



**Wisconsin DNR Urban Forestry Grants
2027
Application Guide
Application Deadline: October 1, 2026**

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Purpose

The urban forest is made up of tree-lined streets, trees in private landscapes, schoolyards, community parks, riverbanks, parking lots, cemeteries, vacant lots, utility rights-of-way and anywhere else trees can grow in a community. Urban forestry is the tree management, operations and education that happens within cities, villages and other areas of concentrated development.

The Urban Forestry Grant Program is designed to fund projects that improve a community's capacity to manage its trees (e.g., management plans ordinances, staff training, tree board development, inventories and public education) and projects that help conserve, protect, expand or improve the urban forest resource (e.g., planting, hazard tree removal and pest control). **Grants are intended to support new projects.** Urban Forestry Grants are not intended to subsidize current, ongoing operations or replace existing funds. Two types of grants are available:

- a) **Regular Urban Forestry Grants** are for communities with existing programs.
- b) **Startup Grants** are for communities that want to start an urban forestry program or resume an inactive one.

2027 Program Priorities

Applications will be ranked based on project outcomes—the impact the project will have on the urban forest. Successful projects will result in one or more of the following DNR Urban Forestry Program priorities (derived from the [WI DNR Division of Forestry Strategic Direction](#) and [Forest Action Plan](#)):

- **Increase tree canopy cover and diversify tree species in urban forest areas (diversify can include species, age and size classes)**
 - Proposals that align with this priority will clearly articulate how the work will increase canopy cover and how the proposal will increase tree species, age and size diversity. Planting efforts are especially encouraged as planted trees will be counted towards Wisconsin's commitment to the [Trillion Trees Pledge](#).
 - Aligned activities may include:
 - Tree Planting
 - Tree Plant Health Care
 - Tree Pruning
 - Public Education, Information and Outreach
- **Improve urban forest health and resilience to emerging pests, diseases and abiotic factors (such as storms)**
 - Proposals that align with this priority will clearly articulate how the work will directly improve urban forest health and resilience by identifying a specific threat and how the work will mitigate the threat therefore reducing its risk and/or impact.
 - Aligned activities may include:
 - Tree planting

- Tree plant health care
 - Tree pruning
 - Tree removals
 - Urban wood utilization
 - Emerging threats plan or update
 - Tree ordinance development or update
 - Tree inventory or update
- **Improve local capacity to manage and care for the urban and community forest**
 - Proposals that align with this priority will clearly articulate how the work will improve the organization’s capacity to better manage and care for the urban forest.
 - Aligned activities may include:
 - Management plan or update
 - Emerging threats plan or update
 - Storm response plan or update
 - Tree ordinance development or update
 - Tree inventory or update
 - Gravel beds/nursery
 - Advocacy group development
 - Staff training/education
 - Public education, information and outreach

General Information

- Eligible applicants may be a Wisconsin city, village, town, county, tribal government and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations residing and conducting projects in Wisconsin. Partnerships with other eligible applicants are encouraged. Individuals, businesses, schools, school districts and state agencies are not eligible to apply.
- This is a 50% reimbursement program. **Grant funds are not provided up front.** The applicant must initially fund 100% of project costs with a combination of cash, labor and/or donations (donations can only count towards the applicant’s share, they cannot be reimbursed). Upon completion, the grant recipient would request reimbursement for 50% of eligible costs. *(501[c][3] nonprofit organizations may request an advance of no more than 50% of the grant when a grant is awarded.)*
- Regular Urban Forestry Grants range from \$1,000 to \$25,000 (total project cost, \$2,000 to \$50,000). Startup Urban Forestry Grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 (total project cost, \$2,000 to \$10,000). **Applicants are encouraged not to overmatch – this does not make for a better proposal.**
- Proposals will be ranked by DNR Urban Forestry staff. Other appropriate subject matter experts may rank applications as part of the ranking team.

- Coordinators cannot write your grant application, but they can help you define your project.
- The State Statute and Wisconsin Admin Code which govern the program are available online.

Important Dates

July 1, 2026: 2027 Urban Forestry Grant Application Period Opens.

Information can be found on the [Wisconsin Urban Forestry webpage](#).

October 1, 2026: Application Deadline.

All application materials, **including the authorizing resolution**, must be sent no later than 11:59 p.m., **October 1, 2026**. Applications must be e-mailed to the program mailbox DNRUrbanForestryGrants@wi.gov.

November 2026: Funding Notification

Applicants will be notified of funding status via email. The notification timeline is subject to change and dependent upon the number of applications and other factors.

December 2026: Grant Agreements

Successful applicants will receive a grant agreement via email.

January 2027: Grant Period Begins

Grants are normally in effect from January 1 through December 31. The grant agreement will specify the effective dates for reimbursable project costs.

June 30, 2027: Interim Progress Reports Due Date

The progress report form can be found [online](#).

December 31, 2027: Grant Period Ends

2027 Urban Forestry Grant projects must be completed by this date.

March 31, 2028: Reimbursement Deadline

Reimbursement request for grants that expired December 31, 2027 must be submitted by this date. The reimbursement request packet, with all supporting documentation and appropriate signatures, must be sent by e-mail or mail by 11:59 p.m. Late submittal could result in loss of grant funding.

