



State of Oklahoma
Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry

Kevin Stitt
Governor

Blayne Arthur
Secretary and Commissioner

January 22, 2024

Dear Applicant:

Oklahoma Forestry Services, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service is pleased to make available the Urban and Community Forestry Cost-Share Grant Program. We encourage state and local governments, educational institutions, approved non-profit organizations, and community tree volunteer groups to participate.

These grants, made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, provide funds on a competitive basis to enable Oklahoma communities to improve the care and management of their valuable local tree and forest resources. The goal of this program is: to develop a better understanding of the local tree cover and resources; to better care for these resources; and, to provide educational and technical guidance to plan, maintain, and improve our urban and community forests across Oklahoma.

An application and criteria outline for the narrative is enclosed in this package. Community involvement and partnerships are the heart of any urban and community forestry program. We encourage applicants to include these objectives in their proposals.

The application deadline is March 29, 2024 at 5:00 pm CST. Should you have any questions about the program and/or application process, please contact Riley Coy at riley.coy@ag.ok.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark E. Goeller".

Mark Goeller
State Forester/Director of Oklahoma Forestry Services



REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants

Sponsored by USDA Forest Service



Application Deadline:

03/29/2024 by 5:00pm CST

Submit via Email or Mail to:

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSISTANCE
Oklahoma Forestry Services
2800 N. Lincoln Blvd. Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Riley.coy@ag.ok.gov
580-231-1770

INTRODUCTION

Oklahoma Forestry Services, in cooperation with the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (USFS)**, announces the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Grant Assistance Program. The program is designed to encourage communities to create and support long-term and sustained urban and community forestry programs throughout Oklahoma.

OBJECTIVES OF THE URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

Legislative Authority

Subtitle D, Sec. 23003 (a). State and Private Forestry Conservation Programs via the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) appropriated \$1,500,000,000 to provide multiyear, programmatic, competitive grants. Of this total allocation \$1,350,000 was allocated to Oklahoma to be distributed over a 5-year period. Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) is also covered under the Agency's Justice40 Initiative established through Executive Order 13985. To advance the mission of Justice40, proposals should deliver the benefits of IRA investments through established partnerships with local organizations working to support disadvantaged communities experiencing low tree canopy. Additionally the UCF program aligns with the USDA Interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Promoting Equitable Access to Nature in Nature-Deprived Communities, which seeks to reduce the number of people without access to parks and nature in their communities, and the America the Beautiful Initiative which supports the prioritization of locally led conservation and park projects in communities that disproportionately lack access to nature and its benefits.

Federal Program Objectives

The objectives of the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program are to:

1. Integrate Urban and Community Forestry into all scales of planning.
2. Promote the role of Urban and Community Forestry in human health and wellness.
3. Cultivate diversity, equity, and leadership within the Urban Forestry community.
4. Strengthen Urban and Community Forest health and biodiversity for long-term resilience.
5. Improve Urban and Community Forest management, maintenance, and stewardship.
6. Diversify, leverage, and increase funding for Urban and Community Forestry.
7. Increase public awareness and environmental education to promote stewardship.
8. Prioritize projects focusing work on extreme heat mitigation, urban wood utilization, urban food forests and workforce development.

State Program Goals

State program goals for the Urban and Community Program are described as (examples below):

1. Foster strong partnerships with various organizations, state, city, and county governments
2. Improve urban forestry knowledge.
3. Increase the number of communities participating in the Tree City USA program.
4. Increase participation of communities in priority areas in community forest management through comprehensive planning strategies.
5. Encourage communities to recognize the public health benefits of trees.
6. Increase community preparedness by developing storm mitigation plans.

Available Funding

Funding available for this cycle is from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Records will be maintained for at least 3 years following final payment.

Eligibility Information

Funds may be awarded to units of local governments (state, city, town, county), non-profit organizations, tribal entities, or educational institutions. Other organizations, such as community tree volunteer groups, neighborhood associations or civic groups which are not 501(c)3 are eligible but must apply in partnership with a non-profit organization or with their local government.

