligible for cost-share under this Program. Because the LPSNRD already partners with the City of Lincoln on the City's Rainscaping Lincoln Program, the District will direct any City of Lincoln applicants to the Lincoln program (which may be found at <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/ltu/watershed/grant/landscape.htm>).

In some cases, a specific project may not fit neatly within either the City of Lincoln's program or the RRLP. The LPSNRD will explore ways to partner with the applicant in such cases to accomplish the project and advance our goals of improving water quality and managing stormwater effectively.

Project requirements

All projects must meet the following requirements:

- No project may be located in the public right-of-way or directly above buried utilities.
- Projects must be designed in accordance with the City of Lincoln's [Small-Scale Residential Stormwater Best Management Practices](#).

Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program Program Guidelines

Application format

An applicant to the LPSNRD Rain-Ready Landscapes Program must provide the following to the District to be considered for cost-share assistance:

- Letter to LPSNRD requesting cost share, including the following:
 - Detailed project description
 - Outline of project costs
 - Implementation timeline
 - Landowner's contact information
- Aerial photo with property and project location clearly labeled
- Diagrams/drawings/design plans depicting the project
- Proposed contractor (if any)
- Maintenance plan for the project

LPSNRD staff may contact a landowner for additional information on the project during the review process.

The District will accept applications on a first-come, first-served basis until all funding for that year has been obligated. The LPSNRD will accept only one (1) project application per landowner per program year (July 1 – June 30).

Review and approval process

See the "Rain-Ready Landscapes Program Process Map" for a depiction of the general steps.

The LPSNRD will consider the following factors in reviewing applications:

- Appropriateness of the proposed BMP to the setting in which it will be installed
- Conformance with the City of Lincoln's [*Small-Scale Residential Stormwater Best Management Practices*](#) and other standard resources, as applicable
- Project timeline
- The District's previous experiences with the proposed BMP
- Other considerations deemed necessary to ensure that the BMP will, when implemented, achieve RRLP goals.

Practices not on the above BMP list may receive additional scrutiny, so that the District can understand the proposed practice and its likely effects and longevity at the project location.

Project implementation

Project implementation may begin after the LPSNRD Board approves the application, and the landowner and the LPSNRD sign a Program Agreement, which outlines responsibilities and requirements under the RRLP. The landowner has one (1) year from the date the Agreement is signed to complete the project, unless the LPSNRD grants an extension. Once the project is completed, LPSNRD staff will come out and inspect the site to verify that the project was constructed as shown in the application materials.

If a landowner, or the landowner's contractor, wants to make changes to the approved plan for the project during construction, then the landowner must notify the District immediately, to ensure that the project remains in compliance with the Program. If the project is not constructed according to the approved plan, and the District does not approve the modifications, then the

**Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Program Guidelines**

LPSNRD may withhold all or part of the cost-share payment for the project. In addition, the LPSNRD may restrict the landowner from future participation in the RRLP.

Cost-share payment

The landowner must submit a completed W-9 and Citizenship Attestation Form before payment will be disbursed. The LPSNRD will provide these forms to the applicant at the time of signing the Program Agreement. Failure to submit these forms will result in delayed payment.

Payment for project expenses occurs on a reimbursement basis, once the project is completed and inspected. The landowner will submit receipts and/or invoices for project expenses to the LPSNRD. The District will reimburse eligible expenses at a 50% rate, up to a maximum of \$2,000 per approved project. The District will not reimburse ineligible expenses. See the “Rain-Ready Landscapes Schedule of Expenses for Reimbursement” for descriptions of expenses that the LPSNRD will accept for reimbursement.