Grant Application Tips

Follow the tips below to improve your project proposal.

Plan ahead. Begin planning your project long before filling out the application. Pre-planning is reflected in better project proposals. Start the process to obtain a resolution from your governing body as soon as possible. The process could be lengthy, and a resolution is required when you submit the application.

Get input from others that will be involved in the project or communities who have done similar projects. If your project will entail the use of a consultant, issue a request for proposals (RFP) and tentatively select the consultant prior to submitting your application.

Contact your urban forestry coordinator to discuss your project.

Make sure the person who completes the application is familiar with the proposed project and able to articulate it well.

Answer each question clearly, succinctly and completely. Fully address all parts of every question asked. Avoid leaving questions unanswered.

Have someone unfamiliar with your project read over your proposal. Do your responses give them a good understanding of your project, the project outcomes and the impact the project will have on the urban forest?

Avoid irrelevant information. Answers should be specific to the proposed project. Unless specifically asked, don't include information beyond the scope of the project.

Follow application instructions. Have you submitted everything required for a complete application?

Be as specific as possible when estimating costs. Grant awards are based on the applicant's cost estimate. Careful cost estimating will ensure that you have enough funds to complete the project and may reduce your out-of-pocket costs.

Get estimates from vendors and consultants before you apply. The cost of an inventory, for example, can vary greatly depending on your requirements. There can be thousands of dollars difference between a quick snapshot tree count and a comprehensive assessment using computerized databases, aerial photography and geographic information systems. Your urban forestry coordinator can help you decide what type of inventory best meets the community's needs.

Round up to the nearest dollar in the individual activity sections.

Do not grossly overmatch. This complicates the reimbursement process and does not make for a better project proposal

Make sure the cost estimate worksheet includes all anticipated project costs. Review your responses to all of the questions. Have you mentioned any project activities or aspects that are not included on the cost estimate worksheet?

Startup Grants

Startup Grants are for small projects focused on initial steps in community urban forest management. The application is designed to determine if your project qualifies for a Startup Grant or a Regular Grant. A long-term goal for applicants applying for a Startup Grant should be the development of an ongoing urban forestry program. Grants range from \$1,000–\$5,000 and provide a 50% reimbursement of eligible project costs up to the grant award. (*Project total is \$2,000 to \$10,000*).

- The applicant must initially fund 100% of project costs with a combination of cash, labor and/or donations (donations can only count towards applicant's share, they cannot be reimbursed). Upon completion, the grant recipient would request reimbursement for 50% of eligible costs. (*501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations may request an advance when a grant is awarded.*)
- Only one Startup Grant may be awarded to an applicant per year.
- Projects begin January 1 and must be completed within one calendar year.

*A maximum of three Startup Grants may be awarded to an applicant within the lifetime of the Urban Forestry Startup Grant program. To be eligible for a third Startup Grant, an applicant must either:

- a) have an existing tree inventory; or
- b) use the grant funding to complete one.

Who may apply for a Startup Grant?

Cities, villages, towns, counties, tribes and **501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations who meet two or more of the following conditions may apply for a Startup Grant:

- starting, recently started or resuming a community-wide urban forestry program
- involvement and support for urban forests by boards/committees, elected officials, organizations and/or residents is low to non-existent
- there are no trained staff, contractors or volunteers authorized to handle, advise or oversee community tree care and management
- community urban forestry operations (planting, pruning, removal) is infrequently performed by staff or contractors

If this describes your organization, please select Startup in Section I of the Urban Forestry Grant Application. If your program does not meet the Startup Grant requirements, a note to that effect will appear at the bottom of the application in Section III.

Startup grants are reviewed separately from regular Urban Forestry grants.

(If there has been a lapse of several years since receiving a third Startup grant or for general questions regarding eligibility, applicants are encouraged to contact the DNR Grant Manager.)*

*(**501(c)(3) organizations must assess eligibility of the community their project serves, not their own organization.)*

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Regular Grants

Projects must relate to urban forestry, which for the purposes of this grant program is tree management, operations and education within cities, villages and other areas of concentrated development.

Each project may consist of **no more than four** of the following fourteen activities:

- Tree planting
- Tree plant health care
- Tree pruning
- Tree removals
- Urban wood utilization
- Management plan or update
- Emerging threats plan or update
- Storm response plan or update
- Tree ordinance development or update
- Tree inventory or update
- Gravel beds/nursery
- Advocacy group development
- Staff training/education
- Public education, information and outreach

Startup Grants

Eligible projects are a subset of the activities listed above for regular grants. Projects by 501(c)(3) organizations must focus on their community's trees.

Each project may consist of **no more than three** of the following eight activities:

- Tree planting
- Tree pruning
- Tree removal
- Tree inventory
- Tree plant health care
- Urban forestry management plan

- Public Education/information/outreach (may include forming a tree board, writing a tree ordinance, staff and/or volunteer training and/or improving awareness of the importance of community trees and their management)
- Staff training/Education

Ineligible Projects

Projects that are ineligible include, but are not limited to:

- Projects not related to urban forestry
- Construction projects: trails, fences, shelters, buildings, site grading unrelated to planting, etc.
- Stump removal projects – stump removal is ineligible as a stand-alone project; however, stump removal is eligible as an activity of a tree planting or removal project
- Land or boundary surveys or title searches
- Appraisal, sale or exchange of real property

Project Costs

Project costs must be incurred between the start date indicated on the project agreement and December 31, 2027.

