



**MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF FOREST CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
BOARDS**
Maryland Urban and Community Forest Committee



MDOT URBAN TREE PROGRAM GRANT Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in planting trees in Maryland. The Maryland Urban and Community Forest Committee (MUCFC) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) are pleased to offer limited grants to help defray the cost of your project. We have listed some guidelines to help you in the process of applying for a grant.

Guidelines for Applying for MDOT Urban Tree Program Grant

- Grant proposals are due to MUCFC Grants Chair, with forestry board member original signature, by 4:30 p.m. on February 15 (for Spring Planting) and July 15 (for Fall Planting).
- Grant funds cannot be used for required mitigation.
- Projects are encouraged to have matching funds and/or in-kind support.
- All grants will be awarded to eligible organizations* rather than to individual citizens.
- All funded projects must take place in:
 - Communities where trees have been removed as part of the recent or past construction of a transportation facility project*, such as construction of the Purple Line project, AND
 - Affected by environmental justice issues* OR
 - Heat island effect*.
 - All funded projects can take place on private and public lands*.
- All funded projects (and applications) must be approved by MUCFC (and signed by your county Forestry Board by the application deadline) before the actual project begins.
- Projects supporting the urban tree canopy* will be given preference.
- Projects that result in the creation of "Pocket Forests"* are also encouraged.
- The maximum grant awarded per project is \$5,000 for tree planting projects
 - "Pocket forests" projects may request additional funding based on the scope of the proposed project
- Final Report is due one month after the proposed completion date and should include:
 - A description of the project including actual # of trees and species planted
 - Photos of planting event
 - Expenses including bills, receipts, contracts, if applicable.
- Any funding not supported through expense receipts shall be returned to the MDOT Urban Tree Program
- Recipients shall also submit a survivability report one year following the completion date. Failure to do so will impact future funding opportunities.

For Tree Planting Projects:

- 1) Project can be completed on private and public lands* with the approval of the landowner.
- 2) Include a simple site plan, project design, and /or photo of the proposed planting site.
- 3) If permits are required, describe the status of permits, review process, etc.
- 4) List plants (and their sizes) to be used in the planting project. Use of native, larger growing shade trees is preferred. MUCFC will not fund planting of invasive species. A list of MDOT preferred trees and plants can be found at: https://www.roads.maryland.gov/OED/Preferred_Plant.pdf.
- 5) Attach a plan that describes how the project will be maintained for 1 year (i.e., watering, weeding, mulching, long term maintenance), expected maintenance costs, and who will be responsible for maintenance. Costs for maintenance of the tree plantings for a maximum of one year following planting for individual trees should be included in the grant proposal.
- 6) Price range for plant material should be appropriate for size. Smaller plants cost less, are easily handled and have a higher survival rate than larger B&B plants. Occasionally, larger plants are necessary, however. When possible, purchase plants from the state facilities. Seedlings can be purchased from the state tree nursery at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/nursery.aspx> and for public land plantings. Container grown trees can be purchased from Tree-Mendous MD Program at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/treemendous/default.aspx>. Prices are typically \$18-\$50 dollars for trees and shrubs.

- 7) Funding for limited outreach to encourage volunteers to support the project or to cover the costs of signage or promotion of the completed project may be reimbursed, for up to 5% of the total grant award. If the project will be printed in a newsletter or placed on a website, then include a copy of the newsletter or URL in report.
- 8) Include the MUCFC and MDOT logos on any signage funded through the MDOT Urban Tree Program grant. Contact wtm@umd.edu for a camera-ready digital file of each logo.
- 9) Applicants are encouraged to contact the Tree Equity Specialist with any questions while developing their proposal.

