Community Forestry Assistance Grant Program

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About the Community Forestry Assistance Grant Program

The Community Forestry Assistance (CFA) Grant Program prioritizes projects that improve urban tree canopies, promoting equitable distribution statewide. Unlike the IRA-funded Urban & Community Forestry Grants, funding is not restricted to disadvantaged communities. CFA grants offer a maximum award of $25,000 with a 20% match requirement, totaling $100,000 allocated for projects across Nevada. Projects funded through this initiative are supported through a collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (USFS).

Legislative Authority

The USDA Forest Service, through the Community Forestry Assistance Act of the 1990 Farm Bill, has allocated approximately $100,000 in funding to the Nevada Division of Forestry for statewide distribution.

Key Dates

- Application portal opens: November 15, 2023
- Applications due: January 26, 2024
- Award notification: February 9, 2024

Point of Contact

Cayenne Engel
Urban & Community Forestry Program Coordinator
(707) 683-0639
NDF-UCFGrants@forestry.nv.gov

Eligibility Criteria

Community Forestry Assistance Grants are available for projects to be implemented across Nevada. There is no requirement to prioritize underserved communities.

Eligible projects must also meet Federal and State Program objectives for Urban Forestry, as outlined in the Ten Year National Urban and Community Forestry Action Plan and/or the 2020 Nevada Forest, Range, and Watershed Action Plan. See Table 1 for a list of eligible entities and activities.

Application Process

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM PST on January 26, 2024, through the online grant portal. No paper applications will be accepted.

Please contact the NDF UCF Program Coordinator, Cayenne Engel, with additional questions:

NDF-UCFGrants@forestry.nv.gov, 702-683-0639

A Frequently Asked Questions document about the application process can be downloaded from NDF's Urban & Community Forestry Website.

Grant Options

Applicants can submit proposals for Program Development and Tree Canopy Management Grants and/or Planting and Education Grants. See Table 1 for a summary of both options.

Table 1: Community Forestry Grant Opportunities at a Glance

Program	Funding Request Range	Grant Delivery Method	Communities Served	Eligible Entities	Eligible Activities (not an exhaustive list)	Cost/In Kind Match Requirement	Project Time Frame
Program Development and Tree Canopy Management **(purpose: to support projects that may take longer than one year to implement, or that require grater funding due to their complexity).**	$5,000 – 25,000	Subgrant award from NDF	Statewide	• Local governments • Tribal governments • Non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 status. • Public Educational Institutions	• Tree care worker education • Municipal or community tree canopy planning and management • Planting and demonstration projects • Urban forest resiliency • Urban forest equity • Urban wood utilization • Workforce development • School greening • Encouraging public valuation of tree benefits (education)	Yes (20%)	Up to 2 years
Planting and Education Grants **(purpose: to support single site or focused projects, or initiatives proposed by entities that lack the resources, staff and/or infrastructure to process subgrants)**	$1,000 – 5,000	Subgrant award from NDF or NDF direct purchase of materials	Statewide	• State Agencies • Counties • Communities • Educational institutions, • Tribal governments • Non-profit 501 (c)(3) groups • Neighborhood associations, • Civic groups • Religious groups	Trees, planting supplies (soil amendments, mulch, tree protection), irrigation (no hard line), tree-care training opportunities (e.g., arborist certification training for staff), and educational materials.	Yes (20%)	Up to 1 year

Other Grant Requirements for Funding Disbursement

To be able to receive federal funding, applicants must comply with the following requirements that will allow for the funding to be disbursed in a timely and appropriate manner:

For Applicants Entering into Subgrant Agreements:
All applicants requesting subgrants must be registered in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM). Proof of registration and expiration date are required (see Appendix 1 for an example of proof of registration). They must also provide a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), which is generated by SAM, and their Federal Tax ID or Employer Identification Number (EIN).

Registering in SAM is free but expires every year. Grant recipients must maintain their SAM registration current for the duration of the grant along with all related information.