Eligible Costs

Reimbursable Costs

Reasonable and necessary project costs which are consistent with the approved project activity and incurred during the project period are eligible for grant funding. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to:

- **Labor:** Salaries and fringe benefit costs of personnel engaged in the project. Direct costs shall be supported by detailed documentation for each activity specific to project. Actual fringe benefits may not exceed the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) rate at the time of award. The current rate for 2027 is 48.58% of the direct labor costs claimed.
- **Equipment Usage:** Equipment owned by the applicant can be billed to the grant. Equipment use rates may not exceed the rates established annually by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and published in chapter 2 of the [State Highway Maintenance Manual](#). These rates are posted to DNR Urban Forestry Website in mid-January.
- **Cash Expenditures:** The cost of necessary supplies, services and equipment to complete the project is reimbursable. Equipment costing more than \$5,000 per unit is not eligible. To be fully eligible under the grant, purchased equipment shall be used exclusively for project-related purposes over its useful life. Nonexclusive

equipment use may be prorated and charged as project costs only for that portion of depreciation specifically related to use in project activities. The costs of leased equipment and facilities, leased specifically for this project and only for the length of the project. The contract costs of qualified vendors to perform project activities are also eligible

Eligible Non-reimbursable Costs

The reasonable, documented value of donated labor, equipment, equipment usage, supplies, facilities or services is an eligible project cost for match, but is not eligible for reimbursement.

Examples include:

- Project tasks performed by volunteers such as tree board or service club members or the general public
- Services such as free printing of a project publication by a local business or a project landscape plan contributed by a landscape architect
- Cash receipts from a fundraiser held specifically to defray project costs and spent on the project
- Use of a local business's cold storage facility without charge to store nursery stock for project tree planting
- Free use of a tree board member's pickup truck to transport project workers
- Seedlings provided by a local nursery at no cost for a project-related Arbor Day event

There are a number of restrictions and requirements that can influence whether donations are eligible as project costs. There are also specific documentation requirements for donations. If you need additional assistance, contact Urban Forestry Grant Specialist.

Ineligible Costs

Costs not directly associated with or necessary to implement the project as determined by the department are ineligible for grant funding.

Ineligible costs include but are not limited to:

- Fines and penalties due to violations of or failure to comply with federal, state or local laws or regulations
- Ordinary operating expenses (indirect costs) of a grant recipient that are not directly related to the project, such as salaries and expenses of a mayor or city council members.
- Costs for which payment has been or will be received under another federal or state financial assistance program, except in specific cases. Community Development Block Grants may be applied toward the applicant's share of the Urban Forestry Grant project funding only when it can be demonstrated to the department's satisfaction that there is a local commitment to and involvement in the project

- Costs incurred in a contract which creates a real or apparent conflict of interest. An apparent conflict of interest arises when an official or employee of a grant recipient participates in the selection, awarding or administration of a contract supported by this project and the official or employee or his or her spouse or partner, has an ownership interest in the firm selected for the contract or receives a contract, gratuity or favor from the award of the contract.
- Program costs paid before or after the project period
- Undocumented or improperly documented project costs
- Equipment purchases that exceed \$5,000 per unit
- Payment for land or land exchanges

Project Revenue

If a grant project includes holding an educational workshop, workshop registration fees may be used to pay for other project costs. Any other revenue generated by the project during the grant period, for example sales of a grant funded video or tree planting costs paid by residents, are considered project revenue and must be subtracted from the total project cost.

Award and Execution of Contract

- Following grant ranking, each applicant will be notified of their funding status.
- Projects meriting funding consideration, but not at the requested amount, may be offered reduced awards.
- The agreement, along with special activity conditions, must be signed by the successful grant recipient and **returned within ten working days** after receiving the contract.

Payment

Grant funding is not provided up front for cities, villages, counties, towns and tribes –. The grant recipient must complete and pay for all phases of the project and then request 50% reimbursement up to the award amount. A reimbursement request should be made as soon as possible after project completion, but **no later than 90 days after the project expiration date**. Reimbursement is contingent on DNR approval of the completed project and expenses. Payment will normally be made within 60 days of receipt of completed reimbursement worksheets and documentation. Payment shall be made only to the contracted grant recipient. **Only one reimbursement payment will be made to the contracted grant recipient upon completion of all phases of the project.**

501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations may request an advance of 50% of their grant at the time the grant is awarded. Final payment is made following DNR approval of the completed project and reimbursement request as above.

Application Overview

While entering data in the Urban Forestry Grants Application, use the tab key to navigate from field to field. You can also click using your mouse.

Section I: Grant Type

- Select the appropriate Grant Type—Regular or Startup. The form will be modified based on your selection. Should you need to convert from one type of grant to the other, data already entered should be maintained. Check to be sure all fields in the current version of the application are completed.
- Be sure to acknowledge that you reviewed and followed the Grant Application Guide.

Section II: Applicant Information

- Fill in your organization name, organization type, county and the contact information.