Project maintenance

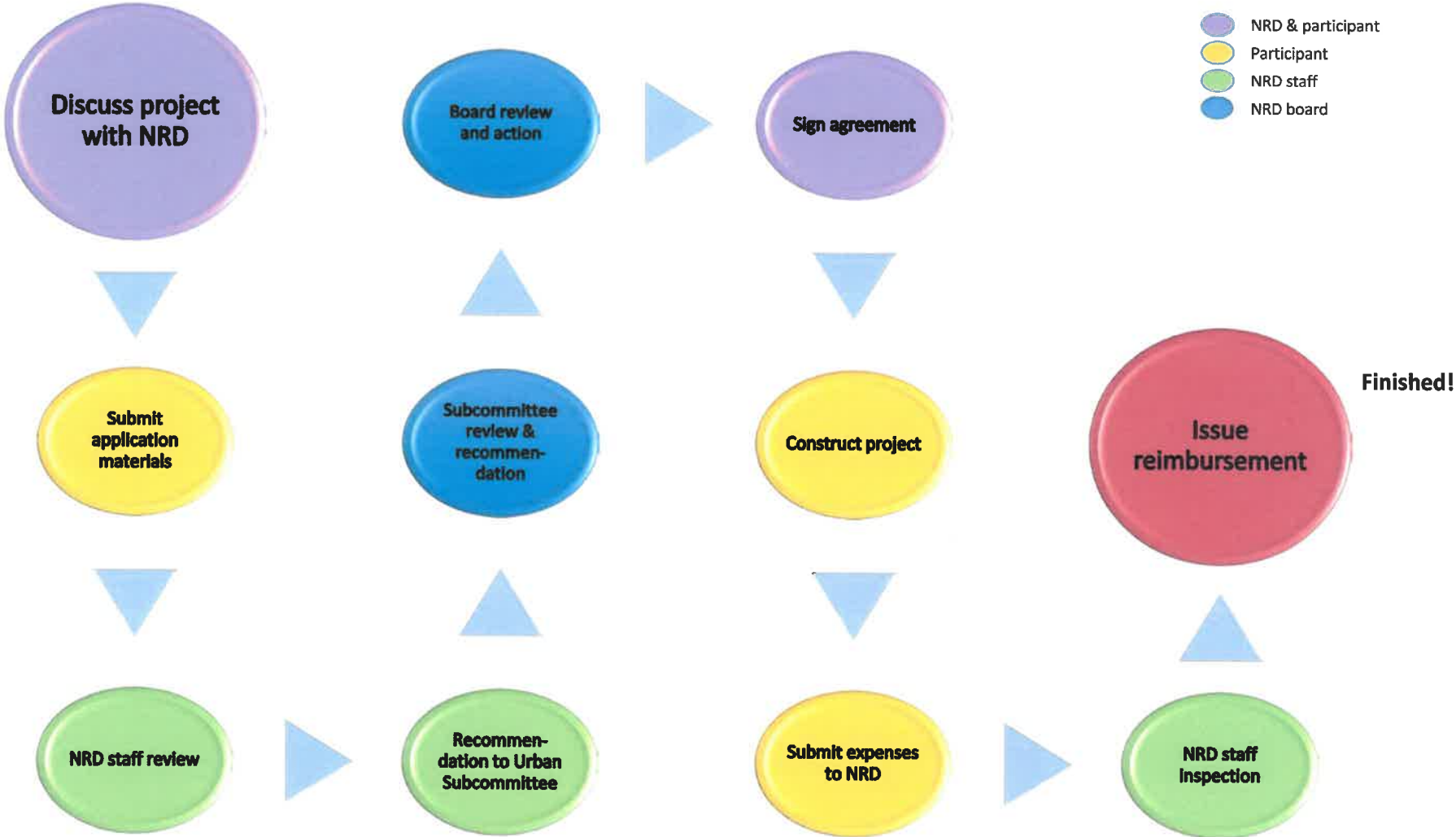
The LPSNRD requires that the landowner will maintain the project in good order for a minimum of five (5) years after the project is completed. The District may periodically inspect projects to verify that the landowner is performing ongoing maintenance. If the landowner removes the project prior to the end of that five-year period, then the LPSNRD will require the landowner to repay all or a portion of the cost-share money paid to the landowner.

Questions

Questions regarding the Rain-Ready Landscapes Program may be directed to Tracy Zayac at tzayac@lpsnrd.org or (402) 476-2729.

NRD rainscaping program general process outline

Step 1



**Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Schedule of eligible/ineligible expenses**

**Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Schedule of Expenses for Reimbursement**

This list organizes typical eligible and ineligible expenses by project type. This list is not comprehensive. The NRD may, upon review of all expenses submitted for reimbursement on a given project, determine eligibility of other project expenses not listed here.

Rain garden or bioswale

Eligible for reimbursement	Ineligible for reimbursement
Approved native or hardy introduced plants appropriate for rain gardens or bioswales	Unapproved plants (e.g., annuals, vegetables, invasive species, certain turf grasses)
Soil amendments (e.g., compost) to increase soil fertility and infiltration rate	Ornamental features (e.g., lawn ornaments, bird baths/feeders, lighting, edging)
Hardwood mulch to line the project installation	Tools (e.g., rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows)
Stone needed to prevent erosion in overflow and inlet areas, or to direct water to a rain garden or bioswale	Irrigation equipment, including hoses and sprinklers
Downspout extensions to direct water to rain garden or bioswale	Retaining walls or raised garden beds
Soil grading to direct water to a rain garden or bioswale	Additional landscaping or dirtwork that does not directly pertain to the project
Rental fees for equipment needed to install the project (e.g., rototiller)	Water or other utility bills, gasoline, etc.
Design and installation labor performed by a landscape company or contractor	Design and installation labor done by the landowner or a non-professional
Attendance at a rain garden or stormwater workshop or educational class	Expenses for work performed or projects completed prior to approval of a cost-share application

Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Schedule of eligible/ineligible expenses

Infiltration or flow-through planter or basin

Eligible for reimbursement	Ineligible for reimbursement
Approved native or hardy introduced plants appropriate for planter or basin	Unapproved plants (e.g., annuals, vegetables, invasive species, certain turf grasses)
Soil amendments (e.g., compost) to increase soil fertility and infiltration rate	Ornamental features (e.g., lawn ornaments, bird baths/feeders, lighting, edging, etc.)
Gravel, filter fabric, hardwood mulch to line the project installation	Tools (e.g., rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows)
Stone needed to prevent erosion in overflow and inlet areas	Irrigation equipment, including hoses and sprinklers
Structural materials to construct planter (e.g., wood, plastic, blocks)	Retaining walls or raised garden beds
Inlet and overflow pipe	Additional landscaping or dirtwork that does not directly pertain to the project
Rental fees for equipment needed to install the project (e.g., cement mixer)	Water or other utility bills, gasoline, etc.
Design and installation labor performed by a landscape company or contractor	Design and installation labor done by the landowner or a non-professional
Attendance at a stormwater workshop or educational class	Expenses for work performed or projects completed prior to approval of a cost-share application

Rain barrel (available as project add-on only) — maximum 2 per project

Eligible for reimbursement	Ineligible for reimbursement
Rain barrel and parts (e.g., spigot, overflow, screen)	Ornamental features
Gutter additions and downspout extensions to direct water to rain barrel	Irrigation equipment, including hoses and sprinklers
Materials to construct rain barrel platform (e.g., blocks)	Tools (e.g., rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows)
Design and installation labor performed by a landscape company or contractor	Water or other utility bills, gasoline, etc.
Attendance at a rain barrel or stormwater workshop or educational class	Rain barrel as a stand-alone project
	Additional landscaping or dirtwork that does not directly pertain to the project
	Design and installation labor done by the landowner or a non-professional
	Expenses for work performed or projects completed prior to approval of a cost-share application

Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Schedule of eligible/ineligible expenses

Trees (available as project add-on only)—maximum 2 per project

Eligible for reimbursement	Ineligible for reimbursement
Trees suitable for eastern Nebraska*	Unapproved tree species or varieties
Individual tree cost up to \$300, excluding installation	Individual tree cost exceeding \$300, excluding installation
Planting kits (e.g., stakes, mulch, tree wrap)	Irrigation equipment, including hoses and sprinklers
Rental fees for equipment needed to install the project (e.g., auger)	Tools (e.g., rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows)
Installation labor performed by a landscape company or contractor	Water or other utility bills, gasoline, etc.
Attendance at a stormwater workshop or educational class	Trees as a stand-alone project
	Additional landscaping or dirtwork that does not directly pertain to the project
	Installation labor done by the landowner or a non-professional
	Expenses for work performed on projects completed prior to approval of a cost-share application

*Refer to the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum’s current list at https://plantnebraska.org/file_download/inline/7294c965-5637-4af9-9cb3-fbf170a1169e

**Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Frequently Asked Questions**

**Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
FAQs**

Q: What is the Rain-Ready Landscapes Program for?

A: The Rain-Ready Landscapes Program (RRLP) provides cost-share to encourage NRD landowners to implement best management practices that will improve the water quality of storm runoff before it enters storm sewers, ditches, and streams. On individual properties and in urban environments, these practices typically take the form of rain gardens and bioswales, which incorporate attractive landscaping features with soil amendments and certain species of plants to filter rainwater and slowly let it soak into the ground or flow through to a storm sewer or stream channel.

Q: Can I design my project myself?

A: Yes. You have the option of designing and/or installing the project yourself, and the NRD will work with you to maximize the success of the proposed project, to the extent feasible. Design and installation labor by you or another non-professional is not eligible for reimbursement through the RRLP.

Q: Who is considered a “professional” under this program?

A: For the purposes of the RRLP, a “professional” is a person who operates or works for a landscaping company, garden center, or plant nursery in the capacity of designing and/or installing landscaping features, including plants.

