2023 CHICAGO REGION EARMARK -
Urban and Community Forestry Support in the Chicago Region Grant Program

General Instructions

- Grant contact: Colette Copic @ccopic@mortonarb.org (preferred) or 503-953-6930.

- Fill out each page of this application, as is applicable to you. In some cases, you may not be required to fill out an item.

- We do not wish for this application process to be a barrier to any interested Applicant. If you would like assistance or have questions, please contact Colette Copic by March 10, 2023.

- Please note that you are required to include a signed cover letter from your Mayor (or equivalent in communities other than municipalities).

- Submit your application electronically. No hard copies will be accepted unless you contact Colette Copic to make specific arrangements.

<u>Applications are due Friday, March 24 2023 at 5:00 p.m.</u>

Free Application Assistance Available

CRTI offers free application assistance for communities applying to this grant program. Contact Colette Copic at ccopic@mortonarb.org for more information.

Application Table of Contents

Grant Information and Funded Program Areas

This request for proposals provides funding assistance to communities (public entities including, municipalities, park districts, counties, tribal governments, townships, forest preserves, and other units of government) in McHenry, Lake, Kane, DuPage, Cook, Will, and Kendall Counties to improve the urban forest. Schools, colleges, and HOAs are not eligible to receive funding assistance through this grant. **This grant project was made possible with increased resources thanks to Congressman Sean Casten's Community Project Funding support in 2021. The Morton Arboretum is the grant administrator.**

The total maximum allowable funding amount for any one organization is $25,000. The minimum allowable funding amount is $3,500. For all communities, a 25% local match is required. Match spending is the use of local resources towards the project total and is explained in detail in the "eligible and allowable match" section of the grant RFP.

Please reference the grant's Request for Proposals for more details on this grant.

Allowable Costs

Program areas funded through this proposal must also include one or more of the following:

1. **Increasing tree canopy** (diverse tree planting and commitment to care for the trees post planting)

2. **Improving forest health** (pruning, dead tree removals, ash treatment, tree mulching, watering)

3. **Improving community forestry programs** (completion of a forest management plan or inventory with management summary; Updating a tree preservation ordinance; Increasing staff professionalism (through forestry training and/or certification or development of a forestry volunteer program)).

No work shall start on the project until the Applicant is awarded funding. All work shall be completed within the specified grant time period.

Section 1: Applicant Background Information

Organization Name	
Government Type (Municipality, County, Park District, Forest Preserve District, Township, etc.)	
Federal Tax ID (EIN)	
Award Amount Requested ($)	$ NOTE: THIS BOX WILL AUTOFILL AFTER YOU COMPLETE THE BUDGET SECTION (pg 12)
Match Proposed ($)	$ NOTE: THIS BOX WILL AUTOFILL AFTER YOU COMPLETE THE BUDGET SECTION (pg 12)
Match Percentage (%)	NOTE: THIS BOX WILL AUTOFILL AFTER YOU COMPLETE THE BUDGET SECTION (pg 12)

Applicant Contact Information			
Name		Title	
Mailing Address			
Email		Phone Number	
Project Supervisor (if different)		Title	
Email		Phone Number	
Additional information (as needed):			

Community Questions	Yes (please specify with a)		No
Do you have an inventory of your public trees? Eligibility: only trees not inventoried or updated in the last 3 years are eligible for funding for an inventory.	Full		
	Partial		
	Digital		
	Paper		
Do you have an urban forest management plan for your public trees? Eligibility: only Applicants whose management plans are older than 5 years old and/or not based on an inventory are eligible to receive funding for a management plan.	Fewer than 5 years old		
	More than 5 years old		
	Based on a tree inventory		
	Not based on a tree inventory		
Does your organization have someone legally responsible for and designated by an ordinance to care for trees on public property (i.e.: forester, city department, tree board)? If so, provide name, title, and email.	Name		
	Title		
	Email		
Does your organization spend at least $2 per capita per year on tree planting, pruning, removal, maintenance, etc.?			

Community Questions	Yes	No
Are you a Tree City USA? If so, for how many years? If not, and you would like more information, please contact Mike Brunk at michael.brunk@illinois.gov		
Would you like assistance in applying to be a Tree City USA during this grant? Administrative time for this process may be used as Match for this grant.		

