



Urban Forest Initiative Pilot Grant Program

Purpose

To build a robust urban tree canopy, providing a healthier, cleaner, more economically vibrant community for all.

Background

This grant program by the Downtown Denver Partnership (Partnership) Downtown Denver Business Improvement District (BID), and City and County of Denver (City), with funding support from private donors has the goal of building a robust tree canopy downtown. Grants of up to \$18,000 per tree planting area are available to property owners in Downtown Denver to be used for expanding tree planting areas and/or installing new tree planting spaces including costs for concrete work, soil remediation, suspended pavement systems, tree planting and installation, and other tree related work.

The benefits of a healthy urban forest are endless, from our health and wellbeing to the vibrancy of our downtown. Trees are not only beautiful but also are essential to the livelihood of Denverites. Trees filter pollutants from the air, cool our neighborhoods, help to reduce energy consumption, reduce stress, lead to higher spending by consumers and higher income streams for businesses, and build a strong sense of community. Downtown Denver's microclimate, heat island effect, and infrastructure present challenges to maintaining a healthy tree ecosystem. That's why the Partnership, the BID, and the City have collaborated to launch the Urban Forest Initiative with the goal of growing Denver's urban forest through education, built infrastructure, and improved maintenance. A downtown tree in a typical constricted 5'x5' planting area only lives, on average, 7 to 12 years and never reaches full maturity. However, through new research and technology, we now know how to build an environment that allows trees to thrive and provide many decades of benefits. From planting area size to irrigation systems, we are upgrading our infrastructure to build a robust and thriving urban forest.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be a property owner, or legal representative of the property owner, within the Downtown Denver BID or a property that is enrolled in the [BID Tree Health Program](#).
- Applicants must have a vested and demonstrated interest in the success of the project and a local connection to the community.



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Project Requirements

Applicants are suggested to request the following amount per tree planting area location. Funding for each tree planting area is dependent upon the future size of the tree planting area:

- 75 sq. feet – 50% of costs or up to \$4,000
- 167 sq. feet – 65% of costs or up to \$9,000
- 250 sq. feet – 75% of costs or up to \$11,000
- 333 sq. feet* – 85% of costs or up to \$18,000

*Tree planting areas that utilize suspended pavement systems qualify for this tier.

For example, if your project consists of installing two (2) new tree planting areas each with a surface area of 250 sq. feet, you may ask for up to \$22,000. Trees that share soil volume through connected tree pits are funded for all the soil that they have access to. For example, a 250 sq. ft tree pit with two (2) trees in it is eligible for up to 75% of the cost.

- Project must be installed in the public right-of-way or must have permanent public accessibility.
- Project must expand at least one (1) existing tree planting area to a surface area of 75 sq. feet or greater per tree or install at least one (1) tree planting area with a surface area of 75 sq. feet or greater per tree.
 - Minimum three (3) ft. depth of the planting area is required.
- Funds from the grant may only be used towards tree-related work such as concrete work, soil remediation, installation of an irrigation system, suspended pavement systems, technical assistance, and tree planting and installation. Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to installation of benches, decorative stone work, annual and perennial plantings, shrubs, and other non-tree related work, as determined through review.
- Project must commit to publicizing the Urban Forest Initiative and its supporting contributors through signage placed at the project site.
- Project must include a three-year tree maintenance plan. The plan must include a functional existing or proposed irrigation system that will deliver moisture to encourage maximum root growth within the planting area. If an irrigation system is not viable, the project must indicate a commitment to tree watering either by enrollment in the BID Tree Health Program or through another tree care entity.
- If funded, applicants will be required to submit a detailed site plan of existing and proposed conditions.

Timeline

All applications for the 2019 fiscal year are due on September 15, 2019. Applicants will be informed about funding decisions by October 15, 2019. Projects must be completed by July 1, 2020.

Construction work may occur year-round; however, trees may only be planted between April 1st and June 15th and September 15th to November 15th.

Subsequent application deadlines will be announced after initial round.



Submittal Requirements

- Application (including project narrative and maintenance plan)
- Budget
- Site aerial photos with project area defined

Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed by the Partnership's Urban Forest Initiative Taskforce (Committee). Applications will be reviewed for completeness and adherence to grant requirements.

