Urban and Community Forestry Program

Resources for Trees in Our Communities, Cities and Towns

What is Urban and Community Forestry?

Urban and Community Forestry is the management of all trees within an urban area. This even includes trees you may not think about, such as those planted along streets or within parking lots. Urban trees are an important part of the local ecosystem providing shelter, food and other benefits to nearby creatures, including us!
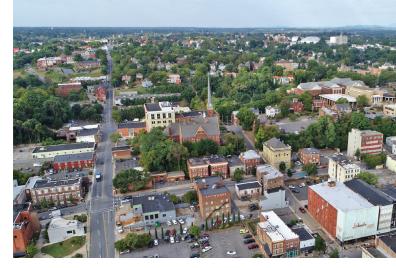
As populations in cities and towns continue to grow, creating and caring for green infrastructure, like trees, is increasingly important. Trees help make cities livable, providing shade, clean air, clean water and other useful benefits for human and environmental health.

The **Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) Urban and Community Forestry Program** fosters partnerships between government agencies, businesses, academic institutions and non-profit organizations to ensure trees in our communities are well-cared for into the future. We provide assistance including education, community engagement, tree selection and grants for tree planting and local program development. These resources and more are available for municipalities and local governments to promote a healthy tree canopy. There are many ways to get involved in helping your community care for its trees and green spaces.

What is Tree City USA?

Tree City USA is an Arbor Day Foundation program that provides a framework for communities to manage and expand their tree canopy. The "Tree City" designation demonstrates that your community has committed to caring for its tree canopy. There are four core standards to qualify as a Tree City USA community. Learn more at www.arborday.org

1. A tree board or department
2. A tree care ordinance
3. A community forestry program with a budget greater or equal to $2 per capita
4. An Arbor Day observation and proclamation

Urban Tree Canopy, Lynchburg

Tree City USA, Abingdon

School campus tree planting, Richmond

Support for Urban and Community Forestry Projects

VDOF has two grant programs that can help communities develop healthy, resilient urban tree cover – **Virginia Trees for Clean Water** and **Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants**:

Virginia Trees for Clean Water Grant Program

Overview: Program encourages the creation of long-term, sustained canopy cover to improve water quality across the commonwealth. This grant is used to fund tree-planting efforts that raise public awareness of the benefits of trees and impacts on water quality.

Funding: Funding helps to offset project costs on a reimbursement basis. Applicant is responsible for a match, which can include in-kind and volunteer hours.

Project Categories:

- ◆ Riparian Buffers
- ◆ Community or Street Tree Plantings
- ◆ Neighborhood-wide Projects
- ◆ Turf-to-Trees and more!

We do fund: Cost of trees, planting materials

We don't fund: Invasive species, monocultures

Additional information, funding details and requirements are available on the VDOF website.

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant Program

Grant Overview: Program encourages projects that promote the protection and enhancement of urban and community forest ecosystems, tree planting, the care of trees and education on tree issues in cities, towns and communities. This program exists to encourage local government and citizen involvement in creating and supporting long-term, sustained urban and community forestry projects and programs at the local level.

Funding: Funding helps to offset project costs on a reimbursement basis. Applicant is responsible for a match, which can include in-kind and volunteer hours.

Project Categories:

- ◆ Support of Local Government Programs
- ◆ Demonstration Projects
- ◆ Non-Profit Organization Support
- ◆ Planning and Development and more!

We don't fund: Beautification plantings, research expenses

Additional information, funding details and requirements are available on the VDOF website.

For More Information

Contact VDOF for more information about the Urban and Community Forestry Program (community@DOF.Virginia.gov). We welcome applications from state agencies, local and regional governments, approved non-profit organizations, neighborhood associations, civic groups, public educational institutions (college level) or community tree volunteer groups. Tree City USA communities are prioritized.

Luray Hawksbill Greenway

For more information about services or programs in your area, contact your local VDOF office:

www.DOF.Virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Forestry
900 Natural Resources Dr., Suite 800
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Phone: (434) 977-6555; VDOF@DOF.Virginia.gov

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