Section 2: Project Overview (10)

750 characters (maximum including spaces) – Provide a summary of the project that includes the scope (e.g., number of trees planted, type of management plan to be created, number of staff trained), location, key partners, and expected accomplishments.

Evaluation Criteria for Project Overview:

- The Applicant identifies which program area(s) your project addresses
- The Applicant indicates a clear scope of the project that includes key numeric deliverables (e.g., number of trees planted, number of staff trained)
- The Applicant identifies who will be involved in the project
- The Applicant provides a short narrative on the long term impact for this project and describes how this project will contribute to the community's canopy and/or contribute to a vibrant and healthy urban forest over the long term.

Section 3: Purpose and Need (20)

1,500 characters (maximum including spaces)–   Describe how the project addresses a financial or capacity need in your community.

Evaluation Criteria for Purpose and Need:

- The Applicant describes the connection between project activities and priorities of applicable strategic plans, or urban forest goals.
- The application demonstrates attention to equity and environmental justice, supported by information such as the CRTI Priority Map, The Climate and Econ Screening Tool, Tree Equity Score, Social Vulnerability Index, Opportunity Zone status, or other equity indicators, and describe how your project will specifically address these needs
- The application clearly describes the community's unique challenges (e.g. canopy loss, staff capacity and training, etc.) and identifies reasons why this grant is needed to address these specific challenges.

Section 4: Scope of Work (15)

5,000 characters (maximum including spaces) – Provide a narrative that details the activities and methods proposed for your project. Include how this project will address the priorities of the Program Area(s) for which you are applying.

Evaluation Criteria for Scope of Work:

- The applicant shows capability and clear plans for carrying out the project and maintaining long-term project benefits.
- The applicant and/or partners show adequate expertise to address technical elements of the project or will seek out contractors with adequate expertise. If applicable, the Applicant describes the role, training, and qualifications of any partners and/or potential volunteers.
- Projects that involve community participation will be awarded higher scores. Support letters are required from any entity providing in-kind donations / match for the project. Support letters from peer organizations may be attached and should describe that entity's commitment to and role in this project.
- The project is designed to be resilient to the effects of climate change and other ecosystem stressors.

Section 5: Leveraged Benefits (20)

5,000 characters (maximum including spaces) – Explain how the project will continue to benefit the community past the grant term and set up the community for success into the future. Describe, as applicable:

- How the inventory will be updated regularly and used
- What kind of management plan will result from the inventory
- How the management plan will be used in basic operations and updated
- How your community will develop and implement a new or existing tree ordinance
- How tree planting will benefit your community and how the trees will be maintained to ensure this benefit
- How newly planted trees will be cared for and monitored after the grant period has ended
- How capacity building / staff training will impact your basic operations
- How your tree maintenance project (e.g., pruning, removals, treatment, etc.) will contribute to an overall healthier urban forest

Summarize how the project will create and sustain environmental benefits and outcomes over multiple decades. Describe your organization's commitment to the project (e.g. Is this project an established goal for the community? Is it tied to a comprehensive or other plan?)

Evaluation criteria for Leveraged Benefits:

- The application shows clear intention that the project will benefit your forestry program or community for the long term.
- Projects that can describe how this grant would expand your urban forestry efforts (not just supplement) will receive higher scores.

Leveraged Benefits Narrative:

Section 6: Budget Details (15)

Communities are required to submit a proposed budget as part of this application. All communities are required to match their requested grant funds with match spending at a rate of 25%. Allowable expenses and match are explained in the grant RFP under "Financial Information."

Examples of match spending include, but are not limited to, time spent developing a specification, plan, or ordinance, approvals and review by staff and/or board; implementation of recommendations of the management plan or inventory, etc. In general, urban forest management activities you normally undertake may be used as match if they relate to grant activities (e.g. cyclical pruning as recommended in a new UFMP, watering newly planted grant funded trees, removal of high priority trees that pose a risk to the community as described in an inventory, etc.). This match requirement should be achievable for all communities and the Morton Arboretum staff would be happy to talk with you to discuss opportunities for match. If you cannot meet the 25% requirement, contact Colette Copic at ccopic@mortonarb.org to discuss additional options.

Please take your time to fill in this table correctly and completely. The dollar amounts you indicate in this table will be a determining factor in how much your project is awarded. For free assistance in filling out this section, you can contact Colette Copic at ccopic@mortonarb.org)

Evaluation Criteria for Budget Detail:

- The budget indicated in this table is balanced and match is present and realistic.