All applicants applying for a federally funded award must have BOTH a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) and a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Information on UEI provided here: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update>

For this cycle, proposals **must** deliver 100 percent of the funding/program benefits to disadvantaged communities. Applications must clearly describe the scope of work to be performed in applicable disadvantaged communities and identify online data tools referenced to support a disadvantaged community designation. The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) must be used for identifying disadvantaged communities, but the following tools may be used additionally to provide supplemental information:

- [EPA Environmental Justice and Screening Mapping Tool](#) (EJScreen)
- [EPA EnviroAtlas Interactive Map, Opportunity Zones](#)
- Additional data tools may be used if approved by Oklahoma Forestry Services

Projects or programs of work completed 100% in disadvantaged communities identified by CEJST will qualify for IRA funding. **IRA qualified** projects will be eligible for funding up to \$50,000 for one (1) year. In addition, **IRA qualified** projects will not be required to provide a match.

Projects which do not focus 100% on disadvantaged communities do not qualify for IRA

funding. Applicant must provide evidence that 100% of the project will be conducted in disadvantaged communities as identified by CEJST.

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must meet Federal and State Program Objectives. The U&CF Grant Program is intended to support new initiatives, programs, projects, staff positions or activities not currently being funded through other sources. Some examples of eligible categories you could use depending on your approved narrative are described in detail below.

Category 1 – Support for Local Governments

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFFING – Local governments can apply for funding to assist in the support of staff engaged in urban forestry activities in underserved or disadvantaged communities for a **limited duration** and be **project-specific**. Funds can be used for either full-time or part-time employees. Example: Professional staff such as an ISA-certified arborist on contract rather than a full-time employee. Grants can also be used to support professional certification of existing employees.

TREE MAINTENANCE AND REMOVALS – Localities can apply for funding to support the care and maintenance of their urban forest and trees. Example: Funds can be used to do soil invigoration or deadwood pruning on a tree of historic significance. All maintenance expenses and removals must occur on public lands.

STORM READINESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT – Natural Disasters happen, but there are ways to manage the urban forest so that the trees are better prepared for disasters. Funding can be used for developing a community forest resilience plan or debris management plan and necessary municipal pruning within critical zones on public lands.

URBAN TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT – Projects to assess the urban tree canopy (UTC) of a specific underserved community and develop a goal to increase canopy based on data from the assessment are eligible. An implementation plan on how the community plans to achieve that UTC goal should be part of the project deliverables.

TREE INVENTORY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT – Projects designed to inventory public trees on streets, in parks, on school campuses, etc. may be funded. The applicant must demonstrate that the inventory will be tied to its tree maintenance activities as well as plans for future tree planting, and that the inventory will be maintained by local staff over the long term. The purchase of inventory software and supplies can be included.

TREE BOARD OR TREE COMMISSION DEVELOPMENT – Projects to organize a new tree board or commission to develop or administer an urban forestry program. The new tree board or commission should be charged by ordinance to act on behalf of local government in coordination with the community's urban forestry program.

TREE ORDINANCE REVISION - Projects to develop or revise a local government tree ordinance or policy will be eligible. The ordinance or policy should address the establishment of municipal authority over public trees; assign responsibility to a public department, arborist position, or established tree board or commission; and/or set maintenance and management standards. The ordinance or policy may also address other issues such as landscape requirements and tree retention or replacement on development sites, riparian buffers, and for the protection of urban forest ecosystems.

URBAN HEAT ISLAND ANALYSIS AND EXTREME HEAT MITIGATION – Local governments may apply for funding to develop demonstration projects that focus on low canopy cover areas to offset urban heat. This can include a GIS-based canopy analysis, sidewalk removal, soil rebuilding for trees and/or education and outreach campaigns about urban heat island effect.

Category 2 - Education

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS – Non-profit organizations, local governments, and educational institutions may apply for funds to assist with the planning and implementation of a conference that has, whole or in part, an urban and community forestry focus. Grant funds can support printed materials, curriculum, speakers, publicity, and administration. Grant funds can also be used to offer scholarships. Scholarships should go to students or others with limited means to attend. Food and beverage costs cannot be funded.

PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION – Projects that develop new and unique publications, exhibits, videos, or websites, etc. that increase public awareness and understanding of the benefits of urban forests are eligible. All communications as signage will attribute projects as made possible by a grant from the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program as part of the Inflation Reduction Act. Communications can be included as part of another category. Any products, language or signage associated with these activities will acknowledge the contribution of the USFS Inflation Reduction Act Urban and Community Forestry funding.

Category 3 – Tree Planting Projects

All projects funded under this category should include a site plan, plant list, tree quality and planting specifications, tree protection needs, site photos, and maintenance plan. Applications should include a letter of permission/support for the planting if the project and property access for maintenance is not on the applicant's property. Private property owners are not eligible unless applying in partnership with a non-profit organization or with their local government. Recommended caliper for new plantings are 1-2 inches unless approved by OFS.

URBAN ORCHARDS - may be organized to address food insecurity on any public lands.

STREET TREE PLANTING - projects including planting strips and cutouts. Cutouts must be appropriate for the size and species of tree being planted to be considered for funding under the program.

NEIGHBORHOOD OR NEIGHBORHOODS TREE PLANTINGS - may be organized by the local civic groups, neighborhood associations or by the community government. Projects should be located on common grounds or within 35 feet of the roadway.

TURF TO TREES PROJECTS - include conversion of regularly mowed lawns greater than 0.1 acres to trees, usually using tree seedlings, saplings, or small potted trees. The cost of tree protection is an allowable expense.

COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING - projects include any tree planting on public lands.

Category 4 – Demonstration Projects

MUNICIPAL TREE RESTORATION PROGRAM – Local governments may apply for funding to do demonstration projects involving the removal of trees conflicting with electric utility lines and replanting with appropriate species.

PILOT URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION PROGRAMS – Non-profit organizations and local governments may apply for funding to develop demonstration projects that increase knowledge, awareness, and visibility of urban wood utilization and recycling. Grant funding may be applied to education and outreach materials, demonstration of specialized equipment and techniques for working on smaller interface woodlots, and assessments of the feasibility of recycling and processing urban waste wood. Funds can also be used to develop business plans for an emerging urban wood program.

Category 5 - Non-profit Organization Support

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION SUPPORT – Non-profit organizations may apply for funds to hire staff to assist with program development, volunteer coordination, and field work in underserved communities etc. These funds should be viewed as start-up funds and not be relied on in subsequent grant cycles for continuation of the position.

Category 6 - Planning

OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN / TREE PLANTING PLANS / LANDSCAPING PLANS – Projects related to the development of comprehensive master plans for urban forest management and community tree care, maintenance, and planting will be funded. Projects funded in this category should be from communities with limited resources to develop plans internally.

GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING – Projects related to the planning and development of community greenways are eligible for funding. Grant funding may be applied to corridor and resource assessment, feasibility studies, maps and drawings, promotional and educational materials, and organizational development and staffing.

Category 7 – Workforce Development

URBAN FORESTRY/ARBORICULTURE SECTOR WORKFORCE PROGRAM – Projects that help groups move toward a more diverse and inclusive workforce in urban forestry and arboriculture

are eligible for funding. Grant funding may be used to build leadership, conduct outreach activities, increase capacity, or provide training and education to support local community development efforts.

Category 8 - Miscellaneous

Projects that meet the objectives of the Urban and Community Forestry Program (see page 2), and that do not fit into any of the previous categories, may be submitted under category 8. The maximum funding for any project approved in this category will depend upon the nature of the project.

Ineligible Projects/Activities

Ineligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- research
- property acquisition and related costs
- construction and capital improvement projects
- equipment purchases
- food or beverage purchases
- gift cards

Grant Timeframe

Approved projects can begin only after you have received a fully executed copy of your grant award. Costs incurred **PRIOR TO** the date on your award letter will **NOT** be covered. Note the timelines for your grant (1-year) here.

Reports

Periodic progress reports and a final report are required of all grantees. Final must be submitted at the conclusion of the project prior to final payout.

Payment Process

The funds awarded under the grant are available on a reimbursement basis after report submittal and in accordance with a payment schedule agreed to in advance. **Grantees must file a Request for Reimbursement (included in award paperwork package)** and send records of expenditures along with documentation of all costs to Oklahoma Forestry Services. Oklahoma Forestry Services reserves the right to make partial payments subject to completion of scheduled milestones. The Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program Manager will evaluate the progress of the project to determine eligibility for full payment.