Q: I’d like to put a rain garden on my business property. Is the RRLP open to properties other than residential?

A: Yes. The RRLP is open to any property in the District, outside the City of Lincoln, including commercial and other non-residential property types.

Q: I missed the application deadline for the City of Lincoln’s Rainscaping Program. Can I apply to the NRD program?

A: No. The RRLP is open to participants outside the City of Lincoln. Questions regarding the City of Lincoln’s Rainscaping Program should be directed to ekubicek@lincoln.ne.gov.

Q: I have a neat idea for managing urban water quality on my property, but it doesn’t fit the project descriptions in the RRLP. Will the NRD cost-share on my project?

A: Contact the NRD to describe your project and how it may fit with our water-quality management goals.

Q: Will the NRD cost-share for pervious pavement through this program?

A: The NRD may approve projects not specifically listed in the program guidelines on a case-by-case basis. Contact the NRD to discuss your proposed project.

Q: I put in a rain garden through this program, but now I want to take it out. Can I do that?

A: The Agreement the NRD signed with you, when your application was approved, requires that the project be maintained for five (5) years. The NRD may require you to pay back a portion of

**Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Frequently Asked Questions**

the cost-share funds we awarded to you, if you remove the project prior to the expiration of the five-year time period.

Q: My HOA has restrictions on landscaping. Can I still participate in the RRLP?

A: Talk with your HOA representatives to explore options for your project that will fit within the association's requirements. The NRD does not review project applications for compliance with association or other locally-applicable restrictions and does not guarantee conformance.

**AGREEMENT FOR
RAIN-READY LANDSCAPES PROGRAM**

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this ____ day of _____, 20 ____, by and between _____, hereinafter referred to as “Landowner”, and the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District, hereinafter referred to as “District”.

WHEREAS, the District currently partners with the City of Lincoln on the Rainscaping Lincoln Program, which encourages City of Lincoln landowners to install landscaping measures for the purpose of reducing urban pollutants in stormwater; and

WHEREAS, the District has established the Rain-Ready Landscapes Program (“Program”) to provide landowners within the District but outside the City of Lincoln with the same opportunity afforded to City of Lincoln landowners under the Rainscaping Lincoln Program; and

WHEREAS, the Landowner desires to participate in the Program and has made an application to the District to enroll Landowner’s property in the Program; and

WHEREAS, the application has been approved by the District.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises contained herein, the Parties agree as follows:

I. THE LANDOWNER AGREES:

- A. To construct, or cause to be constructed, the landscaping measure(s) described in the application materials (“Project”), in the location(s) designated in the application materials, which are attached to this Agreement as Exhibit “A”.
- B. To maintain the Project in good working order for not less than five (5) years.
- C. To control all noxious weeds on the property shown in Exhibit A.
- D. To abide by all applicable municipal and association ordinances, covenants, codes, and restrictions regarding the installation and maintenance of landscaping on the property.
- E. Notify the District immediately if the Project is modified or removed prior to the termination of this Agreement.
- F. To allow the inspection of the Project by District staff to ensure compliance with the Program.

II. THE DISTRICT AGREES:

- A. To administer the Program in the manner described in Exhibit "B" and as further provided herein.
- B. To make one (1) cost-share payment to Landowner, upon completion of the Project and inspection by District staff, of 50% of the eligible expenses incurred by the Landowner, up to a maximum of \$2,000.

III. IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED:

- A. Payment under this Agreement shall be sent to _____.
- B. If the Landowner fails to maintain the Project or is otherwise in violation of this Agreement, the Agreement may be terminated, and the Landowner may be required to repay all or part of any payment received.
- C. Disbursement of funds by the District is contingent upon the District receiving a completed W-9 and Citizenship Attestation Form from the Landowner.
- D. This Agreement shall remain in effect for five (5) years from the date of the last signature, unless extended by mutual agreement of the Parties.

By signing this Agreement, Landowner certifies that the statements made herein and in the application materials are true, complete, and correct.

Landowner/Landowner

Date

Landowner/Landowner

Date

District Representative

Date

**Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program
Program Guidelines**

Rain-Ready Landscapes Program Guidelines

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- Improve quality of surface water in our District by capturing and filtering storm runoff to reduce pollutants and sediment loads.
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Project types

The LPSNRD will accept the following BMPs as part of the RRLP:

- Rain garden
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Project requirements

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Proposed Rain-Ready Landscapes Program Program Guidelines

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Review and approval process

See the “Rain-Ready Landscapes Program Process Map” for a depiction of the general steps.

The LPSNRD will consider the following factors in reviewing applications:

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