

Urban & Community Forestry: “Leafling Out” Grant Program

A program to initiate or advance early stage urban forestry programs or projects.

2012/2013

Request for Proposals



**State of California
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
(CAL FIRE)
Urban & Community Forestry Program**



Grant programs made Pursuant to the California Urban Forestry Act of 1978 (Public Resources Code 4799.06 – 4799.12), a copy of which can be found at: http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

Grant Funds made available from:

Proposition 84, *Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006*

Concept Proposals Due: September 19, 2012

Urban Forestry and Urban Greening: “Leafing Out” Grant Program 2012-2013

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Please also see and refer to the Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide for 2012/2013. This document is available at <http://www.ufe.org/grantinfo.lasso> or http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php. Grant applicants are responsible to meet the requirements of both documents. This RFP document takes precedence in the case of a conflict between the two documents.

Introduction:

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (*CAL FIRE*) will set aside funds to provide grants to applicants that currently do not have an Urban or Community Forestry Program or have an early developmental stage program or project. Such applicants must show a strong desire to create, implement, or advance an Urban or Community Forestry project or program. The funding level of each *CAL FIRE* Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) grant program may be adjusted based on the applications received.

The *CAL FIRE* Urban & Community Forestry Program works to optimize the benefits of trees and related vegetation through multiple-objective projects that provide environmental services and cost-effective solutions to the needs of urban communities and local agencies, including, but not limited to, increased water supply, clean air and water, reduced energy use, flood and storm water management, recreation, urban revitalization, improved public health, and producing useful products such as biofuel, clean energy, and high quality wood. Such efforts play a significant role in meeting the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. We encourage citizen participation in the development and implementation of state and local agency and non-profit organization urban forestry programs and projects.

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, qualifying districts, or nonprofit organizations qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (PRC 5096.605). Districts include, but are not limited to, school, park, recreation, water, and local taxing districts.

Purpose:

The purpose of this grant program is to fund the creation and implementation of early stage urban forestry projects or programs. Early stage projects and programs are characterized by historical absence of an Urban Forestry, Community Forestry, or Urban Greening Program, lack of qualified personnel, non-existent or very low budgetary resources for qualifying activities, lack of programmatic structure, and other characteristics as determined by *CAL FIRE* Urban & Community Forestry Staff.

Practices that can be funded (including but not limited to):

- Tree planting (subject to same criteria as a *Green Trees For The Golden State Grant* from the *CAL FIRE U&CF Program*).
- Tree inventories (subject to same criteria as an *Inventory Grant* from the *CAL FIRE U&CF Program*).
- Tree policy and/or ordinance development.
- Education, training, or outreach activities (subject to same criteria as an *Education Grant* from the *CAL FIRE U&CF Program*).
- Any other activity under the California Urban Forestry Act of 1978 that meets the intent of this grant program as expressed in this RFP document.

Conditions:

All of the following conditions must be met for a proposed “Leafing Out” project to be eligible for a grant:

- Grant requests must be for the creation and development of an Urban Forestry, Community Forestry, or Urban Greening project or program that showcases the benefits of sustainable urban forests.
- Amount requested must be between \$2,500 and \$30,000. For projects over \$30,000, please see *CAL FIRE*’s other U&CF grant programs.
- A project must be located in, or immediately adjacent to, an “urban area” or “urban cluster” as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. (<http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/2010urbanruralclass.html>)
- The project has a commitment for active participation from one or more of the following: local residents, local business, local nonprofit group or local government.
- The applicant has complied (and will comply) in all respects with all applicable local and county ordinances, and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- The applicant demonstrates a strong commitment to development and continuing support, both in policy and financially, of the program being developed.
- Applicants must agree that they will not apply for other *CAL FIRE U&CF Grant Programs* in the same fiscal years as applying for or carrying out a “Leafing Out” Grant. This grant program is meant as an alternative to competing with applicants that have well established Urban Forestry, Community Forestry, or Urban Greening projects or programs.
- Applicants agree that if the project or program to be developed would otherwise fit into one of the other *CAL FIRE U&CF Grant Programs*, then the requirements of that grant program will apply with the exception of the cost share requirement which will remain as described below for this grant program.