Item	Grant Funds (Must not Exceed 75% of total cost and be between $3,500-$25,000)	Match (May not include any federal funds and must be a minimum 25% of the total cost)	Total Cost (Local Match + Grant Funds)
Personnel / Staff Labor Costs (Include any personnel costs for your grant and/or match activities.)	$	$	$
Fringe Benefits	$	$	$
Volunteer personnel (Estimated hours and $ value per hour. Only counted for match.)	N/A	$	$

Item (continued)	Grant Funds (continued)	Match (continued)	Total cost (continued)
Sub Total	$	$	$
Contracted services (Include any estimates you've received. If not, write the amount you are applying for and the amount you are able to match.)	$	$	$
Sub Total	$	$	$
Supplies (Include any trees, soil, mulch, etc.) For inventory / management plan / ordinance projects, materials are not an allowable grant funded expense but may be used as match.	$	$	$
Sub Total	$	$	$
Other (Please identify/explain the expense.)	$	$	$
Sub Total	$	$	$
Grant Total	$	$	$

Budget Narrative-1,500 characters (maximum including spaces)

Provide a written explanation of expensable activities and match.

Evaluation Criteria for Budget Narrative:

- The Applicant provides a clear explanation on how they arrived at project cost (e.g., quotes, previous projects).
- The Applicant describes all local match, both in-kind and direct, including contracted services, personnel salary and fringe, material purchases, volunteer efforts, community organization support and/or community contributions.
- The Applicant details any "other" expenses listed in the budget matrix.

Section 7: Sharing Knowledge and Outcomes (10)

750 characters (maximum including spaces) – Identify strategies that will be used to engage people and share outcomes and knowledge.

Evaluation Criteria for Sharing Outcomes and Knowledge:

- Applicant identifies strategies for outreach to the community about this grant's outcomes.
- The project includes efforts to share knowledge, tools, or innovations that have practical application beyond the grant period.

Section 8: Timeline (10)

1,500 characters (maximum including spaces) – Provide an approximate schedule of intermediate steps and major milestones.
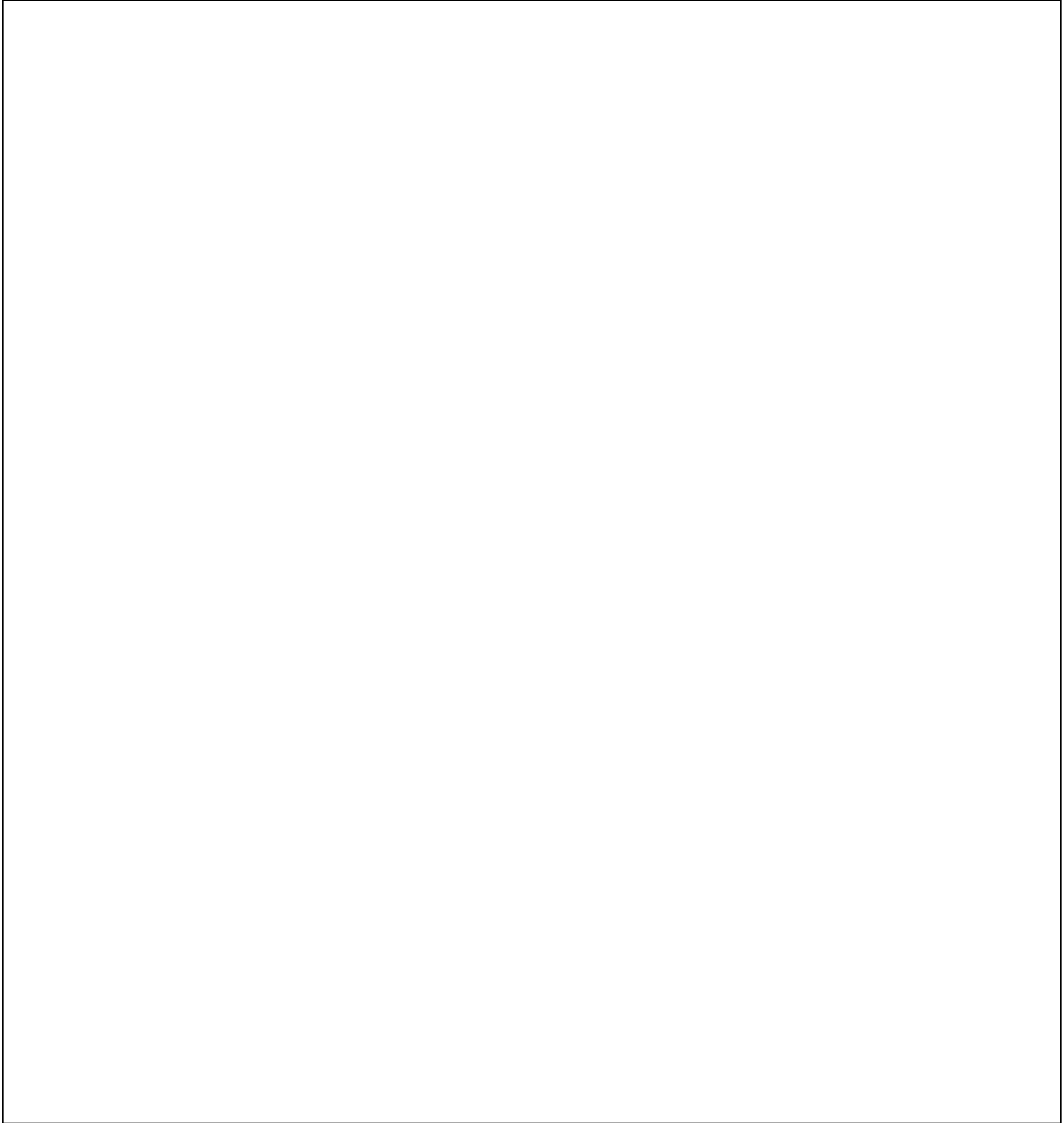
You may group activities by month or by quarter, as appropriate. You are welcome to create a numbered or bulleted list, or use the one below as a template. Include the following, as applicable.

