

TREE CANOPY FUND

Program Guidelines 2015-2016

The Tree Canopy Fund (TCF) is administered by Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE) and the Arlington County Urban Forestry Commission (UFC). ACE is a tax-deductible, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, while UFC is a volunteer, citizen commission, whose members have been appointed by the Arlington County Board. The purpose of the TCF is to arrest the decrease in tree cover in Arlington County in recent decades and to assist in increasing canopy over time.

Groups eligible to receive TCF grants include civic and homeowner associations, community nonprofit organizations, civic service clubs, church or school-related groups, and ad hoc neighborhood groups. We strongly encourage Individuals not affiliated with a group to recruit at least one or two neighbors to apply together. If there are any individual applicants not affiliated with any neighborhood group, they'll be grouped together for management purposes. Individuals may also apply for grants for maintenance to be performed on specific trees designated by Arlington County through their Champion Tree Program and Tree and Shrub Ordinance. ACE and UFC reserve the right to reduce the scope of any proposal. Grant applications will be accepted and approved depending on the availability of funds.

Note that the TCF program only provides for planting of large trees. Those residents interested in whips of smaller trees (i.e. with mature height from 20 to 35 feet), can apply to the Arlington County Tree Distribution Program which will take place in October of 2015. Visit the following website for details: <http://environment.arlingtonva.us/trees/plant-trees/tree-distribution-program/>

Although applications will be considered for the following two purposes, it is anticipated that most grants will be awarded for the planting of trees:

1. Planting Large, Locally Native Trees

- The TCF provides funds for groups to organize planting locally native trees with diameters of about two inches that, at maturity, will be large canopy trees.
- In difficult planting locations due to overhead wires, poor soil conditions, and other situations smaller or non-native trees will be considered.
- A list of priority trees and other available trees is online at www.arlingtonenvironment.org.
- All trees must be planted on private property (grounds of private houses, apartment buildings, condominiums, churches, etc.), and not on public property (public schools, military or government grounds).
- Each property owner must sign a waiver granting permission to plant on private properties, releasing the program from all liabilities, and agreeing to all future maintenance of the tree(s).
- Each homeowner must commit to providing ongoing maintenance and watering.
- In order to apply, an online registration form must be completed.
- We recommend that one coordinator per group complete the online registration form.
- Complete applications are to be submitted online by Friday, June 26, 2015.
- Further information is available at www.arlingtonenvironment.org.

2. Champion Tree Care

- Tree maintenance applications will only be considered for trees that are on Arlington County's current list of Champion Trees.
- In addition to having Champion Tree status, eligible trees must also be designated or under application for protection through the County's Tree and Shrub Ordinance as specimen, heritage, or memorial trees.
- ACE and UFC will work with applicants and a tree contractor to estimate maintenance costs for designated trees.
- Such requests may be submitted at any time directly to ACE by email at trees@arlingtonenvironment.org

HOW ARE THE PROPOSALS EVALUATED?

Projects will be evaluated by a grant review panel consisting of representatives of ACE, UFC and staff of Arlington County's Department of Parks and Recreation. Projects may be approved as requested, may be reduced in scope, or may be denied based upon the priorities of the Tree Canopy Fund and the availability of funds.

In evaluating projects, the review panel will give priority to:

1. Locations where the tree will shade a public sidewalk or other right-of-way, especially those where the public right-of-way between the curb and sidewalk is less than four feet wide;
2. Applications from neighborhoods with current canopy coverage below the 43% county average.
3. Locations near a Resource Protection Area (generally within 100 feet of a stream), in an area subject to erosion, or in other environmentally degraded areas, while ensuring the protection of existing natural areas;
4. The planting of species represented in the natural community when the planting location is adjacent to one of the County's Natural Resource Protection Areas;
5. Locations where proposed trees will be situated in areas conducive to future growth and health, i.e., in areas that will provide sufficient space for root growth and crown development and not located under utility wires;
6. Projects in which Tree Stewards, Master Gardeners or other individuals who have training or experience in tree care have committed to maintain trees and/or provide maintenance advice or oversight for the group;
7. Projects in which the applicant commits to providing additional "cost share" towards tree planting or the education project; and
8. Projects which detail all the proposed planting locations at the time of application. Those wishing to replace a dead tree still standing must apply the year after the tree has been removed to ensure the location is suitable for replanting. Applicants must guarantee at the time of the application that the tree has been removed as of the fall of 2014 and that the site is clear of obstructing stumps and/or roots.
9. Projects submitted by organized groups.

HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

STEP 1: Fill out an interest form by Friday, April 24.

New for 2015-2016: because of limited funding in the 2015-2016 grant cycle, the application process will be by invitation only.

- In order to receive an invitation to apply, all prospective applicants must complete an online interest form which is available at www.arlingtonenvironment.org.
- The form requires submission of the name of the group, contact information for the group coordinator and a backup contact, anticipated number of trees in the group's application, and interest in help with tree selection.
- We will invite selected applicants to submit full proposals with priority given to first-time applicants and applicants living in neighborhoods or areas with low tree canopy coverage.
- We will notify all applicants about whether or not they are invited to submit a full proposal by Friday, May 1.

STEP 2: Apply Online by Friday, June 26, 2015 (selected applicants only)

- The application form and instructions are available online at www.arlingtonenvironment.org.
- The application is designed for each group's coordinator to submit all trees for the group.
- Photos and diagrams may be uploaded online as well, but if you have difficulty, email trees@arlingtonenvironment.org.
- You are encouraged to apply early as last minute requests can overload the system.

STEP 3: Evaluation of Projects

- The grant review panel will review and evaluate all applications received in July and August.
- Groups may be contacted for clarification if necessary.
- Projects may be approved as requested, may be reduced in scope, or may be denied based upon the priorities of the Tree Canopy Fund and the availability of funds.
- Once the evaluation process is complete, the review panel will forward a recommended list of projects to be funded to the ACE Board of Directors for approval.
- Applicants will be notified no later than early October of final decisions.

STEP 4: Implementation

- ACE will contact each group or individual tree recipient with an estimated date of planting.
- Recipients will be required to mark the tree locations with white paint circles or wooden markers so that Miss Utility may check and provide clearance for digging.
- An experienced tree planting contractor will provide the sapling trees, dig the holes, plant the trees, mulch and water.
- Recipients are required to have water available during the planting time, either by a hose or five gallon bucket at each planting site.
- Staking of trees will only occur where the contractor feels it is necessary or if the recipient requests it due to environmental situations, such as near a playground, dog park, ball playing area, etc.).
- Each homeowner or property owner must sign a waiver and commit to providing ongoing maintenance and watering.
- Each homeowner or property owner must submit a report on tree health to ACE by May 1, 2016.

Our goal is for trees to be planted in the October to January timeframe. There will be no spring planting during the 2015-2016 grant cycle.

Contact Information

Applications and notices of intent must be submitted to ACE online via the website forms at www.arlingtonenvironment.org.

Phone Inquiries: 703-228-6427

Email inquiries: trees@arlingtonenvironment.org