



Community Forestry Partnership Grant Program 2023-2024

GUIDELINES

*** Grant Guidelines change each year. Please read ALL directions carefully. ***

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Administrator

This program is administered through the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the Utah Community Forest Council. *The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.*

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include State agencies, counties, communities, educational institutions, and tribal governments. Volunteer groups, non-profit 501(c)(3) groups, neighborhood associations, and civic groups may work in conjunction with and through one of the above.

Funds Available

The state recently applied for and received Federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Funding. These funds are specifically for community forestry projects in disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods. Disadvantaged communities are designated using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. More information about this tool, and a map showing the designated disadvantaged areas can be viewed at the following link: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#8.37/40.948/-111.892> To utilize this funding, the main focus of Community Forestry Grants, this year, will be on projects in these disadvantaged areas. Grant projects that occur in these areas will **not** be required to provide match.

Projects outside these disadvantaged areas will still be considered, using other funding sources, but will not receive priority. These projects, if granted, will be required to provide a 1:1 match.

Grant monies awarded under this program are in the form of reimbursement grants and will be paid only upon **completion of granted projects**, and **submission of a final report** (although partial reimbursements may be allowed, at intervals, for larger projects). The intent of this grant is to provide for large-scale projects ranging between \$10,000 to \$400,000 (which may extend into more than one year, if approved).

Grant dollars may not be used for projects that have already been accomplished.

All applications must be signed off by a Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands Forester prior to submission to the Urban & Community Forestry Coordinator. Area forester contact list is included as Appendix 1. A letter of support from the area forester may replace the signature only if a personal visit is unattainable.

Deadline for Area Forester Signature

Tuesday, July 25, 2023

Application Deadline

Monday, July 31, 2023

Final Report Deadline

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

Program Goals

To encourage the planting and maintenance of trees within municipalities and unincorporated communities (65A-8-105) and to meet the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands State Assessment Strategies for U&CF. Project proposals will be prioritized for how well they meet the following objectives:

1. Provide urban forestry resources to disadvantaged communities/neighborhoods.
2. Promote urban forestry planning and tree management plans.
3. Connect urban forestry benefits to diverse environmental issues.
4. Cultivate an appreciation and understanding for the social, economic, environmental and aesthetic values of trees, forests and related resources in cities and towns.
5. Develop and encourage the profession of urban forestry through technology transfer, education and training.
6. Seek support from all levels of government and citizens for Urban and Community Forestry Programs.

Additionally, priority will go to projects that move a city from the “developing” stage of their urban forestry program to the “managing” stage. The USDA Forest Service defines a “managing” forestry community as having all four of the following benchmarks (“developing” communities will have at least one component):

1. Tree Ordinance
2. Professional Forestry/Arboriculture Staff
3. Tree Advisory or Advocacy Groups
4. Tree Management Plan based on inventory data

The grant program is designed to support a specific project or initiative. Be sure the activities outlined in the grant application fit within the overarching “Problem Statement”.

CATEGORIES OF FUNDING:

1. Community Forestry Development (CD)

Grant requests in this category should include projects that aim to promote and enhance urban forestry programs within a community. The intention is to elevate tree care efforts and professionalism as well as develop strategic methods to better manage community forests. **Grant requests in this category will be considered “top priorities”.** *Underrepresented* and *disadvantaged* populations and communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Examples (requests not limited to these topics):

Tree Inventory – Hire a consultant, train an in-house crew, or develop a volunteer program to conduct or update an inventory of street, park and/or other public trees. An inventory is a critical tool in city tree management and the first step in outlining an overall Tree Management Plan. Full or partial inventories can include: Tree location, species, size, condition, maintenance needs, and hazard potential. (For a free tree inventory protocol visit the Forest Service website at, <http://www.itreetools.org>)

Tree Management Plans – Devote time and resources into the development of a citywide tree management plan. Seek professional or in-house assistance. Outline the goals and objectives of your forestry program and current status. Identify tree related issues that need to change and grow with the community. This shows a commitment to strategic urban forest planning. Future grants based on a *Tree Management Plan* will be given priority and **ALL** tree planting grant requests **MUST** be tied to a management plan.

Public Tree Ordinance – Hire a consultant to update an outdated municipal tree ordinance so it better reflects the current needs of the community. Address matters such as establishing municipal authority over public trees, setting standards for tree planting, maintenance and management, and outlining enforcement. Review by City Council, lawyer, or citizen panel may be required before a tree ordinance can be adopted.

Workforce Development and Training – Provide urban forestry related training and educational opportunities for tree board members, local officials, city personnel, and tree workers. Grants may be used to purchase training videos, publications and reference materials. Training and testing for staff member to become Certified Arborist through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), or attendance at other workshops may also be funded. (*Upcoming urban forestry workshops and training sessions hosted by Utah Community Forestry Council, Utah Chapter – ISA and USU Extension can be found on their respective websites*).

