

ELIGIBLE IDEAS FOR YOUR URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT PROPOSAL



Consider these proposal ideas to help build your Urban & Community Forestry Program.

The Urban and Community Forestry Grant is not simply about planting trees. In fact, grant applications for the sole purpose of tree planting or beautification are discouraged. Tree planting should happen within a larger project which is aimed at promoting and enhancing the tree population already present in the community.

Communities, interest groups etc. may apply for grants yearly, although when funding is limited, and project merits are solid, a first-time application may be selected before a repeat applicant. In addition, grant funding is not meant to support on-going programs, such as planting, maintenance or staffing. Prior to making an application consider your project in terms of:

- Tree Board or Shade Tree Commission
- Tree Ordinance
- Master Tree Plans
- Tree Planting, Demonstrations & Brochures
- Tree Care Demonstrations & Brochures
- Training and Education

- How it fits into the present approach to urban forestry in the community
- The project's long-term effects, and whether there is a commitment within the community/organization to maintaining its goals.
- Whether it's the right time for the project. Will it be used to its full potential now or in the very near future?
- Its completion within the one year grant period. Should it be divided into two components, the second of which can be applied for the following year?

While any well-planned project proposal will be reviewed carefully, here are some additional ideas and/or factors to consider, in no particular order:

TREE BOARD OR SHADE TREE COMMISSION DEVELOPMENT

The organization of a new tree board or commission to develop or administer a community forestry program. The group should be charged by ordinance and given the responsibility and authority to act on behalf of the city in coordination with a city department(s). This is one of the steps necessary for becoming a Tree City USA community.

TREE ORDINANCE (also Landscape and Tree Preservation/Conservation ordinances)

A Tree Ordinance may be developed or revised to address such matters as establishing municipal authority over public trees, setting standards for tree planting, maintenance and management, outlining enforcement, fees and fines, and defining nuisance conditions on private trees.

A Tree Conservation Ordinance may be included in or separate from the Tree Ordinance. The focus of such an ordinance is the regulation of the removal or establishment of trees by establishing definitions, procedures, penalties, and appeals necessary for enforcement.

There are many resources/references available for any community to create its own ordinance, however, the larger the community and the more complex the issues, the more important it is to have an ordinance created/reviewed by an experienced and knowledgeable consultant.

- Review any related by-laws before and after ordinance up-date or creation, (may include landscape, streets, parks, etc.) to determine whether they have any tree elements included or whether they might conflict with any aspects of a tree ordinance.
- Consider future as well as present community needs. Having a thorough ordinance in place, even when the community is not yet able to enforce all aspects, provides a basis and a goal for a tree program.
- Among other things, a "thorough" ordinance should address:
 - tree board establishment
 - tree master plan
 - hazard trees
 - boundary trees
 - vandalism and fines
 - line of sight
 - tree preservation/conservation (can be a separate ordinance)
 - professional standards to be adhered to on private land
 - development (and tree planting in newly developed areas)
 - contract and nursery specifications
 - removal and pruning specifications
 - approved species for planting by individuals or the community
 - planting specifications including staking, mulching, watering, training pruning
- An information brochure explaining the ordinance and its value to the community, and a brochure of the approved species list for planting trees can also be a part of any ordinance update or creation. Volunteers can be used to create/distribute brochures where appropriate.

MASTER TREE PLANS

Following a complete tree inventory, a community has the basis for creating a Master Tree Plan. This further establishes the commitment of the community to managing the urban forest. Generally, this includes planning for future tree planting, open space management and enhancement and protecting existing green spaces.

The plan should reflect goals established by the tree board, city departments and city council and should address selection, placement, planting, maintenance and replacement of community trees. It may also address administrative, policy and budgeting needs. Effective plans often start with analysis of data collected through inventories or assessments and provide for periodic reviews and updates. Grant funds may be used to contract with qualified consultants, hire temporary staff, publish plans, etc.

TREE PLANTING, DEMONSTRATIONS AND BROCHURES

Since the purpose of the grant program is to encourage communities to develop and strengthen urban forestry programs, funds for tree planting are limited and therefore highly competitive. If you are requesting tree-planting funds, the proposal must demonstrate how the project will help develop or enhance a community forestry program. The following tree planting limits have been established:

Tree City USA Communities: \$3,000 tree planting limit and the proposal must be submitted by the City or by a closely allied organization partnering with the City.

Other Communities and organizations: \$1,500 tree planting limit.

Eligible tree planting projects include:

- Tree planting in low-income areas, particularly when combined with neighborhood involvement and a tree adoption program.
- Projects which have a commitment to using native species of large and small trees, shrubs and other plants, particularly when they emphasize natural restoration, wildlife habitat or conservation priorities, riparian stabilization, soil and water conservation and community/volunteer involvement.
- Planting/replacement projects which follow a prior tree inventory or hazard tree inventory project and are part of a **Master Tree Plan**.
- School projects, which combine naturalization and tree planting with classroom and hands-on learning as well as project follow-up.
- Tree planting projects which demonstrate benefits for economic development, energy conservation or utility line compatibility, particularly when combined with other educational activities/methods.
- Community events that promote correct tree planting methods and educate the public are valuable.
- Brochure creation and distribution by volunteers can be a good way to meet in-kind obligations.

Tree planting plans **must** be created for all projects with species selection, placement, design, detailed site drawings, installation and establishment care. Projects that do not include this information will not be considered.

TREE CARE WORKSHOPS

Workshops, presentations and outdoor demonstrations which present tree care to members of the community, municipal staff, condo/facilities managers, developers and local tree care contractors can be considered. Tree species/site selection, training pruning, mulching, fertilizing, landscaping, watering, pest management, hazard tree management, tree protection measures during construction, cabling and bracing, equipment are some of the topics that can be covered. The programs must be advertised broadly and made available to all interested parties, neighboring communities and related interest groups and businesses.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Besides educational activities in conjunction with demonstration activities, education can involve local presentations by consultants, or payment of registration for workshops, conferences, seminars or meetings by tree board members, local officials and municipal staff. Grant funds may also be used to purchase training videos, publications and reference materials to advance municipal knowledge, expertise and practice.

Educational and awareness efforts targeted to youth audiences, youth-at-risk, under-served groups (by ethnicity or economics or remote location) and designed to enhance an understanding of community trees and forests is also encouraged.

Questions? Please [contact us](#), we will be happy to help.