For "Pocket Forest" Projects:

- 1) Project can be completed on private and public lands* with the approval of the landowner.
- 2) Include a planting plan that includes project design (including site preparation and planting density), proposed planting location, and a photo of the proposed planting site.
- 3) If permits are required, describe the status of permits, review process, etc.
- 4) List plants, shrubs and groundcover (and their sizes) to be used in the "pocket forest" project and any proposed soil amendment (including compost) and types of mulch (such as straw). MUCFC will not fund planting of invasive species. A list of MDOT preferred trees and plants can be found at https://www.roads.maryland.gov/OED/Preferred_Plant.pdf.
- 5) Attach a plan that describes how the project will be maintained for 3 years (i.e., watering, weeding, mulching, long term maintenance), expected maintenance costs, and who will be responsible for maintenance. Costs for maintenance of the tree plantings for a maximum of three years for planting "pocket forests" should be included in the grant proposal.
- 6) Price range for plant material should be appropriate for size. When possible, purchase plants from the state facilities. Seedlings can be purchased from the state tree nursery at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/nursery.aspx> and for public land plantings. Container grown trees can be purchased from Tree-Mendous MD Program at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/treemendous/default.aspx>.
- 7) Funding for limited outreach to encourage volunteers to support the project or to cover the costs of signage or promotion of the completed project may be reimbursed, for up to 5% of the total grant award. If the project will be printed in a newsletter or placed on a website, then include a copy of the newsletter or URL in report.
- 8) Include the MUCFC and MDOT logos on any signage funded through the MDOT Urban Tree Program grant. Contact wtm@umd.edu for a camera-ready digital file of each logo.
- 9) Applicants are encouraged to contact the Tree Equity Specialist with any questions while developing their proposal.

For Reimbursement:

Submit the Final Report which is due one month after the proposed completion date and should include:

- A description of the project including actual # of trees and species planted
- Photos of planting event
- Expenses including bills, receipts, contracts, if applicable.
- If the project is printed in a newsletter or placed on a website or newspaper, then include a copy or URL in report.

Recipients shall also submit a survivability report one year following the completion date. Failure to do so will impact future funding opportunities.

* Definitions

Eligible Organizations: non-profit organizations, schools, community/neighborhood associations; community business associations; homeowners associations; business service, youth, and civic groups; institutions of higher education; counties; municipalities; and forest conservancy district boards.

Environmental Justice: equal protection from environmental and public health hazards for all people regardless of race, income, culture, and social status (§ 1-701 of the Environment Article).

Heat Island Effect: urban areas that experience higher temperatures relative to outlying areas (EPA).

"Pocket Forest": small, high density, native-shrub and tree planting projects in urban environments that recreate or restore layers of forests, including a canopy layer comprised of taller trees, a mid-height shrub layer, and ground cover. These projects can also include soil augmentation and other restoration techniques to encourage low maintenance in urban spaces. "Pocket forests" are designed to integrate forests into the urban environment.

Public Land: land paid for and supported by public tax dollars – can include homeowner association, city, town, county, state or federal land, with the approval of the landowner.

Transportation Facility Project: for the purposes of this grant, a transportation facility project is defined as any construction, operation or maintenance activities that have occurred as part of the state-owned transportation system (including highways, transit, bridges, tunnels, airports, or seaports), which resulted in the removal of trees. (Examples include, but are not limited to, highway or rail corridor projects, park & ride lots, bicycle and walking path construction, mass transit projects such as the construction of the Purple Line project).

Urban Forest: the ecosystem that consists of trees and other vegetation including shrubs, vines and groundcovers that grow individually, in small groups or under forest conditions on public and private lands in our cities, their suburbs and towns. The urban forest not only provides shade for us and habitat for wildlife, it helps to clean our air and water. Streets, sidewalks, buildings, utilities, and most importantly, people are an integral part of the urban forest.

Urban Forestry: according to the U.S. Census Bureau, an urban area is a place with a population of at least 2,500 people. This definition encompasses a wide range of communities, including most of the cities and towns in Maryland. Forestry refers to individual parks, yards and street trees, as well as forest fragments such as wooded parkland, unimproved lots and naturally regenerating areas. Urban Forests are generally, though not exclusively, thought of as providing economical, ecological and social services like recreation, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, stormwater management, carbon storage and interception of airborne pollutants. This is in addition to the traditional view of forests as primarily providing goods like lumber, pulpwood or firewood.

Urban Tree Canopy: when viewed from above, the leaves and branches of trees that cover the ground. This serves as an overall indicator of urban forest quality and quantity.

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