

PROJECT CANOPY INNER CITY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS 2009 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION'S MAINE FOREST SERVICE AND THE
PINE TREE STATE ARBORETUM
USDA FOREST SERVICE – URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY CFDA 10:675



Mandatory Grant Workshops
February 6-13, 2009

Application Deadline
April 10, 2009

Project Canopy
Maine Forest Service
22 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
1-800-367-0223

PROJECT CANOPY

INTRODUCTION:

Project Canopy is seeking proposals from municipal governments, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions that support inner city community forestry projects in Maine municipalities. **The ultimate goal of this grant program is to improve the quality of inner city community forests in Maine's most urbanized communities.** For the purpose of this grant "inner city" refers to the usually older and more densely populated residential sections of urbanized cities in which low income and minority groups predominate.

Project Canopy estimates that approximately **\$15,000** will be available for this grant program. This amount is contingent on federal and state funding levels. Applicants are eligible to request up to **\$15,000** in federal funds under this program. The grant period is from June 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

The Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program is a national initiative designed to strengthen the connections between people and their environment. The USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program was authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (PL95-313) and revised by the 1990 Farm Bill (PL101-624) to promote natural resource management in populated areas and improve quality of life. Urban and Community Forestry Program goals of awareness, outreach and environmental equity, partnerships, and comprehensive natural resource management focus on achieving healthy sustainable forests, sustainable economic development, and information management.

Inner city communities are often in need of improved tree cover, tree maintenance, and urban forestry education. Through these inner city improvement grants, Project Canopy and the USFS will support projects that improve the quality of urban forests in Maine's inner cities. Improving the quality of forests in inner city areas can help retain and attract new residents, combat suburban sprawl, and have a significant impact on metropolitan air and water resources.

Project Canopy has a vision that *every community will actively and wisely manage its community forestry resources in a sustainable manner, and that all Maine citizens become well informed as to the proper management of these resources and the benefits derived from them.* Project Canopy has identified four goals to support this vision. Projects proposed under this grant program must effectively contribute toward the following Project Canopy goals and USDA Forest Service national goals:

Project Canopy Goals:

1. Increase the number of managing community forestry programs.
2. Stimulate and heighten public awareness of what the community forest is, its role and benefits.
3. Create and maintain partnerships.
4. Promote comprehensive resource management of community forests and related natural resources.

USFS National Goals:

1. Restore, sustain, and enhance the Nation's Forests and grasslands.
2. Provide and sustain benefits to the American people.
3. Conserve open space.
4. Sustain and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.

5. Maintain basic management capabilities of the Forest Service.
6. Engage urban America with Forest Service programs.
7. Provide science-based applications and tools for sustainable natural resource management.

ELIGIBLE GRANTEES:

Local municipal units of government with a population greater than 9,500, and educational institutions and non-profit entities operating in these communities, are eligible to receive funds under this program. Preference will be given to applicants that have not recently received funding through this program. Based on 2000 census data, the following municipalities are eligible to receive funds under this program:

Auburn	Gorham	Saco	Windham
Augusta	Kennebunk	Sanford	York
Bangor	Kittery	Scarborough	
Biddeford	Lewiston	South Portland	
Brunswick	Portland	Waterville	
Falmouth	Presque Isle	Westbrook	

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

Eligible applicants may submit proposals for developing and implementing inner city community forestry programs or projects. Applicants are encouraged to contact Project Canopy staff to discuss project ideas. Examples of eligible projects include:

- ◆ **Tree planting and public safety.** Older inner city communities often have an aging stock of trees desperately in need of attention. Planting new trees and removing dangerous trees signals a rebirth and revitalization that can spark renewed investment by local government, small business, and the banking community.
- ◆ **Vacant land enhancement.** Inner city neighborhoods that have experienced years of declining investment and population loss have a legacy of abandoned houses, empty storefronts, and weed-choked lots. These vacant lots and “brownfields” offer tremendous opportunities to create viable open spaces in the public realm, enhance water infiltration and tree cover for storm water control, while uniting residents around positive community improvements.
- ◆ **Access to greenways and riverways.** Older industrial cities have inner city neighborhoods adjacent to historic riverways and trails, but without public access opportunities. Many older warehouses have their backs to woodland and water, or have fenced-out adjacent residents for safety purposes. Access to these resources can be opened through public dialogue.
- ◆ **Long Term Planning** – encourage long-term community forest management through community forestry assessment, tree inventory, and strategic planning.
- ◆ **Increase Community Awareness and Involvement**– Work with community leaders, non-profit organizations, local businesses, and volunteers to support community forestry awareness through community tree planting and educational projects.