Section III: Community Urban Forestry Program Status

- Choose the most appropriate answer in each category. Based on your answers, a red advice box may appear below the table indicating if a change in application type is required or advised. Make changes as appropriate.

Section IV: Project Description

A. Project Overview

- **Descriptive Project Title:** provide a title for your project
- **Project Description:** provide a brief project description that includes basics of who is doing what, where, how and why.
- **Project Needs Statement:** Describe the issue(s) you hope to address through this project and why your project should be funded. How would this grant have a greater impact on your community/organization versus others. What unique challenge(s) does your community/organization face that this grant will address? What impact would not receiving this funding have on your project?

B. Project Activity Boxes (activities are limited to four)

- Using the dropdown feature, select project activity (or activities) that you will employ to complete your project. No more than four activities may be selected. To add activities, click the plus symbol. For tree planting, pruning and removals, provide the quantity of trees. For staff training, provide number of staff that will be trained. For public education, information and outreach, provide the number of events and/or programs. Describe the project activity selected. Make sure to address the following in the activity description/outcome:
 - What is the **expected outcome(s)** of the activity?
 - How will expected activity outcomes be **measured, evaluated** and **shared**?
 - What is your timeline for completing the activity? **Provide a timetable for project activity selected.** Detail steps leading up to completion. Include major milestones.

Below is the list of project activities, including the activity description:

- **Tree planting:** Plant new trees to increase urban tree canopy and replace lost or removed trees. Please include the number of trees to be planted in your application.
- **Tree plant health care:** Implement practices to improve the health and longevity of urban trees, such as treatments for pests and diseases, soil amendments or nutrient programs. If treating trees, include the number of trees to be treated in your application.
- **Tree pruning:** Prune existing urban trees to improve their structure, health, safety and appearance. Please include the number of trees to be pruned in your application.
- **Tree removals:** Remove dead, dying or disease urban trees that pose a risk to public safety or urban forest health. Please include the number of trees to be removed in your application.
- **Urban wood utilization:** Develop or support initiatives that use wood from removed urban trees for uses such as lumber, mulch, firewood or community projects, reducing waste and promoting local wood markets.
- **Management plan or update:** Create or update an urban forest management plan to guide long-term care, maintenance, advocacy and decision-making for the community's trees.
- **Emerging threats plan or update:** Develop or update a plan to address current and anticipated threats to the urban forest, such as invasive pests, diseases, abiotic or climate-related stressors.
- **Storm Response Plan or Update.** Develop or update a plan to address how you will prepare for, respond to and recover from storm-related impacts affecting the urban forest.
- **Tree Ordinance Development or Update.** Develop or update municipal ordinance(s) to provide legal authority and standards for planting, maintenance, protection and removal of public trees.
- **Tree Inventory or Update.** Conduct or update an urban tree inventory to collect at a minimum, information on species, location, size and condition.
- **Gravel Beds/Nursery.** Establish or expand a gravel bed (to hold bare-root trees prior to planting) or small-scale nursery.
- **Advocacy Group Development.** Initiate or increase capacity of a tree board, urban forestry committee or friends' group to support and advocate for the community's urban forest.
- **Staff Training/Education.** Provide training or professional development opportunities for municipal staff, elected officials, board members or volunteers involved in urban forestry activities. Include the number to be trained.

- **Public Education, Information and Outreach.** Deliver programs, materials or events to raise public awareness and support for urban forestry, tree care practices and community involvement. Please include number of events and/or programs.

C. Sustainability and Capacity: Describe how the Project Activity (or activities) and benefits of this project will be sustained beyond the grant period. If the project responsibilities extend past the funding timeframe (such as tree establishment in years 2 and 3), outline your plan for ensuring their completion. Additionally, explain how this project builds on prior initiatives and demonstrates your organization’s capacity to successfully manage and maintain the work over time.

Section V: Additional Applicant Information

- Is your project being conducted in a community designated as a Tree City USA?
Select Yes, No or N/A as applies to your organization.
- Have you received an Urban Forestry grant in the past 3 years? If yes, describe the funded project(s), including what you accomplished.
- Finally, if partners will be involved in the project, list them along with the specific service, product or role they will contribute to the project. A [Partner Verification form](#), will need to be completed for each partner listed here. Print as many as needed. Partners must sign and date their forms, acknowledging participation in the project. A project partner is a person or organization whose contributions are critical to the success of the project. Contracted companies and/or paid services would not be considered partners for this form.
- You have the opportunity to provide additional information about your project you feel would be beneficial for the application ranking team to know.

Section VI: Cost Estimate Worksheets

- Create a Cost Estimate Worksheet to correspond to each activity selected in application. This should include **both** estimated Applicant Costs and expected Donation Value for labor, equipment, supplies or other cash expenditures.
- Totals from these pages automatically calculate the Total Project Cost, Grant Share and Applicant’s Share values.

Section VII: Certification and Submission

- Indicate which attachments will be included with your application.
- If you indicated the use of partners in Section V. 3., complete the Urban Forestry Grant Partner Verification form for each contributing partner. Print each attachment separately and forward to the partner for their review and signature. Include their returned, signed form with your application submittal; a scanned version is fine.
- Save your application file. Change the name to reflect your organization and the grant year.

