



NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

(2024)



Community Tree Programs: Community Tree Partnerships Grant

SERVICES BETWEEN AUGUST 1, 2024, AND JULY 31, 2025

RELEASE DATE: JUNE 4, 2024



CITY OF BELLINGHAM COMMUNITY TREE PROGRAMS
NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)
COMMUNITY TREE PARTNERSHIPS

RELEASE DATE: JUNE 4, 2024

I. GRANT OPPORTUNITY

This Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) solicits applications for the City of Bellingham's Community Tree Programs: Community Tree Partnerships Grant. The Community Tree Partnership Grants Program aims to increase the number of planted trees on private property within the City of Bellingham. This announcement provides information and instructions for non-profit organizations and other private, non-governmental entities interested in applying for these grant funds.

All grant-funded work shall be completed within a one-year period, commencing August 1, 2024, and ending July 31, 2025. The City may choose to extend the period of performance based on activity schedule needs. If funding and need continue in future years, the City may solicit similar services in future years under a separate solicitation(s).

II. FUNDS AVAILABLE

The source of funding is City funds. The normal range for grant awards in this program is expected to be between \$10,000 and \$45,000 per year, depending on the type of services offered.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Program Goals

This Community Tree Partnerships Grant funding opportunity is limited to those services that meet the City's goal of increasing the number of planted trees on *private property* within the City of Bellingham or related services in pursuit of this goal. The services may include but are not limited to events, community education and materials distribution, collaboration with neighborhood associations, and collaboration with tree service providers. Applicants are encouraged to consider developing projects that will leverage funding available to neighborhood associations through the City's Small and Simple Grant Program in pursuit of the above goal.

Background

Bellingham's urban forest includes all trees within the city boundary, whether located on public or private land. The City manages an expansive urban forest including several thousands of acres of forest and thousands of street trees. Trees and forests are an integral part of Bellingham's identity and culture and provide the local community with a wide variety of benefits. They provide shade, reduce stormwater runoff, provide wildlife habitat, absorb, and store carbon, increase property values, and improve well-being. However, urban forests are

facing increasing challenges due to climate change, urbanization, and declining forest health.

The Urban Forest Plan is designed to achieve a long-term vision for a healthy and resilient urban forest that enhances the quality of life for all residents, supports associated ecological functions, and contributes to community climate mitigation and adaptation needs. This document includes the strategic direction and clear guidance on the implementation of a program to protect, expand, manage, and monitor Bellingham’s urban forest in collaboration with the community over the next 10 years. Additional information and background materials can be found at www.cob.org/ufmp.

The City's Community Tree Programs (www.cob.org/trees) include new and existing programs and resources that will help grow our urban forest and increase tree canopy cover citywide, helping us meet the goals in our Climate Action Plan and upcoming Urban Forest Plan.

The City’s Community Tree Partnerships Grant is a Community Tree Program aimed at increasing the number of planted trees on private property. The Community Tree Partnerships Grant will help reduce the financial, educational, and logistical barriers to tree planting on private land by providing grant funding to non-profits and other private entities who, in turn, will help community members overcome some or all of these barriers.

Eligible Costs

The City will only reimburse for the following costs, provided they are directly related to program delivery:

- Personnel (salary and benefits);
- Consultants, contractors, or subcontractors;
- Program costs (directly associated with authorized activities, such as travel, printing, communications, and supplies);
- Indirect or administrative costs are limited to no more than 10% of direct costs paid by City or an approved indirect cost rate from a cognizant federal agency.

All expenses must be directly related to carrying out the eligible service within the City limits. All funds are distributed on a reimbursement basis. Supporting documentation must be submitted with requests for reimbursement, and all records are subject to field audits to verify expenses.

Ineligible Costs

Funds may not be used for fundraising, political activities, furnishings, or repair and maintenance of facilities.

Funds Must Increase Level of Service

The services funded must be either a new service or a quantifiable increase in the level of service above that which was provided by the applicant in the 12 months prior to August 1, 2024. Projects must demonstrate that the grant funding would not merely replace (supplant) other state or local government funding for an existing service.

This funding is part of a pilot program. Services that were originally funded by the City as a

new or increased level of service may be eligible for continued funding, depending on future funding availability. Activities currently receiving City funding may request increased funding if they: a) demonstrate a quantifiable increase in the level of service; b) demonstrate loss of other funding; or c) demonstrate increased costs for service delivery.

Quarterly and Annual Reports

The City will require quarterly and annual reports which document the type and number of any events (if applicable), number of trees planted/distributed and location of the services.

Project Location

All services funded in this program must be provided/delivered within the City of Bellingham.

Funding Recognition

All projects must acknowledge the City's funding contributions in educational materials, promotional materials, and reports. Materials include both electronic and physical methods of delivery.

Grant Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement with the City as a condition of award.

Indemnification Requirements

Grant recipients must agree to defend the City, hold it harmless, and indemnify it as to all claims, suits, costs, fees and liability arising out of the acts or work of the agency, its employees, subcontractors, or agents pursuant to the funding agreement, where such liability is incurred as a result of the actions or omissions of such parties.

Insurance Requirements

Grant recipients must maintain insurance during the term of the Grant Agreement in the following amounts:

A. Workers Compensation	Statutory Amount
B. Automobile Liability	\$1,000,000
C. Commercial General Liability	\$1,000,000/occurrence
	\$2,000,000 aggregate

The grant recipient's insurance must be primary and noncontributory with any insurance for which the City is named insured and include a waiver of subrogation against the City for losses arising from work performed by the Agency. The City must be named as an additional insured and be provided with a certificate of insurance and endorsements showing such coverage.

Faith-Based Organizations

Organizations that are religious or faith-based are eligible, on the same basis as any other organization, to participate in the program.

