



Urban Trees Grant Program *Request for Qualifications (RFQ)* for Tree-Planting Service Providers

I. Introduction

The Tree Solutions Now Act (2021) of the State of Maryland established the goal of planting 5 million native trees by the end of calendar year 2031. The Chesapeake Bay Trust (the Trust) was named to administer a grant program to qualified community-based organizations to plant 500,000 of these trees in urban, underserved communities. Urban trees reduce urban heat island effects, improve air and water quality, benefit human health, reduce stormwater volume and flooding, increase property values, reduce cooling costs, provide wildlife habitat, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

To ensure that tree plantings in urban underserved areas can be completed efficiently, the Trust is seeking qualified companies that can provide technical and tree-planting services to community groups applying to the Urban Trees Grant Program. Many of these community groups in underserved areas have little experience planning the various technical aspects of a tree planting project (site identification, tree species selection, procurement), obtaining services, and managing contractors. The goal of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to help provide some of these lower-capacity entities applying for a Trust grant with streamlined support in a number of areas as related to their tree planting efforts.

Urban, underserved areas, are defined in Section 8–1911 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland as:

- An urban area, as delineated by the United States Census Bureau AND
- An area that meets ONE or more of the following criteria:
 - o **Historic Disenfranchisement**: A neighborhood that was, at any point in time, redlined or graded as “hazardous” by the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation; OR

- **Unemployment:** A census tract with an average rate of unemployment for the most recent 24-month period for which data are available that exceeds the average rate of unemployment for the State; OR
- **Household Income:** A census tract with a median household income for the most recent 24-month period for which data are available that is equal to or less than 75% of the median household income for the state of Maryland during that period; OR
- **Housing Project:** A housing project as defined in Section 12-101 of the Housing and Community Development Article.

The following map can help identify urban underserved areas in the state of Maryland:
<https://cbforg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3bce1e558f5a46cd86287ee5929cf079>

For more information on the Urban Trees Grant Program, please visit its website:
<https://cbtrust.org/grants/urban-trees>

II. Description of Services Sought

The Trust is seeking to develop a list of qualified tree-planting service providers that can offer services, as specified in [Appendix 1](#), to applicants to the Chesapeake Bay Trust Urban Trees Grant Program and other Trust opportunities in underserved urban areas of Maryland. An initial list of service providers will be made available to Program applicants and grantees through the Trust's website in January 2023.

The list of tree-planting services in Appendix 1 is not exhaustive. Applicants to this RFQ are encouraged to suggest any additional services that they think may be requested or needed following the instructions in Appendix 1.

The list of service providers will serve as a resource to grant applicants and grantees but does not guarantee that services will be requested or used by them. An individual applicant may request/use some, but not all, of the services offered by a specific provider as determined by the site characteristics, the applicant's tree-planting experience, and other criteria.

The Trust encourages applicants to the Urban Trees Grant Program to request work estimates from at least 3 service-providers before deciding on which one to use.

The Trust reserves the right to add additional tree-planting service providers to the resource list that have not responded to the RFQ. The Trust also reserves the right to remove contractors from the list should they fail to perform services in accordance with the agreement, plans, and specifications set forth between future and existing Urban Trees Grant Program awardees and the tree-planting service provider.

III. Qualifications Format

Required Information and Format- Applicants must include the following information to be considered:

- 1. Contact information.** Please provide a Primary Contact Person, Company Name, Address, Phone, E-mail, Website and Federal ID#.
- 2. Company's mission and profile.** Please describe the company's mission, expertise and experience. Please include: geographic service area; number of employees, number of clients; how long the company/organization has been in business; annual budget; and, the number of tree planting projects involved within a given year including number of tree planting projects that are urban in nature.
- 3. Type of services and fee structure.** Please fill out Table 1 in Appendix 1. For fee structure, estimate the program/service fees for each of the services you provide (*include per hour fees and/or total program costs, depending on the nature of your billing.*). This information will be used by Urban Tree Grant Program applicants and grantees to evaluate the costs and benefits of the services your company provides.
- 4. Service area.** Please fill out Table 2 in Appendix 1.
- 5. Key staff.** Please provide brief backgrounds of key staff. You may attach resumes of key staff as appropriate.
- 6. Experience.** Please detail experience in planting trees especially in urban areas. If work has occurred in underserved areas, please specify. Provide a short description and contact information for your last 3-5 clients and/or accomplishments that are relevant to the type of assistance noted in this RFQ. Attachments such as photos of planting projects or planting designs may be included. Please limit attachments to five pages or less.
- 7. Past failure.** Please describe an unsuccessful experience in planting trees in urban areas and what you and the company/organization learned from that experience.
- 8. Key specialties.** Please explain the type(s) of project(s) your company/organization is most accomplished in. Describe the organization's niche in meeting the needs of urban trees planting projects.
- 9. Method of evaluation.** Describe how the company/organization currently evaluates the effectiveness of the services provided and how the organization plans to evaluate the services provided through this urban tree planting program.