- Print and review. Edit and save again as needed.
- We encourage all application material to be submitted electronically.
- If you have Microsoft Outlook, Yahoo or Gmail you can use the “Submit by E-mail” button. If you don’t have these e-mail applications, you can submit a copy of your application as an attachment in whichever e-mail application you normally use.
- Electronic signatures on grant applications are accepted. We prefer that you use the “Submit by E-mail” button.
- Once satisfied with the completeness of your application, save the latest version. Then click the “Submit by E-mail” button.

If you do not have a default e-mail application set up on your computer, you may get a pop-up message asking how you would like to send this email. If you use a Yahoo or Gmail for your e-mail, click Use Webmail, select the appropriate option, enter your e-mail address and click OK.

An e-mail message will appear, and you will have the ability to enter text or include attachments as needed, before sending. If you do not use Microsoft Outlook, Yahoo or Gmail, please send the application as an attached file to DNRUrbanForestryGrants@wi.gov.

Common Questions and Answers

What can grant funds be used for?

Funds can be used to hire a consultant, contractor or seasonal employee to perform project tasks; purchase materials or services; or reimburse your agency for expenses or staff time spent on the project.

What kind of local match is required?

The remaining (unreimbursed) project costs could be costs that were paid out of pocket or donated by a third party. No funds from other state or federal sources may be used to match this grant except that community development block grants may be used to match urban forestry grants only when it can be demonstrated to the Department’s satisfaction that there is a local commitment to and involvement in, the project.

How likely is it that I will get a grant?

This depends on the quality of your proposal and on the number of grant applications received.

We are a small, rural community. How can we compete against large urban communities?

Grants are awarded according to expected outcomes not the size of your community. Be sure to articulate how the expected outcomes relate to this year’s DNR urban forestry priorities.

May we include indirect charges in the project cost estimate?

No. Indirect charges (sometimes known as ‘overhead’) are not eligible project costs.

Are computers and urban forestry software eligible costs for an inventory project?

A portion of equipment cost is eligible. Urban forestry software specific to the project is fully eligible.

I'd like to use volunteer labor. What's the dollar value of volunteers?

Donated labor is \$15 per hour.

Can I claim staff time on this project?

Paid working hours spent on the project by employees of the grant recipient are eligible project costs and as such are reimbursable.

When will I be notified of the status of my application?

The notification timeline is subject to change depending on the number of applications and other factors. Applicants will be notified in November. Successful applicants will be sent a grant agreement in December.

APPENDIX A: WI DNR URBAN FORESTRY (UF) CONTACTS

Southeast

Elton Rogers, UF Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources
1027 W Saint Paul Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53233
Phone: (414) 294-8675
e-mail: elton.rogers@wisconsin.gov

East Central

Olivia Witthun, UF Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources
625 E County Rd. Y, Suite 700
Oshkosh, WI 54901
Phone: (414) 750-8744
e-mail: olivia.witthun@wisconsin.gov

North Central - Vacant

Interim Contact: Patricia Lindquist, UF Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources
2984 Shawano Ave.
Green Bay, WI 54313
Phone: (715)574-1314
e-mail: patricia.lindquist@wisconsin.gov

West

Abby Krause, UF Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources
1300 West Clairemont
Eau Claire, WI 54701
Phone: (608)556-5690
e-mail: abigail.krause@wisconsin.gov

Northeast

Patricia Lindquist, UF Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources
2984 Shawano Ave.
Green Bay, WI 54313
Phone: (715)574-1314
e-mail: patricia.lindquist@wisconsin.gov

South Central

Brian Wahl, UF Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources
3911 Fish Hatchery Road
Fitchburg, WI 53711
Phone: (608) 225-7943
e-mail: brian.wahl@wisconsin.gov

Grant Coordination

Nicolle Spafford, Urban Forestry Grants Specialist
518 West Somo Avenue
Tomahawk, WI 54487
Phone: (715) 896-7099
e-mail: DNRUrbanForestryGrants@wisconsin.gov

Please see the [Urban Forestry website](#) to determine which coordinator is assigned to your county.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Applicant

The Wisconsin town, village, city, county, tribal government or 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that applies for an Urban Forestry Grant.

Applicant Authorized Representative

The position authorized by the applicant(s) to submit a grant application, sign documents and take necessary actions to undertake, direct and complete the approved project. This is also the person to whom DNR will direct grant correspondence. (See also “project manager.”)

Applicant’s Share

The portion of the total project costs not reimbursed by the grant; this will be 50% or more of the total.

Department

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Donated

Labor, services, equipment and/or supplies, given to the grant recipient without charge by a third party. Examples include the hours a landscape architect works creating a planting design for a grant recipient, a service club providing volunteers to do an inventory or a landscaper providing free mulch.

Grant Recipient

The recipient of an Urban Forestry Grant.

Indirect charges or costs

Everyday operating expenses that are not specifically related to the project such as rental of office space, expenses for heat, telephone and computer use. These expenses are not eligible project costs.

Nonprofit

Includes organizations that meet the requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Project Agreement

A contract between the grant recipient and department setting forth the mutual obligations with regard to a portion or all of a specific project.

Project Manager

The person delegated by the applicant to oversee day-to-day implementation of the project.