However, organizations may not engage in explicitly religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as a part of the programs or services funded by the

City. If the organization conducts such activities, the activities must be offered separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded by the City. Faith-based organizations may use space in their facilities to provide City-funded services without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols.

An organization receiving City funding shall not, in providing the service, discriminate on the basis of religion or religious belief.

A religious organization's exemption from the federal prohibition on employment discrimination on the basis of religion, set forth in section 702(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is not forfeited when the organization receives City funding. Notwithstanding the foregoing, non-discrimination requirements imposed by statute on all City grantees shall apply to religious and faith-based organizations.

Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity

Agencies receiving City funding may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, families with children, and disability in employment or the provision of services.

Compliance with Laws

Recipients must comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, and codes of the local, state, and federal governments, and must submit, within two weeks of the City's request for information, any and all information required to demonstrate compliance. Recipients are required to register their business. Go to <http://bls.dor.wa.gov/>. In addition, the Recipient agrees to adhere to other policies and guidelines established by the City of Bellingham.

Child Safety Policy

Agencies seeking funds for services that benefit or interact with children or youth (age 17 or below) are required to have an adult, youth, and child safety policy in place prior to contract execution that is in compliance with national standards. See <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/developing/>.

IV. COMPETITIVE SELECTION CRITERIA

In addition to the general requirements described above, the City will evaluate proposals using the Evaluation Criteria below, based on responses to the questions within the application.

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Overall Project Approach & Understanding (including timeline and work effort necessary to perform identified work)	30 pts.
Demonstration of Experience & Expertise (in performing work of this size and nature, including support staff and subconsultants)	30 pts.
Estimated Quantity of Trees Planted	10 pts.

Proposed Fees/Costs	30 pts.
Total	100 pts.

A. Overall Project Approach & Understanding

Provide a brief overview of your understanding of the City’s goals for the Community Tree Partnerships Grant Program. Discuss your project approach describing how you would perform the identified work. Include your methodology for performing the work and provide an accompanying timeline with key milestones.

B. Demonstration of Experience & Expertise

Summarize your firm’s qualifications, experience and special expertise in providing the type of services/work product identified in the City’s program goals. Include resumes of key personnel. Describe their experience relative to this type of work along with their primary duties/roles proposed for this project. Identify experience with governmental agencies. Show ability to meet program schedule and stay within budget.

C. Estimated Quantity of Trees Planted

Estimate the number of trees to be planted as a result of your proposal.

D. Proposed Fees/Costs

Include a description of fees or costs associated with the proposed services. An accompanying budget shall provide price estimate including number of billable hours, hourly rate and total cost for services being proposed. Any expenses that are to be included as part of your proposal must be listed as a separate line item (lump sum amount is acceptable) and must include both the total anticipated expenses to be claimed and nature of the expenses (such as: trees, office supplies, lodging, meals, etc.).

V. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

To qualify for consideration, proponents must submit the following as a response to this NOFA.

A. Proposal Preparation

All respondents are requested to review this invitation carefully. Application materials are available at www.cob.org/community-tree-partnerships-grant-application.

B. Proposal Format

Complete application available for download at www.cob.org/community-tree-partnerships-grant-application.

C. Applicant’s Expenses

Applicants are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing a proposal and for subsequent negotiations with the City, if any.

D. Inquiries

All applicants are requested to review this invitation carefully and to submit any questions concerning this NOFA, the City’s requirements, or its evaluation process to Aaron Burkhart at akburkhart@cob.org.

E. Closing Date

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m., Pacific time on July 12, 2024 at:

City of Bellingham
Attn: Aaron Burkhart
2221 Pacific Street
Bellingham, Washington 98229

Office: 360-778-7961

Proposals shall be submitted in hard copy and their envelopes should be clearly marked with the name and address of the Proponent and the Request for Proposal number and name. DO NOT ADDRESS YOUR PROPOSAL TO AN INDIVIDUAL. Proposals must not be sent by facsimile.

F. Evaluation Committee

Applications will be evaluated by a committee formed by the City. The committee will rank applications based upon the evaluation criteria identified in this NOFA. The City’s intent is to award grants to applicants who have high overall rankings, subject to grant funding availability.

G. Proposal Schedule

NOFA released	June 4
Applications due.....	July 12, 5:00 PM
Initial Review and Screening.....	July 15-July 25
Final Selection.....	July 26

Questions

Please contact akburkhart@cob.org with any questions about the application process.

VI. OTHER INFORMATION

City's Rights to Limit Funding

The decision to reserve and allocate funding rests with the Mayor of the City of Bellingham with advice provided by relevant City staff.

Disclosure of Documents

All proposals and related materials become the property of the City upon delivery to the City. State law, RCW Ch. 42.17, provides that public records are subject to public inspection and copying unless specifically exempted. RCW Ch. 42.17 enumerates limited exemptions a public agency's obligation to disclose public records. If the applicant believes that portions of its proposal are exempt from disclosure to third parties, the applicant must clearly label the specific portions sought to be kept confidential and specify the exemption the applicant is relying on. However, acceptance of an application containing such designations by the City is not an agreement that such material is legally confidential, and the City cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed. Marking all or substantially all of an application as confidential may result in the application being rejected.

The applicant recognizes and agrees that the City will not be responsible or liable in any way for any losses that the applicant may suffer from the disclosure of information or materials to third parties, nor for any use of information or materials by third parties. Materials submitted by unsuccessful applicants are subject to disposal unless picked up promptly by the applicant, except that the City will maintain one copy in compliance with public record laws.

Interpreter Services

Interpreter services for the deaf and materials in alternative formats are available upon advance request.

The City of Bellingham does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identify, religion, age, families with children, and disability in employment or the provision of services.