Applicants must also enroll as a state vendor and provide their state vendor number. Instructions, requirements and registration form can be accessed through the State Controller's office website. Please note that the state vendor address and name must match SAM registration address and name.

For Applicants NOT Entering into Subgrant Agreements:
Applicants for Planting and Education Grants who cannot enter into a subgrant agreement will have materials and/or services outlined in the grant application directly purchased by NDF, in accordance with state purchasing guidelines. Please note that the purchasing process for the state is likely more onerous than for other entities and will often come with a time delay.

Eligible Programs, Projects, and Lands; Ineligible Activities

Eligible projects must meet Federal and State Program objectives, as outlined in the Ten Year National Urban and Community Forestry Action Plan and/or the *2020 Nevada Forest, Range, and Watershed Action Plan* goals for Urban & Community Forestry:

The objectives of the 10-year National Urban and Community Forestry Action Plan 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

NDF'S Urban and Community Forestry Program Goals, as defined in the *2020 Nevada Forest, Range, and Watershed Action Plan*, are to:

1. Develop and maintain strong partnerships with key stakeholders that can contribute to urban and community forest planning including design, establishment, and maintenance

2. Promote the role of urban and community forestry in human health and wellness, local economies, ecosystem services, and urban livability

3. Improve urban and community forest management, maintenance, and stewardship

4. Diversify, leverage, and increase funding for Urban and Community Forestry activities

5. Increase public awareness and environmental education to promote urban and community forest stewardship

6. Cultivate diversity, equity, and leadership in the urban forest management community

The following example projects are a non-exhaustive list of possible projects by category. Other projects that fit the aforementioned goals are encouraged.

Tree Care Worker Education and Encouraging Public Valuation of Tree Benefits
Tree care or tree worker educational resource development, seminars, and workshops; Arbor Day programs; Urban forestry youth programs; Development and distribution of publicly accessible resources (physical or digital); Training of city employees and volunteers to improve community forestry practices; Increasing the number of certified arborists in Nevada.

Planning and Management
Development of or updates to tree management plans, ordinances, tree care standards and inventories; Science-based development of canopy targets; Tree board or commission development; Facilitation for shared planning efforts (i.e. coordinating

across municipalities, stakeholders, and geographic regions to address shared needs); Urban forester staffing; Storm readiness planning; Invasive species removal; Hazard tree removal (must be conducted with planning and oversight of ISA certified arborist and removals MUST be accompanied by replacement plantings [only communities with tree management plans qualify]); Pruning for tree health (must meet ANSI A300 standards [only communities with tree management plans qualify])

Tree Canopy Evaluation and Management
Tree inventories (new or updates, protocol development, synthesis and promotion), including tree risk assessments; Tree canopy analyses.

Planting and Demonstration Projects
Development and support of arboretums, demonstration gardens, food forests, or climate refugia. Priority projects include those which:

- address tree equity
- mitigate the effects of extreme heat and climate change
- replace storm damaged canopy
- create greenspaces
- reduce stormwater runoff
- increase the environmental and social benefits of trees.
- Planting projects may be conducted on private lands.
- Include a monitoring plan to evaluate survival in the proposal to ensure protection of Federal investment with a strategy to maximize survival rates included in the project proposal

Proposals for planting projects must include planting and maintenance specifications and identify parties responsible for ensuring proper planting and maintenance implementation.

Urban Forest Resiliency
Nursery and plant material development targeting current and future climate scenarios; urban forest vulnerability mapping with coordinating strategic planning efforts (including heat, drought, flood, wildfire and other climate impacts); Pest preparedness activities; Water conservation and appropriate watering practices.

Urban Forest Equity
Development of partnerships targeting equitable distribution of tree benefits; Projects focused on addressing environmental health disparities; tools or programs to assist urban forest planning and management from a perspective of improving urban forest equity.