Project Period

The period of time specified in the project agreement during which all work shall be accomplished; generally, January 1 to December 31 of a given year.

Strategic Urban Forestry Plan

A plan that establishes the long-term goals and objectives of the organization's urban forestry efforts and recommends actions, priorities and timelines for accomplishing them.

Third Party

Not employed by or belonging to the applicant.

Tree Board

A group of citizens—usually volunteers charged by ordinance to develop, administer, advise or set policy for a comprehensive urban forest management program.

Tree City USA

A program sponsored by The National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. The program has four standards 1) a tree board or department; 2) a community tree ordinance; 3) a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita; 4) an Arbor Day observance and proclamation. Some of these standards are broadly interpreted. For specific details contact your urban forestry coordinator.

Urban Forest Management Plan

A plan typically based on the results of a community tree inventory, delineating all aspects of community forestry field operations (planting, maintenance, removal) on a priority basis for a minimum of 5 years and includes estimated annual budgets for these activities.

Urban Forestry

or the purpose of the urban forestry grant program, is considered to be tree management, operations and education within cities, villages and other areas of concentrated development.

APPENDIX C: COST ESTIMATE BUDGET WORKSHEET INSTRUCTIONS

The cost estimate worksheets are used both in application ranking and to determine the grant amount for funded projects. **The cost estimate worksheet should accurately reflect all anticipated project costs.** Over-estimating leads to underspent situations where the ability to use those dollars for urban forestry needs is lost. All project expenditures, activities, products or services should be included. **Overmatching does not make for a better grant proposal.**

Review your responses to all application questions to make sure all project activities and aspects are included on the cost estimate worksheet. Each project activity selected will have a cost estimate worksheet. The “Grant Calculations” sheet will auto-calculate the total project costs, your grant request and required applicant’s share. While the electronic form has some automatic calculations, be sure to double check **all** calculations.

Separately itemize costs **for each activity** included in the project description, (e.g., management plan, inventory, tree planting, etc.). For each activity, group anticipated costs according to the categories shown (e.g., labor, consultant services, equipment, etc.). Include a cost basis as necessary (e.g., supervisor – 28 hours @ \$24 and/or DOT Class #101 @ \$16 x 5 hrs.). Estimated labor costs for the applicant’s employees should estimate **actual** fringe benefits **up to the current DOA rate of 48.58%.**

To determine eligible costs for purchased equipment and supplies or for use of the applicant's or a third party's donated equipment and supplies that are not listed in the "State Highway Maintenance Manual," see Eligible Cost of Equipment and Supplies (Page 20). View the “State Highway Maintenance Manual” for current rates: [Highway Maintenance Manual \(HMM\) 02-25-50 & 02-25-55 Classified Equipment Rates](#)

To determine the value of **third-party labor**, see page 23.

Enter **estimated** project costs in either the Estimated Cost column or the Donation Value column (**round up to the nearest dollar**).

For an example cost estimate worksheet, contact dnrurbanforestrygrants@wisconsin.gov

APPENDIX D: ELIGIBLE COST OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Equipment that is purchased for more than \$5,000 is not an eligible cost and cannot be charged to the project.

To calculate eligible equipment costs, determine the useful life of the item using the table below. If a “partial cost eligible” item will also be used for non-project work during the grant year (e.g., a computer used for everyday program activities), estimate what percent the item will be used for project activities. Then divide the item’s cost by its useful life and multiply by the percent use.

For example: The applicant’s \$1,200 computer will be used approximately 25 percent of the time for project work during the grant year. The computer has a useful life of four years. $(\$1,200) \div (4) \times (.25) = \75 . The eligible pro rata project cost is \$75.

If an item is not listed below, check the “State Highway Maintenance Manual” or contact Urban Forestry Grant Specialist for guidance.

Full Cost Eligible

- cabling and bracing supplies
- climbing gear: ropes, saddles, carabiners, etc.
- computer software
- diagnostic tools and equipment: soil probes, increment borers, etc.
- diameter tape, pH meters, etc.
- educational resources (urban forestry books, videos, etc.)
- hand tools: pruners, loppers, pole saws, etc.
- lightning protection apparatus
- tree injection equipment: chemicals, tubing, t-caps, pumps
- planting supplies: stakes, straps, irrigation bags, mulch
- nursery supplies: grow tubes, irrigation apparatus, fencing
- safety equipment: hard hats, steel-toed boots, chaps, eye protection
- signage and educational markers specific to urban forestry
- sprayers (hand or backpack)

Partial Cost Eligible – Useful Life

- aerial platform (tow-behind), **useful life 12 yrs**
- air spade, **useful life 10 yrs**
- A-V equipment: overhead and slide projector, etc., **useful life 10 yrs**
- brush chipper, **useful life 8 yrs**
- chain saw, **useful life 3 yrs**
- compressor, **useful life 10 yrs**
- computer hardware, including PDAs, digital camera, LCD projector, camcorder, etc., **useful life 4 yrs**
- tiller (walk-behind), **useful life 8 yrs**
- directional borer or tunneling device, **useful life 5 yrs**
- display board, **useful life 5 yrs**
- GPS unit, **useful life 4 yrs**
- hydraulic pruner/pole lopper, **useful life 3 yrs**
- resistograph (decay detection probe), **useful life 4 yrs**
- stump cutter/grinder, **useful life 10 yrs**
- tree spade/planter, **useful life 12 yrs**
- trencher, **useful life 10 yrs**
- water tank, **useful life 12 yrs**

APPENDIX E: DONATIONS

Donations of cash, labor, services, facilities, equipment and supplies to your project are encouraged as a way to be cost effective as well as to build project awareness and support. Third-party donations are not eligible for reimbursement.