Special consideration will be given to:

- Properties in the BID between California Street and Grant Street, W. Colfax Avenue and 20th Street.
- Projects that create a high visual impact through completion of an entire block, near other installation projects, or partnerships among neighboring properties.
- Demonstrated commitment to incorporate job training, at-risk assistance programs and eco-friendly practices in the execution of the project.
- Projects that support a higher number of installed or expanded tree planting spaces.
- Projects that propose a higher soil volume than the standard minimum.
- Projects that include structural soil cells, paver grates, or other techniques that increase soil volume beyond the standard minimum and limit potential infrastructure damage or soil compaction.
- Projects located on blocks with zero or low-density plantings.
- Projects that practice water conservation by installing automatic drip irrigation, or upgrade current irrigation system with rain/soil moisture sensor shut offs.
- Projects that propose the installation of drought tolerant annuals, perennials, and shrubs.

Application

For questions or assistance on the application, please reach out to Amanda Miller, amiller@downtowndenver.com.

Assistance on design and application is available to qualifying properties upon request. Please submit the application and associated submittal documents electronically at: <http://bit.ly/UFIGrantApplication>

Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions are applicable to all grantees of the Urban Forest Initiative Pilot Grant. By accepting funding from this grant, you agree to these Terms and Conditions. This grant is a pilot and an evolving process and these terms and conditions, or any part of them, may be modified, revised, or terminated without notice, at the discretion of the Partnership.

Project must be in executed in accordance with all City and County of Denver rules and regulations.

Trees planted must meet the City and County of Denver Office of the City Forester spacing, species, and planting requirements. The Committee reserves the right to



select and/or substitute the species to be planted at the project site.

All proposed ROW trees shall be a minimum of 3" caliper, have a proper central leader, and a form conducive to the urban environment. If the proposed tree is less than 3" caliper, it must be approved by the Committee. Trees are subjected to inspection by the Committee and/or Office of the City Forester prior to planting. Any tree in unhealthy or unsightly condition, and/or does not have a proper central leader, in the opinion of the Committee and/or Office of the City Forester, shall be substituted.

All tree work, including but not limited to the installation of new trees, excavation, and work in the critical root zone of existing trees shall not be performed unless a Certified Arborist is present and authorized by the Office of the City Forester.

Any tree planted that is dead, in unhealthy or unsightly condition, and/or has lost its natural shape due to dead branches, excessive pruning, inadequate or improper maintenance, or other causes including vandalism, prior to final acceptance, in the opinion of the Committee and/or Office of the City Forester, shall be replaced. Once approved and funds given, planting areas shall be maintained as approved, including the approved street tree(s).

Watering must take place throughout the life of the tree, in accordance with Denver Water's Tree Care Guide (see resources below). Watering remains the responsibility of the property owner but may be contracted to the BID or another tree care entity.

For commercial properties, the BID will provide integrated pest management, fertilization, organic soil enhancements, and pruning on a five-year cycle over the course of the tree's expected life span or for as long as the Tree Health Program continues.

The Partnership reserves the right to inspect the health of any tree planted through this grant program and will inform the Office of the City Forester of any code violations.

The Partnership reserves the right to provide tree care services, at the expense of the property owner, if it is deemed that the property owner is not watering or providing proper care for the trees planted through this grant program.

At the completion of the project, a punch list inspection will be performed by a representative of the Committee and/or the Office of the City Forester for quality control. Punch list items will include, but are not limited to, correct species, planting height, tree structure, location within the planting area, and PW construction approval.

Trees will be inspected for successful establishment once annually at minimum by the Committee and/or the Office of City Forester for a period of no less than 2 years. This inspection will include, but is not limited to, planting depth, root establishment, trunk damage, proper structure, percent live canopy to nearest 10%, shoot tip extension, surface treatment kept 4-6" away from trunk. If a tree(s) is(are) deemed unsuccessful, the Committee and Office of City Forester will discuss remediation or replacement options with the property owner.

All applications are subjected to available funding.

The Partnership, the BID, and/or the City shall not be liable for any special or consequential damages that may result from activities involved in the construction of projects funded through this grant.



In the event of termination for any reason set forth above, The Partnership reserves the right to revoke funding from any applicant who is found in violation of any of these terms and conditions.

Resources

[Urban Forest Initiative Webpage](#)

[Denver Forestry Resources](#)

[Denver Forestry Approved Street Tree List](#)

[Denver Public Works Rules and Regulations](#)

[Denver Water Tree Watering Guide](#)

[Arbor Day Foundation](#)

[Green Blue Urban Soil Cells](#)

[Deep Root Soil Cells](#)

[Citygreen Soil Cells](#)

[Permeable Grout](#)

[Drought Tolerant Plants](#)

[ISA Certified Arborists](#)