

**OHIO'S URBAN FORESTRY GRANT PROGRAM  
EMERGING PROGRAMS 2023  
INFLATION REDUCTION ACT FUNDING**

Federal Grant ID: 23-DG-11094200-363

**SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND TIMELINE**

Government agencies and nonprofit organizations are eligible to submit proposals for consideration under this competition. Funds supplied by the USDA Forest Service are intended to substantially invest in the long-term growth and development of local urban and community forestry programs.

This specific RFP is intended to benefit small communities and any community without an existing, well-developed urban forestry program.

**PLEASE SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO [urban.forestry@dnr.ohio.gov](mailto:urban.forestry@dnr.ohio.gov) NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 29, 2023.** Supporting documents may be included with the application form. Applicants will be notified of funding status by January 31, 2023. Projects must be completed by June 30, 2025.

**ELIGIBILITY**

A requirement of this subaward program (per federal grant requirements) is a focus on disadvantaged communities as defined by The Council On Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool ([CEJST](#)). Many communities have at least a portion of their municipality defined as disadvantaged and are encouraged to apply. Projects funded through this opportunity will receive a full match waiver, with the requirement that 100% of the program benefits are delivered to disadvantaged communities.

If a portion of the project is proposed to take place outside of a census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the CEJST tool, the applicant should describe how the project will benefit a disadvantaged population, using an alternative government-sponsored tool such as EPA Environmental Justice and Screening Mapping Tool (EJScreen), EPA EnviroAtlas Interactive Map, Opportunity Zones, or other government sponsored vulnerability tools which inform metrics applicable to the scope of work. Proposed work in disadvantaged communities outside of CEJST census tracts is subject to DOF approval.

**GRANT PROGRAM GOALS**

- To contract with local governments or non-profits for the purchase and planting of trees for public benefits.
- To restore community tree canopy with large-stature trees and promote species diversity.
- To reduce stormwater runoff, maximize filtration of overland flow, and improve watershed health.
- To enhance the quality of life in participating cities, villages, and townships.
- To promote urban forestry benefits through the proper planting and care of trees.
- To strengthen and support existing comprehensive community tree care programs.
- To ensure that urban forests provide communities with clean air and water, increased property values, wildlife habitat, and reduced erosion, stormwater runoff, and energy demands.
- To promote Ohio's nursery, arboriculture, and landscape industries through tree purchase and installation contracts.

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- To increase the capacity of Ohio communities to effectively manage and grow their urban forest canopy.
- To advance the mission of the Justice40 Initiative and support disadvantaged communities experiencing low tree canopy and environmental justice.
- To build sustainable urban forestry programs.
- To mitigate urban heat islands

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ELIGIBLE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Professional staff** – Full or part-time staff or contractual staff to implement any program activity noted below. Funds can be for new or existing staff.

**Planning** – Funding for staff or contractors to complete an urban forest management plan, tree inventory, operations review, tree risk assessment, Master Planting Design, specification development, and tree related ordinance review and development.

**Risk mitigation** – Funding to support high-risk tree removal and/or pruning on public property. Must be supported by professional based tree risk assessment data and/or a risk management plan. Projects funding tree removals must include tree planting at no less than a 1-to-1 ratio.

**Proactive maintenance:** Applicants may apply for funds to conduct mature tree pruning, young tree training and care, and tree and soil protection measures.

**Site Preparation:** Funding category for site preparation prior to tree planting. Eligible activities include soil amendment (the recipe), suspended pavement/soil cell, hardscape removal, and stump grinding.

**Training** – Funds for staff to attend urban forestry related trainings, or to fund trainings for staff and/or volunteers delivered by contractors, or to develop training programs.

**Tree planting and establishment** -Grant applicants may apply for tree planting and establishment on public property. All tree planting projects will be required to conform to the [USDA Forest Service Eastern Region Tree Planting Guidelines](#). All trees must be selected, planted, and maintained according to the [ONLA & Division of Forestry Tree Planting Specifications](#), American National Standards Institute (ANSI) [Z60.1](#) and [A300](#) Standards, and the [ISA Best Management Practices](#). Planting on private property is an eligible expense but the applicant must demonstrate there is a clear long-term public benefit and measures in place to maximize likelihood of establishment and long-term survival

**Urban Food Forests** - Grant applicants may apply for funding to support creation of urban food forests in disadvantaged communities.