TIMETABLE

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY EMAIL OR MAIL on March 29, 2024, by 5:00pm CST.

The Urban and Community Forestry Program manager will notify successful applicants of funding approval as soon as possible. Successful applicants must submit required federal forms **within thirty (30) days** of the date of the award notice. Municipalities needing city/town council or Board of Supervisor approval must contact the Department of Forestry for an extension of this time, if needed.

APPLICATION FORMAT

Written proposals should be included in addition to the signed one-page Application Form and Budget Worksheet. The proposal narrative should not exceed four pages. Applicants may also include maps, photos, etc. in addition to the narrative. Clear and concise proposals should address an urban and community forestry need and meet one or more of the objectives of the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program (see page 2-3). The information that should be presented in the narrative and budget include:

1. The purpose, objective, or mission statement of the applying organization and the purpose and objectives of the project. The project's purpose should be explained in one concise paragraph.
2. Explain why the project is important. Identify the project audience, why they should be addressed and describe what condition will be changed because of the project. The narrative should include these elements:
 1. **Activities** – List all the activities you will undertake to complete the project.
 2. **Partnerships and Participants** – List project personnel, volunteers, participating organizations, etc.
 3. **Public, Educational Benefits, and Community Engagement** – Strategies for the project should also be described. *Communications and signage will attribute projects as made possible by a grant from Oklahoma Forestry Services and the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program as part of the Inflation Reduction Act.
 4. **Disadvantaged Benefit** – Provide a written description of how funds will benefit disadvantaged communities. Also, provide a screenshot of the geographic area and/or areas from the approved online data tools.
 5. **Administration** – Specify who will be responsible for project management and record keeping.
 6. **Timetable** – Show project start date, project milestone completion dates, and total project completion dates.
 7. **End Product/Result** – List specific **deliverables** to be accomplished with funds (i.e., brochures, packets, videos, publications, websites, proposed newsletter articles, street tree inventory, management plans, etc.) and identify the recipients of or target audience for the deliverable (i.e., students, employees, civic organization, Chamber of Commerce, citizens in _____ community). This may be written as a bulleted list with descriptions and clarification.
3. A detailed project **budget** should include sources and description of materials, maintenance costs, and costs of professional services. Applicants should use the budget worksheet attached to this Request for Application Package. On the last page of this document is a budget worksheet example for reference. The budget will be compared to the project narrative to determine if proposed expenditures are reasonable and allowable. A maximum of 20% of the total award can be used towards administrative/indirect expenses.

Categories that might be used in the budget include:

1. **Personnel** – List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.
2. **Fringe Benefits** – Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.
3. **Travel** – Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips, and other costs for each type of travel. Please visit www.gsa.gov/perdiem to determine the appropriate federal rates. Note - homestays are eligible for reimbursement.
4. **Supplies** – All tangible items other than “equipment”. Supplies must not exceed \$5,000 per individual item. The budget detail should identify supplies to be purchased.
5. **Contractual** – Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose, nature, and estimated cost
6. **Administrative costs** - Examples of administrative costs for UCF IRA funding: Direct personnel and fringe, service contracts, and sub-awards for staff providing administrative support functions for the IRA UCF Program. Subawards may include administration, accounting, and general administrative support to urban and community forestry staff.
7. **Other** – List each item in sufficient detail for grant administrators to determine the reasonableness of the cost.

Supplies such as printers and office supplies. Note: these costs should be included in indirect costs unless they are ONLY for the IRA UCF work.

*State assumes no liability for any contractors, volunteers, or local government employees working on any projects.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

1. **Fill out and sign the grant proposal application form, budget worksheet, and state W9.** These documents must be submitted with your proposal package.
2. Non-profit organizations must submit documentation of 501(c)3 status (IRS letter or copy of annual tax filing).
3. Submit an **email or mailed copy** of your proposal, including the application form **by March 29, 2024, by 5:00pm CST to Riley Coy.** Post marked applications will not be accepted. Please make sure you receive a confirmation email once your application is submitted.