Cost share:

These grants are to share the cost of eligible urban forestry projects. The proportion of the project's cost funded by *CAL FIRE* Urban & Community Forestry shall not be greater than **75% of total project cost**. Matching contributions (**25% of total project cost**) required as a condition of grants made pursuant to this section may be made in the form of material, services, or equipment, as well as funds from any non-state source. For example:

Total Project = \$40,000.00
Cal Fire Maximum = \$30,000.00
Minimum match required = \$10,000.00

Important Note: *Disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities as defined in the Urban Forestry Act are eligible to have increased cost share of up to 90% of project costs with a 10% matching contribution in the form of material, services, equipment, or funds from any non-state source. Such communities must be able to prove they meet this criteria. Please see Procedural Guide for further details.*

Ineligible costs:

This grant cannot finance any undertaking or complete any practice designed to supplant rather than supplement existing local agency activities. Such ineligible practices shall consist of any request that *CAL FIRE* furnish grants to take the place of a regular or ongoing fiscal commitment to a program or project by a local government. Any practices that are required as mitigation of any kind may not be financed by this grant program.

This grant program may not finance any project or program that would otherwise be eligible for other *CAL FIRE* U&CF Grant Programs.

Application:

The first step is to complete a Concept Proposal Application. If your Concept Proposal Application is selected, you will be asked to complete a Full Proposal. The Concept Proposal Application can be found at:

<http://www.ufei.org/grantinfo.lasso> or
http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

Concept proposals must be submitted electronically in the provided format by September 19, 2012. Email or electronic submissions other than in the provided format will not be accepted unless alternative arrangements are made with Urban & Community Forestry Program staff ahead of the deadline. Do not send unsolicited materials. Doing so will result in rejection of the application. In the case of technical difficulties or an inability to utilize the online format, please contact your *CAL FIRE* Regional Urban Forester for authorization to use

(see Procedural Guide APPENDIX E).

Using the submit button at the end of the form field will submit the concept application electronically. Before clicking to submit your concept application, please print a copy for your records and go to the file menu in your current version of Adobe Acrobat Reader (<http://get.adobe.com/reader/>) and select the “save a copy” option. This will allow applicants to retain a copy of the application for their records.

Information required on concept application shall include:

Complete the online application and follow the format, directions about size limitations etc. Failure to fully complete the form will result in rejection of the application.

The project description should include a description of the project, the number and job nature of the people involved in the project and the source of funds, materials, equipment or services to be provided by the applicant. Also include (if applicable) the number of trees to be planted within the project or other measurable outcome. Provide your proposed budget following the format provided in the concept proposal form.

Desirable Concept Proposal Attributes

- The project provides urban forest resources to areas where such resources are absent, or replenishes such resources where they are badly depleted
- The project uses trees or other vegetation to reduce consumption of finite energy resources, reduce urban heat island effects, or to produce energy and other products from urban forests.
- The project uses trees or other vegetation to help reduce air pollution or improve air quality.
- The project is located in an area with an unemployment rate in the relevant census tract that exceeds the average unemployment rate for urban areas in California and provides jobs for currently unemployed persons. Documentation will be required for full proposal if successful in the concept proposal process.
- The project has an educational component and develops public awareness of the need for expanding and managing urban forest resources.
- The project will plant trees in an area that will have high public health related benefits.
- The project has strong public support and involvement.
- The project will lead to a long term increase in urban forestry activity in the project area.
- The project will be in one of the following:
 - *Disadvantaged community*: means a community with a median household income less than 80% of the statewide average.
 - *Severely disadvantaged community*: means a community with a median household income less than 60% of the statewide average.

Project Rating Criteria:

Projects in this grant program will be rated referencing the same criteria as in the most applicable criteria form *CAL FIRE*'s other U&CF Grant Programs. Additionally, any conditions, attributes, or requirements of this RFP may be utilized for rating purposes.