- Planning / prep meetings
  - Who from your organization will be involved
  - When these meetings will take place
- Which steps need to be approved by your Board / Council
- Ordinance review / development / passing
  - Who will participate
  - Timeline for Board / Council review
  - Board or Council meetings (as appropriate) to approve items including an ordinance if applicable
- Finalizing the project & beyond
  - Reporting / invoicing
  - How will these items be updated or managed in the future
- Match activities
  - How, when, & what will you use as match

Evaluation criteria for timeline:

- The Applicant's timeline is clear and realistic
- Major milestones and required approvals are detailed
- Match activity timing is considered and clear

Timeline narrative:

Section 9: Bonus Points (9 points)

Bonus points will be awarded for applications that go above and beyond the minimum requirements. Some of these bonuses will require a signed commitment from your Mayor, Executive Director, Board Chair, or other Chief Executive of your governmental entity, to be submitted with the application. This commitment can be found at the end of the bonus list.

Some of these bonuses will add additional required deliverables to your grant agreement. For these bonuses, you must complete the additional requirement to be eligible for reimbursement.

BONUS: Have you encouraged a peer community to apply for this grant? Or, has a peer community recommended that you apply for this grant? If so, please provide details in the box to the right. (2 points)	
BONUS: Applicant commits to apply for Tree City USA if not presently a Tree City USA community, or commits to receiving a Tree City USA Growth Award if presently a Tree City USA community. Indicate commitment in the box to the right if this bonus applies **(requires a signed commitment from the Mayor or Village President to be submitted with the application).** (2 points)	

BONUS: Applicant formally adds a requirement to form a tree board or other advisory group. See Appendix B of the RFP for a description of this added commitment. **(requires a signed commitment from the Mayor or Chief Executive to be submitted with the application).** (2 points)	

Commitment to add additional grant deliverables:

I certify that, according to the above, my organization will comply with our self-selected bonus requirements listed in section 9 of this application. (requires signature of Mayor or chief executive).

Name:_____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Signature   _____

Date_____

Final Instructions

Please be sure to include all of the following in your application. Once you have completed and collected all of these items, send it to Colette Copic at ccopic@mortonarb.org.