GRANT PREPARATION ASSISTANCE

Assistance in developing proposals is available to all potential applicants from Oklahoma. We will also provide guidance as to a project’s suitability under this grant program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss potential projects with Oklahoma Forestry Services before proposal submittal. Contact information is below to reach out with any questions.

Riley Coy (IRA Grant Administrator)

Riley.coy@ag.ok.gov

580-231-1770

FUNDING CRITERIA AND PROPOSAL REVIEW

Only applications that meet all General Requirements will be reviewed. Proposal ranking is based on the following criteria (Some examples to consider):

- Clearly defined purpose or objective of project.
- Goals, purpose, or mission statement of the applicant is clear.
- Meets a demonstrated urban forestry need.
- Helps strengthen and develop local urban & community forestry capacity.
- Meets federal and state program objectives.
- Involves various partnerships.
- Local visibility or awareness of the project.
- Long-term benefit of the project.
- Clarity of budget presentation and use of budget worksheet (enclosed).
- Cost effectiveness.
- Has a realistic time frame for completion.
- Acknowledgment of IRA UCF contribution language/signage.
- Can be duplicated and/or used as a model in other cities.
- Demonstrated ability of the applicant to follow through on project completion.
- Enhances environmental, social, cultural, historical, psychological, and economical values.
- Clearly defined maintenance plan for projects that involve any planting.

SAMPLE
Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program
BUDGET WORKSHEET

The City of Metropolis has received a grant to do an urban forestry inventory and management plan. They plan to conduct an inventory and develop a management plan with in-house staff and help from a volunteer group. They plan to contract with a consultant to do the management plan. The inventory and management plan components are shown separately.

Applicant: City of Metropolis

Project Name: Tree Inventory Project

ITEM	Grant Share Direct Expenses or Cash Purchases	TOTAL
Component: Inventory		
Personnel: Clark Kent – Supervisor 30 hrs. @ \$30.30	\$909.00	\$909.00
Project Outreach Staff – 30 hrs. @ \$25.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Consultant Services	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Pickup Rental-100 hours @ \$10.00 (Keep on Trucking)	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Supplies – Tablets 5 @ \$300	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Inventory Software	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Total Direct Expenses	\$8,659.00	\$8,659.00
Indirect	\$1,731.80	
TOTAL	\$10,390.80	\$10,390.80

ITEMIZED BUDGET WORKSHEET

Submit with
Application

Description (Itemize estimated cost within each category)	Non-Federal Share (Grantee Match) (Not less than 50% of total project cost)		Federal Share
	CASH OUTLAY (Specific project expenses using local funds)	IN-KIND (Donated or Existing labor & materials on hand)	Cash Outlay (Specific project expenses using federal funds)
Contractual	No Match	No Match	
Personnel Services (Include estimated number of Person-hours & rate of pay)	No Match	No Match	
Fringe Benefits	No Match	No Match	
Supplies	No Match	No Match	
Travel	No Match	No Match	
Other	No Match	No Match	
Total Project Amount\$ _____			

Liability Waiver

(To be completed and included for any projects)

_____ hereby releases the
(Organization name)

state from any liability associated with contractors, volunteers, local government employees or other persons working on the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

Printed Name of
Authorized
Representative:

Signature:

Title:

Date:

Application Form

Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program

Please type

This page must be the first page of your application packet.

Project Information							
Project Title (10 words or less):							
Category:							
Brief Description of Project (3 sentences or less):							
Applicant Information							
Organization Name:							
Organization's Federal ID No.:		Unique Entity ID (UEI):					
Project Manager (Person responsible for project reporting and activities. All correspondence will be directed to this contact.)							
First Name:		Last Name:					
Title:							
Mailing Address:							
City:		County:		State:		Zip:	
Daytime Phone:							
E-Mail Address:							
Web Site:							
Financial Information							

U&CF Funds Requested	\$
Signature of Agreement	
<p>As the duly authorized representative of the applicant named above, I hereby certify that all parts of this grant application have been read and understood and that all information submitted herein is true and correct. If awarded a grant under the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program of the state, said organization agrees to comply with all Federal and State guidelines for completion of the grant.</p>	
Signature of Authorized Representative	Date
Name and Title of Authorized Representative (Please print or type)	