



## **Arlington County Tree Canopy Fund Tree Planting Program Guidelines Spring 2024**

The Tree Canopy Fund (TCF) is administered by EcoAction Arlington and the Arlington County Urban Forestry Commission (UFC). EcoAction Arlington 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 other neighbors to apply together. If there are any individual applicants not affiliated with any neighborhood group, they'll be grouped together for the purposes of management.

Note that the TCF program emphasizes the planting of large native trees. At planting, these trees have diameters of about two inches. Those residents interested in whips of smaller trees (i.e. with mature height from 20 to 35 feet) are encouraged to apply to the Arlington County Tree Distribution Program which takes place every fall. Visit the following website for details: [environment.arlingtonva.us/register-for-your-free-tree/](http://environment.arlingtonva.us/register-for-your-free-tree/).

All trees are planted by a contractor. A list of available trees is online at [www.ecoactionarlington.org](http://www.ecoactionarlington.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 property, releasing the program from all liabilities, and agreeing to all future maintenance of the tree(s). Condo and homeowners' associations must also indicate that the association leadership has approved the planting of trees. Each property owner must commit to providing ongoing maintenance and watering. In order to apply, an online registration form must be completed. Complete applications are to be submitted online by Friday, January 5, 2024. Further information is available at [www.ecoactionarlington.org](http://www.ecoactionarlington.org).

### **HOW ARE THE PROPOSALS EVALUATED?**

Projects will be evaluated by a grant review panel consisting of representatives of EcoAction Arlington, 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.

Depending on application volume, we may not be able to award trees for all the worthy applications we receive. The review panel will prioritize applications based on the criteria below and will also use a lottery to select final awardees if more applications are received than the funding we have available.

## Tree Canopy Fund Planting Priorities:

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 41% 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 spring of 2023 and that the site is clear of obstructing stumps and/or roots.
9. Projects submitted by organized groups.
10. Applications from first-time applicants.
11. Applicants with flexibility in species choice.

## HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

### **STEP 1: Apply Online by midnight on Friday, January 5, 2024.**

The application form and instructions are available online at [www.ecoactionarlington.org](http://www.ecoactionarlington.org). Photos and maps should be uploaded online as well, but if you have difficulty, email [trees@ecoactionarlington.org](mailto:trees@ecoactionarlington.org). You are encouraged to apply early as last minute requests can overload the system.

**STEP 2: Evaluation of Projects**

The grant review panel will review and evaluate all applications received by the January 5 deadline. Applicants 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 trees. Once the evaluation process is complete, the review panel will forward a recommended list of projects to be funded to the EcoAction Arlington Board of Directors for approval. Applicants will be notified in late February through March of final decisions.

**STEP 3: Implementation**

Our contractor will contact each group or individual tree recipient with an estimated date of planting. Planting can take place anytime between mid-March and May. 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.

**STEP 4: Reporting**

Each homeowner or property owner must submit a report on tree health to EcoAction Arlington by May 15, 2024. Any trees not thriving will be evaluated for consideration of replacement under warranty by the tree-planting contractor.

**Contact Information**

Applications must be submitted to EcoAction Arlington online via the website forms at [www.ecoactionarlington.org](http://www.ecoactionarlington.org)

**Phone Inquiries:** 703-228-6427

**Email inquiries:** [trees@ecoactionarlington.org](mailto:trees@ecoactionarlington.org)