Hazard Tree Removal and Pruning (tree maintenance/replacement) – Many of the trees along the streets and in city parks in Utah have reached their biological maturity or have developed large rot cavities, been damaged by lightning, or are otherwise a liability in the community. The Community Forestry Grant will help offset the cost of the removal/stump grinding or pruning of these dangerous trees and to help reduce the risk to citizens and property. Communities requesting funds for these projects **must** accompany tree removals with replacement plantings. Additionally, pruning and removals **must** correlate with a Tree Management Plan. If a community does not currently have a Tree Management Plan, the creation of one can be part of the grant project.

ALL TREE PRUNING AND REMOVAL CONTRACTS FUNDED BY THE COMMUNITY FORESTRY PARTNERSHIP GRANT MUST REQUIRE AN ISA-CERTIFIED ARBORIST ON STAFF AND OVERSEEING PROJECT.

(Invasive tree removal projects may seek exemption.)

Public Education – Develop or purchase educational materials as part of a public awareness campaign to increase the understanding of urban tree values and benefits of good tree care. Grants may be used to develop or purchase newsletters, brochures, videos, slide programs, and web pages that advocate urban trees and sustained management of community forests.

Demonstration Planting - Plant trees for educational outreach purposes or demonstrate the use of trees to achieve specific outcomes. Examples include planting trees for energy conservation, wastewater treatment and impervious surface water collection sites, wildlife habitat areas, stream bank soil stabilization and water shading, arboretum demonstration, low water use landscape tree demonstrations, overhead utility line compatibility, social and psychological benefits, etc. Demonstration site tree planting projects must be accompanied by a **public education campaign** that highlights intent of tree planting efforts. Partnerships are key in this category.

Urban Tree Wood Products and Biomass Recycling – Develop a new program for utilizing urban wood waste from removals and pruning. Encouraging secondary uses for wood derived from urban trees for forest products, soil amendments/mulches, energy, feedstock, etc.

Green Infrastructure – Many cities and counties are adopting green infrastructure plans that outline how “green infrastructure” works in relation to the “gray infrastructure” to solve environmental, social and economic goals in communities. Potential projects might involve planting trees as part of bike/walking path development, historic landscapes, business district planting, conversion of impervious surface, erosion control, etc.

Invasive Species Control – Invasive trees such as Russian olive and tamarisk can jeopardize urban streams and native species. Controlling such invasives could require physical removal, hauling downed material, chemically treating stumps and replanting.

Mulching – Adequate mulch rings around trees in park lawns are critical to the trees protection. Without a buffer trees are subject to mechanical injury and compete for water and nutrients with surrounding turf.

Water Conservation – This is a huge issue in the State of Utah, due to ongoing drought conditions. Any project that can tie in to water conservation, particularly if it is the main focus, will have a higher chance of being funded. Project ideas could include tree plantings in landscapes that include drip irrigation and some form of groundcover (rock, bark mulch, wood chips, vegetative groundcover, etc.). Other project ideas could include conversion of public green spaces into low-water-use landscapes. These projects could occur in public parks, park strips, or other city-maintained property.

Requirements for the Society of Municipal Arborist Accreditation and other Community Forestry Program Development grant proposals not outlined in the examples above will be considered as long as the purpose and relevance is explained clearly.

2. Tree Planting Projects (TP)

The purpose of this program is to provide funding to communities for tree planting in **public areas** and encourage lasting urban forestry programs across the state of Utah. Examples of possible projects are tree planting in parks, school gardens, food forests/community gardens, playgrounds, and along public roads. Applications require a detailed planting plan including the tree species that will be used, sizes to be planted and a site map showing the location of plantings. **All tree planting proposals must include a detailed three-year maintenance plan with names of responsible parties for the maintenance.** See Appendix II. for more details.

All tree planting projects must be tied to a *Tree Management Plan* that identifies the strategic community benefit to the proposed project. Tree planting projects designed to reduce energy use in public buildings or focused on extreme heat mitigation will be prioritized.

NOTE: Applicants may submit projects in both the Community Forestry Program Development category and the Tree Planting category.

Ineligible and Low Priority Applications

1. Applicants who received an “unexcused default” for their 2022-2023 Partnership Grant.
2. Applicants who received a Community Forestry Partnership Grant in 2022-2023 fiscal year may not request funding for the same project. Example: If your community had a grant to plant trees in City Park, you would not be eligible for another grant to plant more trees in City Park this year.
3. Communities or organizations that have received consecutive grants in the past will have a lower priority than first time grant recipients.

