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Affordable Housing Alert

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\$1B in grants available for green space development

By Nicholas P. Tsimortos

The Biden-Harris administration announced funding to expand access to trees and green spaces in disadvantaged urban communities.



What's the Impact?

- / The funding will support projects designed to improve public health, increase access to nature, and deliver economic and ecological benefits to cities, towns, and tribal communities across the country.
- / The application period is open now and closes June 1.
- / Eligibility varies based on entity and project types.

The Biden administration announced the availability of \$1 billion in grants to increase equitable access to trees and green spaces in urban and community forests. The funding is part of the administration's efforts at improving community and urban forest resilience to climate change, pests, and storm events through best management and maintenance practices. This level of investment will enable the Forest Service to support projects to improve public health, increase access to nature, and deliver real economic and ecological benefits to cities, towns, and tribal communities across the country.

Who can apply?

- / State and local government entities
- / Federally Recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations/villages, and Tribal Organizations
- / Nonprofit organizations
- / Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- / Community Based Organizations

Lands owned or administered by the federal government are not eligible for this funding opportunity except for lands held in trust for Native American Tribes and individuals.

Eligible uses of funding

Examples of eligible activities include projects that:

- / Encourage long-term urban forest planning, assessment, and management
- / Advance the use of tree and forest inventories, monitoring, and assessment tools in priority areas, including monitoring and measurement of extreme heat
- / Improve preparation for severe storms and the recovery of damaged or deteriorated landscapes to more healthy and resilient conditions
- / Protect, enhance, and increase access to watersheds in urban and developing areas with a focus on conserving and managing forest patches and green stormwater infrastructure

Examples of project activities that are NOT eligible for funding include:

- / Construction and capital improvements
- / Land acquisition (conservation easement and fee simple) projects
- / Cost-share, reimbursement, and other types of payment provided directly to private landowners

However, funding may be used to perform work on private lands; for example, an eligible entity could pay for trees to be planted on private lands with permission of the landowner.

Grant funding specifics

Along with the open grant funding opportunity, the USDA Forest Service is providing up to \$250 million to states and territories to further local efforts to support urban communities through equitable access to trees and the benefits they provide. The funding for state and territory forestry agencies will be administered as subgrants to reach disadvantaged communities, as determined by the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#).¹

¹ See the detailed breakdown of [funding awards by state and territory](#).

Learn more

The Forest Service is holding a series of webinars to assist potential applicants in applying for grant funding. These webinars will be advertised and posted on [the Forest Service website](#). The final funding amount will depend on the total funding requested from proposals and their potential impact on disadvantaged communities. **The open application period extends from April 12, 2023, to June 1, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. EDT.**

To learn how to apply for federal Urban and Community Forestry grants, visit the [Forest Service website](#), or www.grants.gov using the opportunity number USDA-FS-2023-UCF-IRA-01. And for data regarding funding to states and territories, visit the [state allocations webpage](#).

For more information on the content of this alert, please contact your Nixon Peabody attorney or:

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