**Urban Wood Utilization** – Grant applicants may apply for funding to support utilization of urban wood.

**Extreme Heat Mitigation** – Grant applicants may apply for funding to complete urban forestry projects designed to mitigate urban heat island effects in communities.

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**INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

**Any activity not supporting a disadvantaged or underserved area** as defined by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) or equivalent analysis (subject to DOF approval)

**Land acquisition or construction**— Funds from this grant cannot be directly used to purchase real property or construct buildings.

**Utility infrastructure upgrades** — The grant can be used to support any defined eligible activity in conjunction with these upgrades, but not utility upgrades or relocations.

**Street or sidewalk upgrades** — The grant can be used to support any defined eligible activity in conjunction with these upgrades, but not the sidewalk, street maintenance, or similar hard infrastructure upgrades themselves unless specifically designed for tree establishment (e.g. suspended pavement system).

**Subawards** — Subawards are not allowed unless approved by the DOF Urban Forestry Administrator in writing.

**Equipment** — As defined by federal regulations 2 CFR Part 200, as generally any one-single item with a purchase value of over \$5,000 which has a useful life of over 1-year.

**TIMELINE & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES**

These grants will be scheduled to end by the state biennium, June 30, 2025. Extensions may be offered if requested and mutually agreed.

Communities without existing plans are encouraged to utilize this grant opportunity to develop sustainable plans, inventories, and capacity needed to implement a larger project. The division anticipates offering additional grant opportunities near the end of this grant period.

- Grant requests may range from \$15,000 to \$50,000
- Federal grant monies awarded under this program will be paid only upon evidence of project completion and approval of eligible expenses.
- All tree plantings must conform to the USDA Forest Service Eastern Region [Tree Planting Guidelines](#).
- All trees must be selected, planted, and maintained according to the [ONLA & Division of Forestry Tree Planting Specifications](#), American National Standards Institute (ANSI) [Z60.1](#) and [A300 Standards](#), and the [ISA Best Management Practices](#).
- Subcontracted firms must have appropriate insurance and Workers Compensation. No service contracts may exceed \$30,000 in total without the expressed written approval of the DOF's urban forestry administrator.
- If grant funds are utilized for pruning, ANSI standard A300 must be followed.
- If grant funds are utilized for tree removals, applicants must explain the evaluation criteria (e.g., utilize an ISA TRAQ certified arborist evaluation)
- Application approval will be based on evaluation criteria and previous grant performance.
- ODNR reserves the right to suggest modifications to the scope of work and reduce grant awards as necessary.

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- At least a portion of the funds must be used for tree planting
- The U.S. Forest Service and Inflation Reduction Act will be acknowledged as a funding source for work performed under this grant, including any future signage requirements.
- **Applications MUST include:**
  - A signed statement from a designated community official (Mayor, Manager, Administrator, Service Director, etc.) certifying responsibility for the maintenance for any public tree planting. If this is a multi-community grant, please include this information for each entity.
  - An authorizing resolution by council for municipal governments, Board of Directors for non-profit agencies, or equivalent entity. If this is a multi-community grant, please include this information for each entity.
  - The community's [Unique Entity ID](#) (UEI). If this is a multi-community grant, only the lead applicant information is required.
  - The community's State of Ohio [Supplier ID Number](#). If this is a multi-community grant, only the lead applicant information is required.
  - Completed application form.
- Non-profit organization applications must also include:
  - A copy of the IRS letter of determination indicating non-profit status.
  - Documented permission from the land-owning authority (e.g., city, village, township) where the project will be performed.

Applicants are encouraged to follow the Tree Commission Academy's Disciplined Investment Strategy when applying for programmatic work. Adhering to the strategy's budget priorities will ensure that over time all trees in a community will be safe, healthy, long-lived, and cost effective. Budget priorities in order from highest to lowest priority include professional staffing, resource assessment and planning, risk mitigation, proactive maintenance, site preparation, and tree planting. Applicants are encouraged to provide documentation of, or apply for, higher priority elements of a sustainable urban forestry program when applying for programmatic elements lower on the priority scale. For example, should an applicant seek to fund high-risk tree removal, they are encouraged to provide documentation of or apply for funding a tree risk assessment to inform the work necessary in the lower priority element.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

The DOF will evaluate each submission based on community need (based on disadvantaged status and prior urban forestry grant awards), tree equity score (per American Forests), budget proposal, and the proposal's long-term impact on community tree cover. A risk assessment will be completed for each community based on information available to ODNR and past performance on grant agreements.