COST-SHARING REQUIREMENT:

This is a 50/50 (Project Canopy/local) match program based on reimbursable costs. The maximum amount of federal funds awarded may not exceed 50% of the project cost and shall be no more than **\$15,000** per community application. Applicants must match federal funds, dollar for dollar, in the form of cash, services or in-kind contributions that meet program

standards and guidelines. Applicants must match federal cost-share funds with nonfederal funds and/or contributions. The applicant may use current reasonable rates, i.e. the value of a professional consultant's time based upon his/her standard hourly rate of pay, when estimating the value of non-cash donations and in-kind services, e.g. volunteer time.

ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS:

Eligible Reimbursable Costs:

The only costs eligible for reimbursement are those associated with one or more of the following:

- Fees charged by private contractors and/or consultants
- Purchase of essential supplies and materials
- Purchase and planting of trees and shrubs, along with maintenance during the grant period. Three-year maintenance with a 90% survival rate is expected on all plantings, however, maintenance costs outside of the grant period are ineligible
- Costs associated with site preparation and soil amendments

Eligible Non-reimbursable Costs (Applicant's Share or Match):

The following costs are not reimbursable, **BUT** are allowed to meet the community's **minimum cost-sharing requirements of 50%** of the total project cost.

- Cash or in-kind donations and services
- Salaries, fringe, and overhead costs
- Volunteer labor, machinery and equipment

Ineligible Costs (And NOT allowed as part of the community's cost-share):

This cost-share program is for projects and/or activities not currently funded. It is not intended to be a substitute for existing funding levels. The focus of the program is to support new initiatives that would not otherwise occur during the funding cycle.

- Purchase of machinery or equipment.
- Construction of any kind, e.g. sidewalks or roads.
- Purchase of land or land charges.
- Purchase of plant material classified as invasive species by the Maine Department of Conservation
- Purchase and planting of Norway maples, including cultivars.
- Normal, community wide periodic maintenance of utility (telephone, electric, and cable) lines unless it is site specific and necessary to the project.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

To be considered for funding, applicants must meet the following requirements:

Training:

Attend one of the grant information workshops held throughout the state (listed below).

Attendance is required. Grant workshops will cover topics including grant writing, project development, sustainable community forestry management, and grant administration. Please register with Jan Ames Santerre (207-287-4987) to let us know which workshop you will be attending. All grant workshops are conditional on registration.

* Please note: The February 6 workshop is a distance learning workshop held in 4 locations simultaneously.

Date	City	Location	Time
February 6	Augusta, Orono, Presque Isle and Machias	Maine State Library, University of Maine, Presque Isle High School and Machias High School	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
February 11	South Paris	Oxford Hills Comprehensive High School	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
February 12	Saco	Saco Community Center	10:00 a.m. - Noon

Application Form:

- Complete the application form
- The application form must be signed by designated and official representatives

Narrative: (3 page maximum)

Applicants are required to submit a narrative with their application containing the following information:

- A brief history of your community program, school or nonprofit organization, including mission and goals for the next several years.
- A description of the project, including what you expect to be developed, produced, performed and/or implemented; a clear and measurable work plan for the project; and a timeline for completion of the process.
- A description of how your project will effectively contribute to Project Canopy and USDA Forest Service goals.
- A description of how this project will enhance your community’s capacity for long-term and sustainable urban and community forestry management.

Detailed Budget:

Use the budget form to provide a detailed estimate of costs and applicant’s match. The following should be addressed in detail:

- Costs eligible for reimbursement
- Applicant’s share match. Indicate the source of matching funds and whether they are in-hand or pending.

Three-Year Maintenance Plan:

If tree planting is part of your proposal, a three-year maintenance plan must be included in your application. The plan should identify individuals and resources responsible for tree maintenance over a three-year period. Only tree maintenance costs during the grant period are eligible for reimbursement or may be used as match.