Only grant recipient costs of labor, equipment, supplies or cash expenditures are eligible for reimbursement and therefore must at least match the grant award. Third party donations of labor, equipment, services and supplies can make up the remainder of the grant recipient's total project costs. Two examples are provided below.

Example 1: Your total eligible project costs are expected to be \$20,000. You expect to spend \$9,000 on cash expenditures, labor and equipment and expect \$11,000 in donations. You would be awarded \$9,000, not \$10,000, as reimbursement cannot exceed the grant recipient's expenditure.

Example 2: Your total eligible project costs are estimated to be \$80,000. You expect to spend \$50,000 on cash expenditures, labor and equipment, with the remaining \$30,000 in donated labor, services, equipment or supplies. Your grant award would be the maximum of \$25,000, as you expect to **expend** at least that amount.

WHAT IS A DONATION?

For purposes of the Urban Forestry Grant Program, a donation is anything of value provided by a third party to the grant project without charge and without reciprocal benefit.

To be eligible as a project cost, a third-party donation must have value and must directly relate to the project. See below for examples that would not be eligible.

- A product or service that a vendor or contractor provides free of charge to all customers has no value as a project donation. For example, if the local electric company customarily removes trees interfering with its facilities at no cost, the same service provided in conjunction with a grant project is not considered a donation. The service cannot be counted as a project cost.
- Time spent by third parties attending a project-related workshop or listening session is not valuable service or labor and cannot be counted as a donation.
- Indirect costs (also called "overhead") and similar expenses not specifically related to the project cannot be included in the value of donations.
- Proceeds from third-party payments in exchange for project goods or services (e.g., a memorial tree program, sale of project publications, etc.) cannot be counted as a donation. Such fees constitute project revenue, not costs.

WHAT IS DONATED LABOR WORTH?

Labor donated by third parties has fundamental value, regardless of whether the labor could otherwise be billed to the project. For purposes of the Urban Forestry Grant Program, time donated to a project by third parties is valued at **\$15.00 per hour**.

VOLUNTEER LABOR AND SERVICES RESTRICTIONS

- Time spent by Department of Natural Resources employees on an Urban Forestry Grant project is **an ineligible cost**, whether or not the employee is in pay status.
- Unpaid (personal) time spent on an Urban Forestry Grant project by other government employees, including those employed by other state agencies, can be claimed as a donation, provided the grant recipient is not that person's employer.
- Unpaid (personal) time spent by **government employees** on an Urban Forestry Grant project sponsored by their own employer **cannot** be claimed as a donation. For example, if an employee of the grant recipient "volunteers" time to the project on a Saturday, that time is not an eligible project cost. Time spent on the project by an employee of the grant recipient during paid work hours is eligible as a reimbursable expense, not a donation and is valued at the employee's normal pay rate, plus benefits.
- Unpaid (personal) time spent by **employees of a nonprofit organization** on an Urban Forestry Grant project sponsored by their own employer **can** be claimed as a donation, provided that the nature of the volunteer work is **clearly distinguishable** from that when in pay status.
- Persons who donate time to a project **while in pay status** (by a non-government employer) must have written permission from that employer authorizing their work on behalf of the employer. The letter of authorization must include the names of employees authorized to donate time and an estimate of the number of hours each employee will donate to the project. The letter must be submitted with the grant recipient's reimbursement request.
- Labor supplied by public offenders sentenced to community service may be considered as volunteer time if the community justice program provides written documentation that the individual worker chooses whether to fulfill his or her community service commitment on the grant project.
- Public school students' time spent on an Urban Forestry Grant project during the normal school day **cannot** be claimed as a donation.

WHAT IS DONATED EQUIPMENT, FACILITIES AND SUPPLIES WORTH?

- The value of equipment, facilities and supplies donated by third parties is the normal charge for those items or as otherwise appropriate for the area; however, such costs, in some cases, may not be fully chargeable to the project. See the Cost Estimate Worksheet Instructions for determining eligible costs of donated equipment and supplies. Note also: Costs claimed for use of donated equipment may not exceed the rates established annually in the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's "State Highway Maintenance Manual."
- If equipment, supplies or facilities are provided to the grant recipient at reduced cost, the value of the donation is the difference between the cost normally charged for the item and the cost actually charged for project use.
- Supplies donated in used condition must be valued accordingly.
- Equipment and supplies purchased with federal or state funds and donated to the grant project **cannot** be counted as project costs.

CASH DONATIONS AND PRIVATE (NON-GOVERNMENT) GRANTS

Third-party monetary gifts and private grants given specifically for **and spent on** the Urban Forestry Grant project expenses are considered donations, provided a product or service is not contingent on the contribution. If the gift or private grant is contingent on a product or service provided by the grant recipient, the money is considered revenue and is subtracted from the total project cost.