NOTE: The Community Forestry Partnership Grant is not designed to offset a community’s annual forestry budget. Though many communities receive consecutive grant awards, the intent is to provide seed money for communities to become self-sufficient and reliant.

Ineligible Expenses for Grant Reimbursement

- Food, drinks and refreshments for meetings, volunteers, etc. (may be NOT used as match)
- Costs associated with preparing the grant application (may NOT be used as match)
- Expenses not supported by proper documentation (may NOT be used as match)
- Nursery structures such as greenhouses (may be NOT used as match)
- Temporary shade structures and hoop houses (may be used as match)
- Play structures or playground equipment (may NOT be used as match)
- Tools, *e.g. chainsaws, shovels, gloves* (may be used as match)
- Computers, **including irrigation computers**, handheld devices, printers and office equipment (may be used as match)
- In-kind and overhead (may be used as match)
- Items not directly pertaining to the approved forestry project. (may NOT be used as match.)

RATING CRITERIA:

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and ranked by a committee composed of the Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator and selected members of the Utah Community Forestry Council and the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be rated on the individual project goals and quality. Evaluation will focus on how each project meets the State U&CF goals (outlined on page 2).

Priority projects

Projects that meet any of the following criteria will receive priority:

- Projects in disadvantaged communities (highest priority)
- Projects that are tied to water conservation, extreme heat mitigation, or energy reduction in public buildings
- Establishment of Tree Ordinance, Professional Forestry/Arboriculture Staff, Tree Advisory or Advocacy Groups, Tree Management Plan

PROJECT FUNDING, INSPECTION, REPORTING AND PAYMENT:

Funding Information

The funding range for proposals is \$10,000 to \$400,000. Grant finances provided by the USDA Forest Service, State, Private, and Tribal Forestry and State of Utah, Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. This is typically a matching grant program requiring a 1:1 match. However, projects in disadvantaged areas qualify for IRA funding* and will **not** be required to provide match. Only actual costs and expenses will be reimbursed. Volunteer labor and in-kind donations can be used for a local match equal to or greater than the grant award, but will not be counted as expenses for reimbursement.

General purchasing guidelines will be adhered to for any purchases made using these grant funds. For any single purchase over \$1,000, at least two competitive quotes (by phone, fax, e-mail, etc.) are required. The purchase must be awarded to the lowest bid. Competitive quote documents must be maintained with the payment document to support validity. Bids for all contract work are required. No company shall be considered a “partner” in grant project.

The grant period will begin as soon as successful applicants are notified and expire May 21, 2024 (unless a multi-year exception is granted). Grant payments will typically be made upon review of financial documentation. With larger grants being awarded, partial reimbursements can be made along the way. These payments can be made after milestones or significant progress has occurred in the project. Successful applicants must maintain project records including paid invoices, time & attendance sheets, and cancelled checks. Final project reports must be submitted by **May 21, 2024**.

*Any IRA funded projects will need to provide funding acknowledgement and signage as well. The funding for this signage can be included in the grant request.

Matching Contributions

Matching support may be in the form of *cash purchases* or *in-kind contributions*; all of these contributions must come from **non-Federal sources** (exceptions may apply).

Cash Purchases are direct out-of-pocket expenditures for eligible project activities that are documented by paid invoices, cancelled checks, signed receipts or payroll records.

In-Kind Contributions include third party donations of supplies or equipment, value of time by volunteers on eligible project activities. Assistance provided by Federal employees may not be claimed as part of the local match.

In-Kind Contribution Guidelines

- Volunteers - \$31.80 per hour (must include sign-up sheet of volunteers, date, and hours worked)
- In-mate labor – hourly rate charged to city; if labor is free, volunteer hourly rate may be substituted
- Donated professional services – use customary rates for services provided
- Donations of materials – use customary retail rates

Review of Projects

The Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands reserves the right to inspect projects at any time. All educational materials (written or video developed) as part of a grant project should be reviewed by a Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands forester prior to final printing to ensure that standards for tree planting and maintenance are met.

Project Completion Report

A final report MUST be submitted to the Urban Forestry Coordinator by May 21, 2024 including the following:

1. Official Final Report Form posted on <https://ffsl.utah.gov/forestry/urban-forestry-grants>
2. Summary detailing how the project goals and objectives were achieved; for example, a tree planting project detailing the number and species of trees planted, photos of the completed project and maintenance plan
3. A cost summary showing eligible costs, cash and in-kind matching contributions, and donated items.
4. Supporting documentation of invoices and cancelled checks, for in-kind labor volunteer log sheets, newspaper articles, newsletter stories, photographs and letters verifying fair market value of donated items or services.

