

Watershed Organic
Lawn Care and Landscape

Proposal for Maintenance and Operational Inspection of the City's Bioretention Basins

Watershed Organic Lawn Care and Landscape
Jim Roberts, Owner and Project Manager
Tom Christopherson, Crew Leader
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Qualifications and Experience:

Watershed has been in business since 1996. We are located in the City of Columbus and all employees live in the City. We were one of the first companies in the area to design and install bioretention basins. Since our first bioretention basin installation in 2004, there have not been any structural or drainage issues with our work. In fact, most of the gardens have performed better than expected, holding and draining the unprecedented rainfall of 2011.

List of notable bioretention basin projects:

- Watershed has been selected to install 6 bioretention basins for the Weinland Park redevelopment project in the spring of 2013.
- City of Columbus Bioretention Basins 2012
- Westerville Brook Run in partnership with Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District, The Ohio State University, the City of Westerville, and Urban Wild.
- Adena Brook Ravine sponsored by the Michael Hazelroth Rainy Day Fund.
- Shawnee Hills at the Municipal Building sponsored by Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District.
- Site selection, design, and installation for homeowners around the Central Ohio area.

Owner Jim Roberts has worked with many of the plants found in bioretention basins for nearly two decades. Before Watershed, Jim worked with the U.S. Forest Service in both Ohio and West Virginia. The field work included identifying plants in all stages of growth and their habits. Jim's knowledge and experience working with native plants continues with Watershed. Watershed primarily works with natural systems and native plants, including design, installation, and on-going maintenance. Jim has trained his exceptional work crew in plant identification and maintenance.

Watershed is a member of the Better Business Bureau and Angie's List, and maintains the highest rating and level of customer satisfaction possible.

Watershed is an equal opportunity employer.

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The Project Approach:

Watershed will continue to efficiently implement the goals developed by the City of Columbus for the bioretention basins. Our focused approach in maintaining the individual basins has improved the aesthetic value and the functionality. Owner, Jim Roberts would like the opportunity to return with his trained crew members from 2012, to continue caring for the bioretention basins. Crew leader Tom Christopherson, has experience working in the basins last year as well as specific training in invasive and native plant identification. None of the work will be sub-contracted.

Jim will conduct the Spring performance inspection for the River South and Reservoir basins 72 hours after the first significant rainfall in March. A similar fall inspection will occur after the first of September. At the time of the inspection, structural issues, vandalism, or dead plant material will be documented and sent to the City Maintenance Contract Manager, if not already reported during our monthly visits.

The work performed will be documented and reported in a spreadsheet format with accompanying photographs at the time of invoicing.

River South

The downtown basins are aesthetically in much better condition since Watershed took over maintenance in the summer of 2012. Because of the weed removal Watershed did last year, less time will need to be spent in each basin this year. During our monthly visits, we will continue to remove the weeds that sprout in the soil and splash basins. We noticed a sharp decline in the number of new weeds sprouting in the basin's soil as the months progressed last year and expect the same this year. Only minor pruning on the evergreens and deciduous shrubs will be needed in 2013. The majority of the corrective pruning was completed late in the season of 2012. We recommend applying two inches of mulch on top of the soil in the basins early this spring. Doing so will reduce the number of hours devoted to weeding, conserve moisture during the summer months, and is visually appealing. We will continue the practice of turning the stones in the splash basin and blowing out the accumulated debris deposited from the road. This will reduce the force of the water entering the basin, decreasing the likelihood of water displacing the soil and mulch around the splash basins. Turning the stones also inhibits weed germination and increases the visual appeal of the stones.

During late fall, we will vacuum the accumulated leaves from each basin. We will do this once in late November and again in late December or early January. Due to the late leaf drop from the numerous trees around the basins and leaves blown in from the Oak trees in Bicentennial Park, a second round of vacuuming is necessary. At this time, a final weeding will also take place. Weed growth in the basins continues late into the season as soil temperatures remain high in the downtown area. Extending the maintenance from February 2013 to January 2014 is a proposed amendment to the City's project timeline. From our experience and inspection of the basins, we learned that a longer maintenance season is required to keep the basins looking their best.

Jim Roberts, Owner

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Griggs and Hoover Reservoirs

The retention basins along Griggs and Hoover Reservoirs will be maintained and improved in similar ways. Each basin will be visited once a month between March and October and twice during the height of the growing season May through August. Inspection of the basin will be noted at time of arrival, debris will be collected, separated for disposal or recycling.

The maintenance of the basins at Griggs and Hoover Reservoirs will follow last year's successful campaign of removing invasive species before they are able to release their seeds. We have developed a weeding schedule based on our experience and what we found growing in the basins. We have gained familiarity with the location of the less common invasive plants, as well as the more common plants. Anticipating the species and population levels found in the basin, we will be better able to allocate resources to remove the invasive plants early in their life cycle. The advantage of this plan is two fold. By removing only the non-natives early in their growing cycle, the desirable plants will have space to grow and will not compete for the limited resources found in the basins. Having more space will produce a healthier and better-looking stand of plants. These healthy, larger plants will produce more seeds enabling them to repopulate the open areas found in the basins as well as creating conditions unfavorable for non-natives to become established. Removing the undesirable plants early will also interrupt their seeding cycle, thus reducing their numbers in the basins in the coming years. This is especially important with the aggressive invasive species found growing around the basins.

Trees and shrubs that have seeded themselves into the basin will be controlled by mowing at the beginning of the growing season. Maintenance of sprouting trees and shrubs will continue through the season by hand weeding.

As with last year, special attention will be paid to those basins that are in highly visible locations. As with the River South basins, we believe we can have a positive effect on the public's attitudes towards these basins by keeping them looking their best throughout the season.

Please see attached Proposed Schedule and Budget to understand how Watershed will control costs and complete work efficiently.