In summary, the 50% grant **reimbursement** can only cover grant recipient costs (out-of-pocket or reimbursable), not donations. The grant recipient cannot be reimbursed for project costs that they did not incur.

APPENDIX F: WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS

The Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Grant Program provides funds for projects that improve a community's ability to manage its trees. Potential grant projects that include urban forestry strategic and management plans, tree inventories or staff training require a certain degree of technical proficiency and a considerable time investment. A community interested in undertaking such a project, but lacking the necessary time and/or expertise, might consider hiring an urban forestry consultant for all or part of the project. Although intended for use with Urban Forestry Grant projects, this guide generally applies to any urban forestry project where consultants are involved.

For grant projects involving consultant services, the following steps are recommended prior to project implementation:

1. identify and flesh out project goals
2. issue request for proposals (RFP) for consulting services
3. select consultant
4. award contract contingent upon receiving the grant
5. apply for Urban Forestry Grant (don't incur any project costs prior to signing grant contract)

Consultants may also be used to write the urban forestry grant application for you, however, since this service will be provided before the grant is awarded, the cost of this service cannot be charged to the grant, should you be awarded one.

The Department of Natural Resources can assist communities in working with urban forestry consultants. DNR urban forestry coordinators can:

- help identify projects and suggest appropriate areas for consultant involvement
- supply a list of available consultants*
- review and comment on a consultant's draft plans, management recommendations, inventory analyses, training outlines, etc.

The [Urban Forestry Consultants Directory](#) is a listing of companies and individuals who have informed the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources that they provide urban forestry consulting services in Wisconsin. This directory is provided for your information and convenience only. The fact that a consultant is or is not listed is not an endorsement nor criticism of that consultant by the Department. Additional consultants who are available in Wisconsin but have not contacted the Department are not listed in the directory.

** The Department of Natural Resources cannot recommend particular consultants, enforce consultant contracts or mediate disputes. Consult your attorney for additional requirements and procedures regarding contractual services.*

APPENDIX G: MINOR VOLUNTEERS (<18YO) – THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Working with minors necessitates careful planning and knowledge of and adherence to legal requirements. Below are a few considerations to successfully integrate minor volunteers into your project while ensuring a safe and rewarding experience for all parties involved. We strongly encourage grantees to work with their legal counsel for assistance in determining applicable laws (e.g., Wis. Adm. Code ch. DWD 270 (and especially s. DWD 270.18), other child labor or volunteer laws) and for assistance addressing insurance and liability issues.

Some Considerations:

- **Task Suitability** - Are the tasks appropriate for minors? Are there any legal prohibitions that apply to the type of work being considered (excavations 4' deep or greater, operation of power-driven saws or shears, etc.)?
- **Risk and Liability** – Are there increased risks when minors are involved? Did you obtain parental or guardian consent? Should liability waivers be signed by both the volunteer and their parent or guardian? Does your organization carry adequate insurance, including liability coverage? Does your organization provide insurance for on-duty injuries that may occur to the volunteer?
- **Management Requirement** – Minors require more supervision than adult volunteers. Does your organization have the resources to provide adequate oversight and maintain appropriate adult-to-minor ratios to ensure a safe and productive environment? Should a parent or guardian be required to accompany each minor during the course of the volunteer work?

Please note that this is not intended to be a comprehensive list of considerations when utilizing minor volunteers on grant projects.

APPENDIX H: SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

An application is **complete** when all applicable information has been provided:

- An Urban Forestry Grants Application **submitted by the Authorized Representative** (all applicants).
- A **signed** resolution (all applicants).
- Constitution, bylaws or articles of incorporation (nonprofits).

Partner Verification form(s), if utilizing partners

2027 APPLICATION FORM

The 2027 Urban Forestry Grant Application, form 8700-298, is a fillable, printable and savable PDF form, with an electronic signature option. The application can be found at: [8700-298](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/urbanforests/grants/regular)

RESOLUTION

A signed resolution must accompany your Urban Forestry Grants Application and be received prior to the application deadline to be considered eligible for ranking.

Resolutions may be mailed or faxed to the address below if not sent in an e-mail. A sample resolution is available as a Microsoft Word document at the following link:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/urbanforests/grants/regular>

WHERE TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

Application & Resolution electronic submittal (PREFERRED)

- Print – review, edit if needed and file
- Type in your name
- Save – file name should represent organization name and UF grant year
- Submit by E-mail (Outlook, Yahoo, Gmail) – you will be given the opportunity to edit the message and provide attachments in an e-mail addressed to:
DNRUrbanForestryGrants@wisconsin.gov
- The **Authorized Representative** must submit or be included in the e-mail submitting the application.

Applications & Resolutions may be mailed to:

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Urban Forestry Grants
518 West Somo Avenue
Tomahawk, WI 54487

If you don't use Microsoft Outlook, Yahoo or Gmail please submit all application materials as an attachment in the e-mail application you normally use to this e-mail address:

DNRUrbanForestryGrants@wisconsin.gov

Electronic submissions must be received by 11:59 p.m., October 1, 2026. Hard copies of resolutions must also be received by this deadline

If application receipt confirmation is not received within 2 business days, contact DNRUrbanForestryGrants@wisconsin.gov