Payments to Grant Recipients

Payments will be made as reimbursement for approved project expenditures. The grants administrator will review all reports. Reimbursement will be based on the originally approved request, not to exceed 50% of the project's actual costs (with the exception of all projects in disadvantaged areas, which will receive reimbursement of 100% of the project's actual cost).

EXTENSIONS & DEFAULTS:

If an applicant cannot complete the proposed project within the given timeframe, the applicant must notify the grant administrator and forfeit funding or request an extension before the final report deadline. **Written request to extend or forfeit grant dollars must be received by the grant administrator no later than May 21, 2024.** If proper notification is in place, projects will not suffer the penalty of an unexcused default.

If a final report, grant forfeit, or extension request is not submitted by the May 21, 2024 deadline, the application will be considered an **unexcused default**. Applicants who default on the 2023-2024 Community Forestry Partnership Grant will NOT:

1. Receive any grant reimbursement
2. Be eligible for the next year's (2024-2025) Community Forestry Partnership Grant cycle.

Unexcused default applicants regain eligibility for the Community Forestry Partnership Grant in the 2025-2026 cycle.

It is critical that all applicants follow strict timelines in order to avoid penalties.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Application Deadline

Completed application must be received no later than July 31, 2023. Electronic copies are required.
E-mail electronic entries to: **jlfarley@utah.gov**

For Additional Information Contact:

Jeran Farley
Community Forestry Program Coordinator
Telephone: (801) 330-7976
Email: jlfarley@utah.gov

Appendix I: Contact Information

A representative from the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands must sign off on your proposal. Below is a list of area foresters who can approve your applications.

Division of Forestry Fire and State Lands:

Salt Lake City Office — *Tooele, Morgan, Utah, Davis, Salt Lake Counties*

Scott Zeidler – Wasatch Front Community Forester, (801) 538-5456, scottzeidler@utah.gov

Cedar City Office (Southwest) — *Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane, Washington Counties*

Ryan Johnson – Southern Utah Community Forester, (435) 559-0219, ryanjohnson@utah.gov

Logan Office (Bear River) — *Box Elder, Weber, Cache, Rich Counties*

Morgan Mendenhall – Area Forester, (435) 669-1153, morganmendenhall@utah.gov

Moab Office (Southeast) — *San Juan, Emery, Grand, Carbon Counties*

Lydia Zowada – Area Forester, (435) 210-0792, lzowada@utah.gov

Richfield Office (Central) — *Sanpete, Sevier, Juab, Millard, Wayne, Piute Counties*

Justin Short – Area Forester, (435) 633-5992, justinshort@utah.gov

Heber Office (Northeast) — *Daggett, Summit, Duchesne, Uinta, Wasatch*

PJ Abraham – Area Forester, (435) 671-3326, pjabraham@utah.gov

State Office — *Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands*

Jeran Farley – Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator, (801) 330-7976, jlfarley@utah.gov

Appendix II: EXAMPLE Tree Planting and Maintenance Specifications

At Planting Time: Once tree is set in the hole, cut and remove all twine, wiring and fabric around trunk and around the root ball. Also cut any girdling roots.

Immediately After Planting:

1. *prioring* – Water each plant immediately and continue watering until bubbles stop rising in the watering basin. Add additional soil, if needed to eliminate air cavities or to cover exposed roots. Position the root collar of trees at or slightly above soil line, so as to prevent trees from being planted too deeply.
2. *Mulching* – Shredded wood chips or other coarse organic material up to four inches thick in at-least a three to four foot diameter around the tree. Keep mulch a minimum of four inches away from the tree trunk.
3. *Prepping* - Remove the ties, labels and trunk protectors immediately after planting.
4. *Staking* – Stake only if necessary; remove after first year.
5. *Pruning* – Do not remove lower branches, the leader (main shoot), or permanent lateral branches. Limit pruning of newly planted trees to the removal of rubbing, dead or broken branches or of a competing leader. For large deciduous shade trees, begin removal of lower branches in the 3rd or 4rd year to promote good form. Limit branch removal to no more than 25% of total branches each year thereafter.

Extended Maintenance

1. For the three years following planting the grantee or designated authority will inspect and maintain tree by regular or routine watering, checking for insect and disease, weeding, and structural pruning
2. Maintain mulch ring and expand laterally as crown diameter increases.
3. Each year, watering berms must be increased in diameter to include the entire area under the tree's canopy to encourage roots to grow laterally. In areas of winter freezing, it is important to break down berms at the beginning of winter so ice dams do not form around the base of the tree. These berms can be rebuilt each watering season and should be made larger in diameter every year.

For planting and maintenance information refer to:

www.treesaregood.com

www.treecaretips.org

www.forestry.usu.edu

For species selections refer to:

www.treebrowser.org

Or contact your area forester or local USU extension agent.