The DOF may, at its sole discretion, request the applicant modify the application prior to award. In all cases the final application will be incorporated into the grant subaward agreement.

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If you have questions regarding the types of planting projects or components that may be considered, please contact your [Regional Urban Forester](#) or email Columbus staff at [DNR\\_UrbanForestry](#).

**MONITORING & REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**

All grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursements may be requested no more often than quarterly. Reimbursements must be requested in a manner and form provided by the division including a narrative report on grant progress and expenditures.

Regional urban foresters, or other designees, will meet with grant recipients at least quarterly to monitor grant progress. Recipients are expected to take programmatic and technical direction from the regional urban forester. All reimbursement requests must be approved by division's urban forestry administrator.

Two meetings will be held to explain the grant program and requirements on Microsoft Teams. Attendance for applicants is not required.

@ [1PM on November 14th](#)

OR

@ [9AM on November 17th](#)

**URBAN GRANT PROGRAM  
APPLICATION FORM**

Grant Applicant: City of Celina  
Unique Entity ID# GMGLMDEF3LA8 State of Ohio Supplier ID# 0000104205

**Project Lead:** Provide the contact information of the grant administrator for the project.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Funding Requested (min. \$15,000, max \$50,000): \$ 50,000 County: MERCER

Population impacted by grant activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Census tracts (11 digits) in project:

Utilize the [Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool \(geoplatform.gov\)](https://geoplatform.gov)

39107967400	
39107967500	
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**Scope of Work:** Provide a detailed narrative that describes your project and the implementation timeline. Be sure to include relevant detail on the portion of the project that will support tree planting. Attach additional pages if necessary.

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Describe how you have or plan to engage local citizens to gather input, identify interests and needs of the community. and bring underrepresented viewpoints into decision making processes. Include information on engagement methods and how information will be used in decision making and implementation.

**Budget:** Complete the budget table and budget explanation that outlines the proposal request. Include leveraged funds that will be utilized in the project but are not part of the grant request. Leveraged funds can include in-kind services, supplies, or equipment use. Reference the DOF urban subaward grant manual for an explanation of each category. Describe who will work on the grant, what supplies will be purchased, and what portion of the project will be contracted. **THE DIVISION OF FORESTRY OBTAINED A MATCH WAIVER FOR THIS GRANT THAT IS PASSED ALONG TO ALL GRANT RECIPIENTS. NO MATCHING FUNDS ARE REQUIRED.** Leveraged funds are not a scoring criterion but may help in explaining overall community commitment to urban forestry.

Budget Items	Funding Request (\$)	Leveraged Funds (\$)	Budget Detail/ Source of Leverage
Personnel			
Fringe			
Supplies			
Contractual			
Travel			
Volunteer			
Other			
Indirect			
TOTAL			



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Budget Explanation:

**Checklist for a completed application:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Authorizing council resolution (if applicable)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Unique Entity ID</a> (UEI) with <i>active</i> registration status in <a href="#">SAM.gov</a> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State of Ohio <a href="#">Supplier ID Number</a> | <input type="checkbox"/> Signed statement certifying responsibility for maintenance   |

**IF ANY OF THESE ITEMS ARE MISSING YOUR APPLICATION MAY BE EXCLUDED FROM CONSIDERATION.**

**OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS**

- ☐ Master Planting Design
- ☐ City urban forest plan
- ☐ Summary of Risk Management / Tree Risk Assessment information
- ☐ i-Tree Landscape analysis summary
- ☐ Budget detail information
- ☐ Organization chart showing key project members
- ☐ Gantt Chart showing project timelines
- ☐ Existing relevant tree ordinance(s)
- ☐ Letter of support from tree commission

## URBAN GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

### NONDISCRIMINATION DISCLOSURE

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

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To file a complaint alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provided in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250- 9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.