Urban Wood Utilization

Projects putting to all use any or all parts of fresh cut urban trees; Projects that increase knowledge, awareness, and visibility of urban wood utilization and recycling; Education and outreach materials; Demonstration of specialized equipment; Techniques for working on smaller interface woodlots; Assessments of the feasibility of recycling and processing urban waste wood.

Workforce development

Programs for those with barriers to workforce entry are prioritized.

School Greening

- Multi-school or regional programs are preferred to projects serving individual schools
- See California Green Schoolyards grants for ideas

Other project needs identified in the Nevada Forest, Range, and Watershed Action Plan benefitting urban forest canopy that were not identified above.

Eligible Lands

Eligible applicants may apply for funding for a project to be conducted on non-Federal lands, including but not limited to those owned by **state and/or local governments, Homeowner Associations, private landowners, and tribal governments**.

Funds may support (allowable costs; max per unit cost $5,000 for any supplies):

- Supplies (trees, non-hard-line irrigation, soil amendments and mulch necessary for tree success)
    - Poly tubing is acceptable
    - Above-ground drip irrigation, slow-release watering supplies (like watering bags), rainwater collection supplies, or watering buggies
- Staff compensation
- Travel for staff to implement project work (maximum reimbursement for lodging and per-diem rates as GSA rates)
- Planning needs
- Consulting contractors for plan/design development
- Materials for plant material development (nursery tree grow outs)
- Development and adoption of a written community tree management plans, community readiness plans, or tree ordinance development
- Tools and PPE necessary for successful project execution

Ineligible activities

- Refreshments or entertainment

- Ornamental grasses, forbs, vegetable gardens, turf - if not required for tree protection
- Research
- Hard-line irrigation (permanent, below-ground)
- Equipment
- Building construction (no permanent structures)
- Structure demolition
- Permanent fencing
- Land acquisition
- Gift cards

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

Evaluation and Ranking

Priority Projects

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

- Municipalities applying that maintain currency on their Tree City USA qualifications

- Projects which move communities from "developing" to "managing"[1] their community forests by meeting USFS standards.

  - Tree Ordinance

  - Professional Forestry/Arboriculture Staff

  - Tree Advisory or Advocacy Groups

  - Tree Management Plan based on inventory data

- Projects that are tied to water conservation, extreme heat mitigation, or reduction in energy use.

Evaluation Criteria

Only applications that meet all requirements will be reviewed. Project proposals will be evaluated by the individual project goals and quality, and clarity of project methods, goals, and outcomes as written in the application. The grant review policy promotes a process whereby each grant application submitted is independently evaluated on its own strengths and merits.

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[1] 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):

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by members of the Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council and Nevada Division of Forestry staff. If conflicts of interest exist, a recusal process will be followed.

The Nevada Division of Forestry reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. Partial funding for projects may be awarded.

Funding Awards, Reimbursements, and Reports

Project Initiation

The grant period begins when a subgrant is fully executed (for large awards), or when announcements are delivered (for small awards).

Direct purchases for "planting and education" grants

NDF may purchase items directly for entities who are not able to accept subgrant awards (subgrant awards are always preferred). NDF purchases must abide by state purchasing and contracting guidelines, will require the grantee to collect quotes and bids and at times research state approved vendors. The purchasing process for the state is likely more onerous than for other entities and will often come with a time delay.

Reimbursement Process for subgrants (all grant programs)

The funds awarded under the grant are available on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursement requests should be submitted quarterly. Grant recipients must submit a Request for Reimbursement (included in award paperwork package) and include records of expenditures along with documentation of all costs. Expenditures must conform to program restrictions to qualify for reimbursement. Awardees are encouraged to consult with NDF staff if there are any questions about qualifying expenses.

Payments to Grant Recipients

Payments will be made as reimbursement for approved and documented project expenditures. Reimbursement requests are expected to be submitted quarterly.