10. DBE/MBE/SBE. This RFQ encourages the participation of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, Minority Business Enterprise, and Small Business Enterprise (DBE/MBE/SBE) firms (members of a group as defined in the State Finance and Procurement Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the “Procurement Article”), Section 14-301(f)(i)(ii)). Indicate if you are a DBE/MBE/SBE registered firm.

IV. Submission Instructions

Applicants to this RFQ must provide the information specified in Section III in a separate Word document. Please email your application as a separate attachment to Lianna Gomori-Ruben: lgomori-ruben@cbtrust.org and include in the title of the email “RFQ Application”.

Service providers who complete the requested information, demonstrate expertise and experience in two or more areas as specified in Table 1, and can provide services to underserved Maryland jurisdictions (Table 2) will be accepted.

For any questions about your application or any additional information contact:

Chesapeake Bay Trust
Lianna Gomori-Ruben
Urban Trees Senior Program
Officer (410) 974-2941 ext. 112
lgomori-ruben@cbtrust.org

Appendix 1

Please complete Table 1 and Table 2 below as part of your submission information. You can copy and paste the tables below or download them separately <https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-1-12.8.22.docx>.

Table 1 - Services Provided

Please complete the third and fourth columns. You can add any additional comments in the fifth column. If you provide additional services, you feel are relevant to the audience described in the RFQ, please use the “other” line(s) below and identify your service(s) in the Summary column. Contractors providing native trees to grantees are strongly encouraged to source stock that has been grown in the State of Maryland. Trees sourced out of state, moved to MD for a short period of time, and then re-sold may not likely survive. Therefore, in the Comments column in row 3 below, please indicate your source(s) of trees (either specific nurseries/growers or general source state/region).

Service	Summary	Does contractor provide the service? (Yes or No)	Fee structure for service	Service-provider Comments
1) Tree planting site identification	Identifying the best planting sites available in a community or in a particular location (i.e., church or school grounds); identifying the type of planting: street lawn, tree pit, cluster planting that is possible at the site			
2) Species selection	Identifying the most appropriate species for the site			
3) Tree purchasing	Obtaining trees from nurseries/growers			
4) Utilities and other restrictions	Identifying utilities, other infrastructure and/or ordinance restrictions to take into consideration when selecting a tree-planting site			
5) Impervious removal	Creating tree planting pits/tree cells within sidewalks and other impervious areas; fully removing sidewalks or other impervious areas			
6) Site preparation	Cleaning up the site (i.e., trash or invasive plant removal); preparing the soil, applying soil conditioner/amendment, and ensuring that the right soil volume is available			

	for root growth; installing root barriers			
7) Planting	Planting the tree(s); providing appropriate tree root preparation and care at time of planting; staking the tree(s); installing tree shelters or fencing for lawn mower or deer protection; installing tree grates for tree protection as needed; applying mulch			
8) Maintenance	Watering, mulching, pruning, checking for disease or damage during the first two years after planting			
9) Warranty – 1 year	Re-planting if a tree dies within 1 year			
10) Warranty – 2 years	Re-planting if a tree dies within 2 years			
11) Other				
12) Other				
13) Other				
14) Other				

Table 2 – Company’s Service Area

Please indicate the Maryland jurisdictions where the company provides services by writing “Yes” or “No” in the **Service column** below. Feel free to add any additional relevant information under the **Comments column**.

Jurisdiction	Service Area (Yes or No)	Comments
Allegany County		
Anne Arundel County		
Baltimore City		
Baltimore County		
Calvert County		
Caroline County		
Carroll County		
Cecil County		

Charles County		
Dorchester County		
Frederick County		
Garrett County		
Harford County		
Howard County		
Kent County		
Montgomery County		
Prince George's County		
Queen Anne's County		
Somerset County		
St. Mary's County		
Talbot County		
Washington County		
Wicomico County		
Worcester County		