Letters of Support:

Applications that include a broad range of participants will be favored. Applicants are required to include letters of support from partners that include specific commitments and contributions to the project, e.g. amount of volunteer labor committed, estimated services provided, donated equipment or labor, and not just a general statement of support. **For applicants that are not a municipality, a letter of support from a sponsoring municipality is required.**

Community Capacity Checklist:

Please complete the community capacity checklist and submit it with your application.

FUNDING REVIEW AND CRITERIA:

Proposals will be evaluated on a competitive basis. An evaluation team made up of individuals from the Department of Conservation's Maine Forest Service, Pine Tree State Arboretum, and Project Canopy partners will review project proposals. The evaluation team will make recommendations on applications to the State Forester, who will make final determinations. The grant review criteria are:

Project contributes to the goals of Project Canopy and the USFS	10 Points
Project supports sustainable inner city community forestry management	10 Points
Community partnerships are evident and described in letters of support	10 Points
Applicant municipality has a street tree inventory, community forestry management plan, tree care ordinance, and a tree advocacy organization.	10 points
Project has a realistic budget and timeline	5 Points
Project need and value to the community are evident	5 Points
Community has a comprehensive plan that includes forestry	5 Points
Application is complete, legible, and clearly presented	5 Points

IF AWARDED A GRANT:

Each grantee is required to sign an agreement for performance containing the required Federal General Assurances. The grant period is from June 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010.

Successful applicants cannot commence work or incur any expenses against the grant until an agreement between Project Canopy and the authorized agency/organization has been signed. Expenses incurred outside the agreement period shall be deemed ineligible for reimbursement.

TIME TABLE:

- 1/12/2009:** Grant announcement
- 2/6/2009:** Grant workshops - statewide
- 4/10/2009:** Applications are due to MFS no later than 5 p.m.
- 5/31/2009:** Successful applicants will be notified by the MFS of conditional project approval

Successful applicants must spend allocated federal funds between **June 1, 2009 and November 30, 2010**. Applicants must complete final project reporting procedures, furnish documentation of project completion, and submit expenses to the MFS within 30 days following completion. Unless prior approval has been granted, grantees will be ineligible for reimbursement if completed grant documentation is not furnished to MFS by **December 30, 2010**.

PAYMENT PROCESS:

Funds will be awarded on a reimbursement basis only. This means that all expenses have been paid in full and the project is complete before filing for grant payment. Funds awarded under the grant are available once satisfactory work has been completed within the contract period, as described in the original scope of work, and after verification of expenditures and match. Grantees must file a request for reimbursement, and send records of expenditures and match to the MFS, within 30 days following completion of the project, but in no case later than **December 30, 2010**. Payment shall be made to the authorized government unit, educational institution, or non-profit organization. Grantees can normally expect payment within 60 days of receipt of expenditure documentation.

All records and receipts associated with the project must be maintained and available for inspection by the Maine Forest Service and State and Federal auditors for three (3) years after the grant period.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Technical assistance is available to all grant applicants from the Maine Forest Service, and the Pine Tree State Arboretum. Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from MFS personnel. Questions concerning the application process and/or project development should be directed to Jan Ames Santerre, Project Canopy Coordinator at (207) 287-4987; Loretta Huttman, Community Outreach Director at (207) 623-2371; or your local District Forester (listed below).

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION MAINE FOREST SERVICE DISTRICT FORESTERS

Dennis Brennan, MFS, 2281 Alfred Road, Lyman, Maine 04002	(207) 324-7000
Morten Moesswilde, MFS, 536 Waldoboro Road, Jefferson, Maine 04348	(207) 549-9003
Jim Ecker, MFS, P.O. Box 415, Old Town, ME, 04468	(207) 827-1811
Dan Jacobs, MFS, 2 Forestry Road, Island Falls, ME, 04747	(207) 463-3653
Steve MacDonald, MFS, P.O. Box 130, Jonesboro, Maine 04648	(207) 434-2622
Ken Canfield, MFS, 356 Shaker Rd., Gray, ME, 04039	(207) 657-3535
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