Matching contribution documentation

All matching funds must be specifically related to the proposed project. Matching support may be in the form of *cash purchases* or *in-kind contributions*; all of these contributions must come from **non-Federal sources.** The source of the match, cash and in-kind, must be identified and quantified in the application.

> ***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 matching contributions include but may not be restricted to *documented* staff time on grant activities valued at their normal salary (document with time sheet or agency payroll records); unpaid volunteer labor (valued at $31.80/hour - or current Federal rate) for skilled/trained labor (must include sign-up sheets for volunteers, date, and hours worked), cash donations (document with receipt, copy of check); supplies or services purchased or donated and valued at the normal value, rate or salary; value of equipment use or rental; consumable supplies provided for the grant (office supplies, postage, etc.); advertising; Arborist Certification exam fee when award has been given for travel per diem to train or to take the exam; and value of discounts and fee waivers for supplies or services.

Documentation of value for donated services or goods, equipment and discounts can be by receipt, invoice showing discount or donation, or documented by signed letter from grantee. In addition, all allowable costs described can be used for a grant match.

Subgrants requiring matching contributions must submit documentation of matching contributions for the quarter requesting reimbursement (or match accrued up to the submission date, do not wait until the end of the project to submit match documentation).

Reporting

Quarterly, annual, and a final report are required of the grantee. The schedule and content of final and periodic reports will be set in advance of initiating the project. Final Reports must be submitted within 45 days of project completion 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.

Review of Projects

The Nevada Division of Forestry 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 Nevada Division of Forestry forester prior to final printing to ensure that standards for tree planting and maintenance are met.

Recognition

Any IRA funded projects will need to provide funding acknowledgement and signage. Signage costs may be included in the grant requests. All published (print and digital materials) should acknowledge USFS funding and include the following statement: "This project is funded (in part) by the USDA Forest Service. In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender

identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity."

Extensions and 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 at least 30 days before the project expiration date.

If a final report, grant forfeit, or extension request is not submitted by the deadline, the application will be considered an **unexcused default**. Applicants who default on the 2023-2024 Community Forestry Partnership Grant will not be eligible for the following year's Community Forestry Grant cycle. Unexcused default applicants will regain eligibility for the cycle following the next cycle.

Projects must comply with federal, state and local laws, ordinances, and regulations. Grant funded activities must comply with federal and state equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies.

Entities may apply for additional funds to extend existing programs in future cycles if project funds are fully and correctly utilized within the original project timeframe.

*** Awardees must show project progress within the first year after the award agreement is finalized. If no progress is documented, the subgrant agreement may be modified to a reduced funding level.

Project Guidelines

- Any project involving tree planting must include a five-year maintenance plan.

- All trees purchased must meet the American Standard for Nursery Stock

- Administrative costs associated with the proposed activities may not exceed 20% of the reimbursable project costs.

- This is a reimbursable grant program. No grant funds will be distributed until project expenditures and match (if required) have both incurred.

- Grant funds cannot be used to purchase capital equipment (i.e., costing >$5,000). However, they may be used to rent equipment.

Letters of intent and/or support

Letters of intent and signatures from volunteers that will be providing cash or in-kind match are not required. However, letters of support from sponsors, partnering organizations, and community leaders may help your application.

Additional Resources

Strategic plans to reference:

- National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council Ten-year Urban Forest action plan: https://urbanforestplan.org/
- Nevada Division of Forestry Forest, Watershed, and Rangeland Action Plan: https://forestry.nv.gov/natural-resource-management/state-frwap

General Resources:

- International Society of Arboriculture: www.isa-arbor.com
- Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA Program: www.ArborDay.org
- USDA Forest Service: fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf
- Tree care and selection how-to: www.treesaregood.com
- www.treecaretips.org

For species selection recommendations, refer to:

- https://selectree.calpoly.edu/
- https://www.snwa.com/assets/pdf/water-smart-plant-list.pdf
- https://www.aztrees.org/Native-Trees-AZ-NM

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