1. **Best Management Practices**

- Project maximizes the multiple benefits of urban forestry.
- Project follows urban forestry best management practices.
- Project is consistent with local ordinances, policies, and management plans.
- Project has potential to advance urban forestry efforts in the project area for the long term.
- Project follows all guidelines of most closely related *CAL FIRE* grant program.
- Project assists applicant in taking their "next step" in urban forestry efforts.
- Project adequately plans for the future of the urban forest and urban forestry program in the project area.
- Project has broad public support in the project area.

2. **Program Priorities (Must meet one or more)**

- Interagency Cooperation and Integration (partnerships)
- Maximizes public participation/involvement.
- Project is proposed in a Severely Disadvantaged or Disadvantaged Community as defined in the Urban Forestry Act (PRC 4799.09).
- Project is ready to move forward immediately.
- Applying organization has adequate capacity to carry out the project.
- Application quality (thoroughness, clarity, focus, accuracy).

Note: In addition to the above criteria, application completeness, degree of community need, project value and project reflection of Urban Forestry Act goals and values will be evaluated.

Project Timeline:

Projects Completed By March 30, 2015

Projects Closed – June 1, 2015
No Reimbursement Possible After this date

Note: Please see the Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide for reporting requirements for this grant program.

What happens after submitting an application?

(Please also see APPENDIX F of the *Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide for 2012/2013* for a CAL FIRE Urban Forestry Program Grant Process Flow Chart).

Application Review and Filing.

Upon receipt of an application for an urban forestry project grant, CAL FIRE U&CF staff or a designee of the CAL FIRE U&CF Program Manager shall review it for conformance with the California Urban Forestry Act of 1978 (Public Resource Code 4799.06 to 4799.12), The California Code of Regulations (Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 9.7), this RFP document, and *The Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide*. Such review may include an inspection of the project area, if applicable.

If the application is found incomplete in a material way or the proposed project is not eligible for a grant, the applicant will be informed that the proposed project is ineligible. Only when an application is complete and the project is deemed eligible for a grant, will CAL FIRE U&CF staff file the application.

Notification of Application Status.

CAL FIRE U&CF staff shall notify each applicant whose application has been filed and reviewed of the status of its application within ten working days of the completion of review.

(1) For those applications that have ranked high enough in the initial review, CAL FIRE shall notify the applicant and invite them to submit a full Proposal for a grant for the project. The applicant may then either withdraw their application or complete the negotiations and execute a grant agreement. When the grant agreement is executed, the Director of CAL FIRE will make the grant funds available to the recipient in the manner and at the times specified in the agreement. **DO NOT BEGIN WORK ON A PROJECT PRIOR TO RECEIVING A FULLY EXECUTED GRANT AGREEMENT.** Doing so may result in the project being ineligible for reimbursement.

(2) For those applications that are eligible but for which there are no existing funds due to ranking, CAL FIRE, shall notify the applicant that they will be invited to submit a full Proposal if funds become available during the fiscal year. If no funds become available during the fiscal year, CAL FIRE shall notify the applicant of this and shall encourage him/her to apply for funds during the next period in which CAL FIRE requests proposals for urban forestry projects.

Administration: To receive a grant, successful applicants must enter into a grant agreement with CAL FIRE. Grant recipients must agree to complete their project and allow for periodic inspections. In return, CAL FIRE agrees to share the cost of the project.

Technical Assistance: For technical assistance in preparing the concept proposal, the applicant should contact the *CAL FIRE* Regional Urban Forester located in the area nearest to the proposed project (see Procedural Guide APPENDIX E):

Request for Record Review.

Within ten days of the receipt of notice that the application has been denied the applicant may request that the Director of *CAL FIRE* personally reconsider the decision of rejection. The request shall identify the applicant and the proposed project, and shall briefly state the applicant's reasons for requesting reconsideration. The Director shall consider the application and all of the correspondence from interested parties in reviewing the decision.

Final Decision by the Director.

If the Director finds that the decision to reject the application conforms to these guidelines and the Act, the Director shall uphold the decision. If the Director finds that the decision to reject the application does not conform to these guidelines or the Act, the Director may approve the application.

FEDERAL AFFILIATION

This program is made possible through a cooperative relationship with the USDA Forest Service.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

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