Application Checklist	
Cover Letter signed by the Mayor or chief executive	
Section 1: Applicant Background Information	
Section 2: Project Overview	
Section 3: Purpose and Need	
Section 4: Scope of Work	
Section 5: Leveraged Benefits	
Section 6: Budget Details	
Section 7: Sharing Knowledge and Outcomes	
Section 8: Timeline	
Section 9: Bonus Points (optional) signed by Mayor or Chief Executive	
Tree Inventory Maintenance Agreement (if applicable) Appendix A	
Tree Planting List (if applicable) Appendix B	
Tree Maintenance Agreement (if applicable) Appendix C	
Letters of Support (from organizations who can attest to your capacity to complete this project)	

Appendix A. Tree Inventory Maintenance Agreement

This Tree Inventory Maintenance Agreement between The Morton Arboretum and the Applicant certifies that regular and effective updates and maintenance will be performed for a period of five years, and will comply with the following requirements:

- The tree inventory shall be updated regularly to ensure that it reflects current conditions in the community. Tree data should be updated during cyclical pruning, or on another continuous basis.
- Inventory updates shall reflect new plantings, removals, replacements, pruning / trimming, condition updates, and maintenance recommendations.
- This work may be done in-house, by contractors, or by volunteers. However, everyone who is working on the update, whether as a paid or volunteer service, shall be qualified/certified or adequately trained to do so.
- Tree inventory updates shall result in timely, periodic updates to prioritization and other action items in an accompanying Urban Forest Management Plan, if applicable.

I certify that, according to the above, my organization will comply with tree inventory maintenance requirements. (requires signature of Forestry Department Director or equivalent)

Name:_____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Appendix B. Tree Planting List

Species (common name)	Species (botanical name)	Number proposed	Anticipated cost per tree, planted	Notes
Add additional sheets as needed				

Description of Proposed Planting Locations (attach map if applicable)

Statement of Tree Diversity

Appendix C. Community Partner Commitment and Tree Maintenance Agreement

Community Partner Commitments and Tree Maintenance Agreements are required for tree planting projects.

Community Partner Commitment Agreement

This is an agreement between The Morton Arboretum (Arboretum) and a community partner or tree recipient (Partner) for the completion of a tree planting project and ongoing care of trees provided through this grant.

The following outlines the responsibilities of the designated Partner:
1. Select species diversity to meet grant requirements.
2. Select species from nurseries that are licensed by the State of Illinois.
3. Contact JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) (all locations other than the City of Chicago or DIGGER for locations within the City of Chicago) two weeks before the planting event. These organizations check utilities before any digging occurs (811). For sites in the city of Chicago call 811 or 312-744-7000. For sites outside of the city of Chicago call 811 or 1-800-892-0123.
    a. The landowner must call for utility locates to ensure the proposed planting sites are clear of utility lines.
    b. Mark the proposed tree locations prior to the JULIE/DIGGER visit.
2. Care of the trees before, during, and post planting is the responsibility of the Partner.
    1. Ensure that trees are protected during the delivery process so they are adequately covered in transit and watered to ensure the trees do not get dried out.
    2. Inspect trees upon arrival to make sure stem to root attachment is solid and no damage to bark, branches or roots has taken place. Refuse trees that do not meet these requirements.
    3. Store the trees in a protected location until they are planted.

    d. All trees must be watered appropriately, before, during, and after they are planted. The Partner will determine the water source and provide the water for the new trees on the day of planting and thereafter for a minimum of three years.

Tree Maintenance Agreement

This Tree Maintenance Agreement between The Morton Arboretum (Arboretum) and the Community Partner and/or Tree Recipient (Partner) certifies that the Partner will provide customary and reasonable tree care and maintenance three years post planting.

The Partner is responsible for mulching and watering the trees appropriately for three years to enable trees to become fully established and thrive. Following are the Partner's responsibilities:

1. During the growing season approximately 10-15 gallons of water or 1" of water should be applied once weekly to the root ball of newly planted trees unless adequate soil moisture is present.

2. A 3" – 4" layer of organic, wood chip mulch will be maintained in a circular area around the base of the tree that is at least 3 feet in diameter, taking care that the mulch does not touch the trunk of the tree.

3. All tags, rope, and wire will be removed.

4. Trunk wrap may remain in place for the first winter season if necessary for thin-barked trees.

5. If trees are staked, stakes will only be used in windy locations and will be removed after one year.

6. All trees will be monitored for pests or other signs of stress, and conditions will be remedied when appropriate and possible.

I certify that, according to the above Community Partner Commitment Agreement and Tree Maintenance Agreement, I will comply with these requirements. (requires signature of Forestry Department Director or equivalent)

Name:_____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

_____   _____

Signature   Date

If you would like tree care tips or tree related information please provide your email below:

_____