



Wildfire Urban Interface Micro Grant Program for Projects Under \$2000

The Wildfire Urban Interface (WUI) Mitigation Micro-Grant Program aims to provide financial support to residents, landowners and community organizations within the City of Rufus and its Urban Growth Boundary for projects and initiatives that reduce the risk of wildfires and improve vegetation management. This Program provides a streamlined application process and reduces overhead for projects. This program is designed to encourage residents, landowners and organizations in the City of Rufus's Urban Growth Boundary to take proactive measures to protect lives and property by reducing flammable vegetation on their properties. All funding for this program was received through the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program.

Grant Category:

- **Fuel Reductions, Vegetation Management and Defensible Space Enhancement:** Projects that focus on reducing the accumulation of hazardous/flammable vegetation, such as tree trimming, prescribed grazing, mowing and weed removal. Projects must reduce wildfire risk on private properties and can include hiring contractors to complete work.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Individuals, community organizations and local nonprofits are eligible to apply.
- Property owners and renters are eligible, for certain projects renters may be required to provide proof of landowner permission.
- Projects must be located within the City of Rufus's Urban Growth Boundary.
- Applicants must demonstrate a clear plan and budget.
- If it is a one-time equipment purchase, applicants must explain why the equipment is a good investment and will be required to provide proof of purchase within 30 days of receiving funding.
- Priority may be given to projects in high-risk areas.
- Priority may be given to projects that produce a broad impact.

Grant Amounts:

For this program, micro-grant amounts may not exceed \$2000 per property tax lot.

Advertisement and Outreach:

This program will be advertised to City of Rufus Residents and landowners through multiple different methods. Advertising will be done through online methods as well as paper based methods to reach as many citizens as possible.

- **Mailer:** A mailer will be sent to all residents and non-resident landowners when the grant period opens to inform all eligible participants of the opportunity for receiving vegetation mitigation assistance.
- **Posters:** Posters in strategic locations around town are frequently identified by residents as the most effective manner of advertising events/programs. Posters advertising the program will be posted at: City Hall, The Post Office and Community Bulletin Board at a minimum. Additionally, they should be posted at local businesses such as the Grocery Store/Market.

- **Website:** A notice advertising the grant, as well as a link to the application will be posted to the City of Rufus's Website.
- **Social Media:** The City of Rufus will share the grant information via their official Facebook Social Media account and shared to the Sherman County E-News Group.
- **Newspaper:** A notice advertising the grant as well as a QR code linking to the application should be published in the Times Journal.

Grant Timeline for 2024:

Application Open: February-March 2024

Grant Review: April 2024

Grant Awards: May 2024

Grant Activities & Expenditures: June -December

Final Reporting: January 31, 2025

Application Process:

The WUI Micro-Grant Program will be open for application once a year and eligible applications will be able to apply through paper and online applications. Paper applications will be available at City Hall. An online application run through google forms will also be available. The link will be posted on the City of Rufus Website, as well as a hyperlink will be provided to interested community members. Using paper and electronic applications will allow for the highest level of accessibility for the community. The application will include contact information, project description, project location, project timeline, budget and funding request, and supporting documentation, such as cost estimates and/or contractor bids. The application is included later in this document.

Review Process:

Review Committee

A review committee consisting of local experts, government officials, and community representatives will be created to score and award grants. The grant committee may consist of a maximum of 5 members and shall have a minimum of 3 members. Each committee must have a representative from the City of Rufus and from North Sherman Rural Fire Protection District, additional members may be comprised of local experts, officials, or community representatives.

The committee will meet after the application period has ended and will use the scoring criteria outlined below to score each grant application. Applications with the highest scores will be awarded. Exceptionally low scores will not be awarded.

Scoring Criteria

The micro-grant program is competitive and not everyone who applies for a grant will receive funding. To guide the review committee, the following scoring criteria have been established.

Scoring Criteria:

1. Project Description (Max Score: 20)

- Project is easy to understand and has a clear goal/objective. Goals can be simple, i.e. keep my lawn mowed, reduce the vegetation on my property, etc.
- Project clearly supports Rufus's Weed ordinance and aligns with wildfire mitigation and vegetation management goals within the City.
- What will this project accomplish? (Will it allow someone to mow their yard? Trim their trees? Hire a contractor because they are unable to complete work?)
- What benefit will this project provide to the whole community and to overall public safety? (Will it allow someone to maintain their own space and contribute to community safety overall?)

2. Project Location (Max Score: 10)

- Is the project located within the City of Rufus or its Urban Growth Boundary?
- Is property rented or owned? If rented, do they need landowner permission? (Follow up after the application period has been closed is appropriate for this item)
- Project location with regards to high priority mitigation areas for the City of Rufus.

3. Project Timeline (Max Score: 10)

- How long will the project take?

4. Budget and Funding Request (Max Score: 20)

- Overall completeness and feasibility of the project budget.
- Justification for the amount requested from the Micro-Grant Program, **including estimates from contractors**
- Purchases must be listed out

Overall Score: _____ / 60

Grant Disbursement:

Once the review committee selects grant recipients, the applicants will be informed and will be provided with a contract to sign acknowledging funds will be spent on what they have been allocated for. Payments will be issued directly to the pre-approved and selected contractor hired to complete the awarded work orders. Use of pre-approved contractors is a requirement of the funding through Oregon State Fire Marshall and is unable to be waived.

Reporting and Evaluation:

Grantees will be required to submit a final report for vegetation management projects. The final report will be required at the end of their project or January 31, 2025. The report must include before and after pictures of their project, and follow the format outlined later in this document.

Program Evaluation:

