



DELAWARE FOREST SERVICE URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM



INFLATION REDUCTION ACT (IRA) GRANT REQUIREMENTS Municipalities, Homeowners Associations, Communities, Non-Profit Organizations

This grant opportunity is made possible through funding from the Inflation Reduction Act and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program.

I. GRANT PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Increase urban tree canopy in Delaware by promoting quality tree related projects in Delaware eligible communities as indicated on page 4.
- To maintain and improve urban and community forest health.
- To increase the number of urban forestry professionals.
- To improve Urban and Community Forest management, maintenance, and stewardship.
- To promote diversity, equity, leadership in engaging and increasing workforce diversity.

The Urban and Community Forestry Program authorizes funding for a broad range of eligible activities such as:

Tree planting, site preparation, and management
Hazard tree removal and hazard tree pruning
Tree inventory, management plan, and implementation
Urban forestry training and workforce development
Community-based outreach, education, and greening
Urban wood utilization
Urban food forests
Tree related extreme heat mitigation strategies

II. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Development of an urban forest management plan based on a professional tree inventory and implementation of at least one priority that is identified from the newly developed plan.
- Hazard tree pruning and hazardous tree removal (1:1 tree replacement is required at a nearby appropriate site). Hazard trees must be rated as “extreme” or “high” risk of failure as documented by a Tree Risk Assessment Qualified professional.
- Tree planting (e.g. urban forest buffers, street and park trees, open space plantings, private lands, food forests) Including site preparation and tree maintenance. Soil samples required.
- Partner with Title 1 Schools, Colleges/Universities, and Low Security Prisons for activities such as:
 - develop and implement a career track curriculum focused on urban forestry and the tree care industry.
 - offer introduction to Urban Forestry and Forestry Courses
 - create management plans and implementation activities for the outdoor teaching areas.
 - training and certification in tree care industry
- Tree related community engagement and education

III. GRANT RULES

APPLICANT AND LOCATION

1. Eligible projects must take place within the geographical areas located on the map on page 4. If you are uncertain if your community is eligible, please contact us.
2. Tree planting and management projects on public lands are preferred but priority private lands are also eligible.
 - Public lands are lands owned by state, county, or local governments along with lands classified as public open space within Homeowners Associations (HOA's), Maintenance Corporations (MC's), etc. Public lands include parks, green-ways, schools, recreation areas, and public rights-of-way or easements.
 - If the project takes place on private lands, then:
 - The community and homeowner must enter into an agreement with DFS to track survival by audit over time.
 - Landowners must give permission/access for work on their property and must commit to maintaining the tree.
 - Landowners will be provided with resources and educational outreach by DFS on proper tree care and management.
3. Tree planting projects must be performed in compliance with U&CF Standards and ANSI Standards.
 - Soil samples are required for approved applications. Kits can be requested from University of Delaware or AgroLab. Follow the instructions in the kit for proper soil collection.
4. Applications for hazard tree removal **must** have tree(s) evaluated by a certified arborist and **deemed** hazardous to qualify for funds.
5. Tree pruning projects must be performed by a certified arborist. The arborist certification number (person performing the work) must be provided on the bid.
6. Applicants **must** have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) – no payment will be made to individuals.
7. All applications **must** be submitted **online**.
 - Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all funds have been expended.
8. The urban and community forestry grant is a reimbursement grant. No project can take place ahead of application approval. Reimbursement may occur throughout the project as activities are being completed. Reimbursement basis will be determined by project type and length of project.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Please use the application form located on our website at de.gov/delawaretrees to provide a scope of work including timeline of activities and a detailed budget sheet. Budget sheet should include cost of materials, labor, training, etc.
2. Please provide a map of the project location. If more than one location, mark the boundary.
3. If approved for the grant, recipient shall schedule a site visit at least two weeks in advance with DFS staff to assess the project location.
4. If approved for the grant and after the site visit, recipient will be asked to provide cost estimates for tree inventory, tree planting, hazardous tree pruning and hazardous tree removal projects. At that time, please provide three original bids on contractor's company letterhead for the grant project showing the itemized costs of materials and/or services for the project being applied for. Bids must be received and reviewed before projects take place.
5. Appendix A must be signed by the contractor and/or volunteer organization, HOA Board president, or municipal representative upon submission of the grant application be provided to the contractor when requesting bids, along with a copy of the U&CF IRA Grant Guidelines.

6. Grant requests must not exceed **\$50,000.00**
7. Project deadline is November 30, 2027.

Important Notes:

- If the grant is approved, the Grantee will be required to sign a contract between the Delaware Forest Service and the Grantee which indicates mutual agreement to specific tree work.
- No materials or work may be purchased or performed until the Grantee signs a contract with the Delaware Forest Service.
- Bids, scope of work, and detailed budget are required before the contract is provided.
- **Any** alterations or changes after the contract is signed **must first be approved** by the Delaware Forest Service.
- In the event that work is found to be inconsistent with U&CF or ANSI standards, the Delaware Forest Service reserves the right to suspend approved project work. The Contractor/Board shall be responsible for correcting all deficiencies prior to resuming work and before any payments are made.
- A 3-year guarantee watering contract is required to be accompanied with closeout documentation in order to be paid out (this is not part of this grant or any grant in the future and *shall* not be reimbursed).
- This is a reimbursement grant. Reimburse may occur throughout the project as activities are being completed. Reimbursement basis will be determined by project type and length of project as outlined in fully executed contract. The Grantee provides proof of payment (paid invoices & canceled checks/receipts).
- No payments can be made during the month of July due to Delaware State fiscal year close-outs. Please consider this when submitting invoices and match; payments may be delayed if submitted around the month of June.
- 100 percent of work must take place in, or benefit, Delaware eligible communities and, therefore, match is waived. This match waiver must be passed on to any sub-awardees.
- Soil samples are required for all planting projects.
- Tree mortality within the first three years of planting, notice must be given to the appropriate U&CF staff. When replanting occurs, tree species and pictures of replacement trees must be provided to U&CF staff.

IV. RECIPIENTS OF GRANT FUNDS

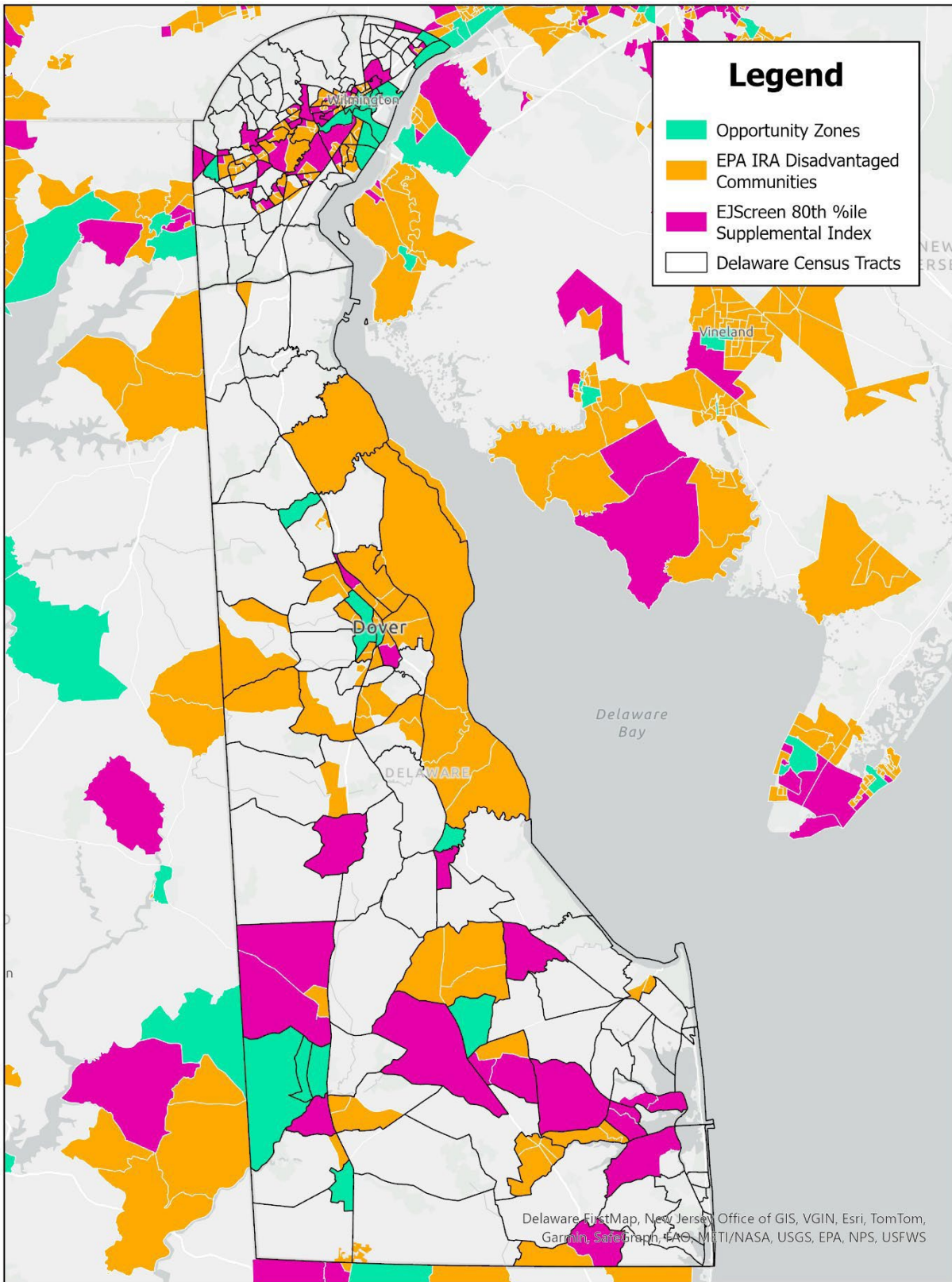
- Will receive a grant status letter and procedural guidelines no later than three weeks after applications are submitted.
- Will sign a contract with the Delaware Forest Service, stipulating that the project will be conducted as specified in the approved grant application along with any amendments. **No materials or work may be purchased or performed without a signed contract with the Delaware Forest Service.**
- Will be required to submit an updated Online W9 Form to allow your organization to receive grant funds from the State of Delaware. <https://esupplier.erp.delaware.gov> before signing the contract. **Verification must be received by DFS 14 days after receiving the award letter.**
- Press releases, articles, newsletters, signage, etc. must contain the following wording: “Funding provided by the Inflation Reduction Act and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Urban & Community Forestry Program and Delaware Forest Service.”
- Failure to use the above statement will result in reallocation of funding and/or repayment of issued funds.
- **MUST** provide a 7-day notice prior to project start date. This notice ensures that a Forest Service representative can be present at the time of event. Failure to provide 7-day notice can jeopardize the level of funding awarded.
- Will provide monthly/quarterly updates depending on length of the project.

- Will complete the project **and** submit an online Summary Report form by November 30, 2027. **No late submission of invoices and summary reports will be accepted. Late paperwork will result in loss of the grant award and reallocation of funds.**
- Interim and closeout documentation must be submitted using the online form. No email submissions will be accepted. The link to the online form will be provided at the time of the 7-day notice. A 3-year guarantee watering contract is required to be accompanied with closeout documentation in order to be paid out (this is not part of this grant or any grant in the future and *shall* not be reimbursed).
- After closeout documents are provided, an audit will be conducted by the Delaware Forest Service to ensure the project was completed properly and to the scope of work that was on the approved application and the signed appendix.
- The grantees are required to pass a final audit which adheres to the approved scope of work, U&CF standards on Appendix A, and the ANSI standards.
- Audits that identify issues must be brought into compliance to U&CF standards within a reasonable amount of time in order to receive full grant funding.
- Will receive approved reimbursement amount upon completion of project, submission of Summary Report and documentation, finalized site plan and passing of the audit.
- Will notify U&CF staff of any tree replacements that take place within three years after grant planting project. If the three-year mortality rate exceeds 50%, the community may become ineligible for future grant funding.

Any questions regarding the IRA grant applications process should be directed to:

Taryn Davidson
Urban Program Coordinator
Delaware Forest Service
Taryn.Davidson@delaware.gov

Jae'lynn Combs
Urban Outreach Coordinator
Delaware Forest Service
Jaelynn.Combs@delaware.gov



“The towns of Marydel and Delmar are included as eligible because both straddle the border between Delaware and Maryland. In both cases, the towns on the Maryland side are identified as eligible through the approved tools of CEJST, for Marydel, and the EPA IRA map, for Delmar.”

APPENDIX A

URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLANTING STANDARDS

Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) recommends the use of these standards and in part the ANSI A300 (Part6)-2012 Planting Standard where indicated.

Shall: As used in this standard denotes a mandatory requirement.

Should: As used in this standard denotes an advisory recommendation.

Nursery Stock: Trees *shall* be grade A stock, have good branching and root structure. Appropriate root ball size per tree caliper. No wounds on trunks or branches and *shall* be insect and disease free. Trees with poor pruning cuts, flush cuts or branch stubs will not be excepted. Trees with bamboo stakes attached to the trunk will not be excepted if the tree cannot remain upright when the bamboo stake is removed.

Planting Hole: Planting hole *shall* be no less than 1.5 times the diameter of the root ball. ANSI 64.4.4 p.15. The depth of the planting hole measurement *shall* be taken from the root ball by measuring from the bottom of the *trunk flare (root collar)* to the bottom of the root ball. ANSI 64.4.2 p. 15. To find the trunk flare pull away soil or planting mix at the base of the tree's trunk to expose the trunk flare. If planting hole was dug too deep refill with soil from planting hole and tamp to compaction until the proper planting depth is reached. Planting holes dug with an auger or mechanical tree spade can cause glazing of the soil on the sides of the planting hole. It is best to break up the glazed surfaces by using a shovel or hard tine rake.

Container Tree: A container tree *should* be removed by wiggling or cutting the container from the root ball. ANSI 64.5.6.1p.15. Before placing the root ball in the planting hole, it *shall* be sliced on all four sides and an x sliced into the bottom of the root ball to help detangle the root system from the root ball. Kinked, J roots, and circling roots *shall* be straightened or severed. ANSI 64.5.6.5 p.16.

Ball and Burlap with Wire Basket: When planting trees with wire basket and burlap all root ball supporting materials, burlap and wire basket *shall* be cut from the top third of the root ball and removed along with the tie up twine. The remaining wire basket and burlap *shall* be pressed down into the bottom of the planting hole. Remove all cut wire, burlap, and twine from the planting hole prior to backfilling. If the burlap is synthetic or chemically treated, it *shall* be removed completely before planting.

Planting: Place the tree in the center of the planting hole and straighten. Cut 1/3 of the burlap and wire basket from around the root ball and remove from planting hole. The bottom of the trunk flare (root collar) *shall* be a little above the finished grade, not to exceed one inch. Backfill the planting hole with the soil that was removed from the hole. Do not amend the backfill soil or add fertilizer. Backfill the hole in layers, tamp and add water to each layer to remove air pockets. Backfill *shall not* be tamped to compaction. All soil left over from the planting hole *shall* be removed from the planting site. Do not build dirt berms around the outside edge of the planting hole.

Staking: Support systems are not necessary for all newly planted trees. Trees needing to be staked *shall* be staked low on the trunk using 1 to 2, 2" sq. x 5' stake(s) and attaching to the tree trunk using 3/4" wide green tree tie webbing. Straps *shall* be loose enough to allow the tree to move slightly. This will help the tree grow a stronger root system and a strong tapered trunk. When using one stake for staking, attach tree tie webbing two-thirds up the tree trunk and place the stake upwind from the direction of the prevailing winds. When using two stakes for staking, attach tree tie webbing one-third up the tree trunk and place the stakes so that they run parallel to the prevailing winds. Stakes *shall* be removed after one growing season. *Do not use wire and hose.*

Trunk Protection: Do not use tree wrap or plastic tubing around the tree's trunk. Should trunk protection be needed for deer rubbing, 1/4" hardware cloth (turkey wire) 48" H *shall* be placed around the tree trunk leaving a 6" space between the tree trunk and wire mesh secured in place with two 2" x 2" x 6' wooden stakes driven securely into the ground and attached to the wire mesh with heavy duty zip ties.

Mulch: Arborist chips *shall* be spread 2 to 3 inches deep around the base of the tree. Keeping the mulch 3 to 4 inches from the trunk. Spread the mulch evenly out to the tips of the branches of the tree's canopy (drip line). Do not use landscape fabric under the mulch.

Watering: ******This grant requires a 3-year guarantee watering contract to be accompanied with closeout documentation in order to be paid out (this is not part of this grant or any grant in the future and shall not be reimbursed)****** Water the tree in by soaking the root ball. Then soak the soil around the root ball outward to the tree's drip line. Trees *shall* be watered in after planting. NO amendments *shall* be added to the water. A newly planted tree needs 10 gallons of water per caliper inch per week and double that during a drought.

Pruning: At planting time, prune broken, dead, and rubbing branches. Corrective pruning *should* start after the second growing season.

Remove: All nursery tags, tie up twine, burlap, wire basket, and excess soil from planting holes *shall* be removed from trees and planting sites.

Awardee acknowledges that the contractor and/or volunteer organization adheres to the planting standards listed above. If the Recipient fails to meet the conditions of this appendix, the Delaware Forest Service reserves the right to cancel the award amount and require repayment.

Contractors' signature

Date

Grantee's signature

Date