

# **MONTANA URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSOCIATION**

## **Continuum of Tree Care Community Support Application**

**Application Deadline:** September 31

**Submission Instructions:** Submit completed applications online or via email to mucfa.web@gmail.com

**Response Guidelines:** Please provide clear and concise responses to the following questions. Open ended questions should be 1-3 paragraphs in length.

### **PART 1 – General Information**

#### **1. Applicant Information**

**Organization Name:** Volunteer Tree Board for the City of Conrad

**City/Town/Community:** City of Conrad

**Primary Contact Person:** David Cates

**Title:** Mayor of Conrad

**Mailing Address:** 413 S Main St. Conrad, MT 59425

**Phone Number:** 406-272-3623

**Email Address:** mayordavid@cityofconrad.com

**Tax ID or EIN (if applicable):**

81-6001249

**Secondary Contact Person:** Dr. Paul Ekness

**Title:** Tree Board member

**Phone Number:** 413-530-4284

**Email Address:** pekness@yahoo.com

### **PART 2 – Community Context and Need**

#### **2. Describe your community's current continuum of tree care status.**

- A. The city of Conrad has an existing tree Board as of fall of 2025. Conrad is working on finishing a new and revised tree ordinance for the community. It is presently with the lawyer who has met with us once and is revising it for a future meeting where we will finalize it. The City of Conrad was accepted into the Tree City USA program in early

2026. The tree committee sponsored a tree planting Arbor Day celebration in one of the city's parks in May of 2026. Three trees were purchased with the 850 dollars from being accepted in the Tree City USA program.

- B. The majority of the management of the public trees within the City of Conrad is done by the public works department. The public works director and his staff have been extremely supportive in advice and active support in the tree plantings and maintenance of present trees in the community. The mayor of Conrad has attended all of the Tree Committee meetings and the Arbor Day celebrations as well as the various tree planting ceremonies. The City of Conrad have an active and energetic group of five volunteers that serve on the Tree Committee. The three working groups, (Public works, Mayor and Tree Committee) have worked well together to move forward in the Stewardship of the community's urban forest.
- C. The City of Conrad had its last tree inventory done in 2016 where 65 % (787 trees) were green ash. We have access to GIS data of the inventory as well as a spreadsheet of the last tree inventory done in 2016 with 1599 trees, stumps, and planting sites. To the best of our knowledge there has not been any additions or updates completed since the initial 2016 inventory.
- D. The community public works department has replaced any trees destroyed in storm activities with new trees purchased by the City of Conrad. With the start of the Tree Committee the city has planted a number of trees in the last two years. Conrad has a 1.7-mile walking trail that is in need of more trees. There has been a steady planting program over the last five years with trees given as memorials. Conrad has just approved the making of a 9-hole Frisbee golf course on town property. The town has received donations for all of the baskets for the course but are still looking for money for trees along the course. Another area of immediate need is further developing a shelter belt of trees around the baseball fields.
- E. We have many concerns about the City of Conrad's Urban Forest, both the public trees and the private trees with in the forest canopy. We need assistance in identifying damaged trees and diseased trees as well as the best ways of managing those two groups of trees. When should a tree be removed or just trimmed? How to develop money to assist private owners who lack financial means to manage damaged or dangerous trees. Being a community in the rain shadow of the Rockies Mountains we do have a water management problem for young trees until their roots get close to the water table. The level of the water table varies in depth a great deal from one part of the town to the other. Another issue is with a forest diversity that has 65% of the urban forest being green elm trees. We foresee a major future loss of tree canopy as the range of the emerald ash borer gets closer to our state every year.

### **3. Primary support requested? (Check all that apply)**

- ☒ A. Tree Inventory
- ☒ B. Tree Care & Management Plan
- ☒ C. Medium to Large Tree Pruning
- ☒ D. Hazard Tree Removal and Replacement
- ☒ E. Tree Planting for Species Diversification

Our primary needs for the purposes of this grant in order of importance are 1. help in completing a tree inventory 2. Development of a tree care and management plan and then 3. Tree plantings for more species diversity.

(Note: Communities may propose multiple activities, but final scope will be based on available budget and overall project feasibility.)

### **4. Additional capacity support requested (check all that apply)**

- ☐ F. Establishing or rejuvenating a tree board
- ☐ G. Create or update guiding documents such as a tree board charter and tree ordinance
- ☒ H. Trainings (tree planting, small and large tree pruning, and/or tree selection)
- ☒ I. Other trainings:
  - 1. How to prevent disease?
  - 2. Direction in developing a community involvement program
  - 3. An Arborist who could train and or be hired to help prune and manage some of our problem trees.
- ☐ J. Other support: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Part 3 – Project Scope, Feasibility, & Impact**

### **5. Explain why your community needs support for the activities selected above.**

The City of Conrad is situated in the rain shadow of the Rocky Mountains and wants to develop a healthy diverse urban forest. There are many benefits to having a healthy diverse urban canopy for both people living in the community and for wildlife, mostly birds. Our last tree inventory for Conrad was done in 2016 and during that time it was identified that we had 65% of the trees being green ash. There have been few visible changes that have been implemented until recently to address the problem of creating a diverse tree canopy in the city. Conrad now has a very active public works director, mayor, tree committee and interested members of the community who want to see our

urban forest become more diverse and healthy. Conrad is situated along a major migratory route for a large number of bird species and development of a more diverse tree canopy would aid in increasing the bird species that nest in the area as well as assist them in the migratory journeys. This grant would assist Conrad in development of a new forest inventory, a new management plan and help us set a positive direction for the future development and management of our urban forests.

**Estimate the scale of work needed for consultant, contractor, and/or tree planting support for the primary activity(ies) you selected. Typical funding amounts are between \$4500-\$6000 for consultant/contractor time and tree purchases.** This amount covers consultant, or contractor time and tree planting costs only; training and additional capacity support are budgeted separately.

Our first goal for the Grant is help to complete a new tree inventory for the City of Conrad. We need a tree inventory consultant for 2-4 days to train your public works staff and members of the urban forest committee to help with the initial identification of the 1600+ trees we have. After 2-4 extensive days of training, we would hope to be able to complete the inventory on your own. I think we could have 2 staff from the town's public works staff and 3-5 members of the tree community that could help complete the inventory. We are planning on the inventory taking us 8-10 days to complete. It would be nice to have someone come at the end for a day to help us identify the possible questionable species of trees within the town.

Our estimated needs for this are \$2500-\$3,000. We are hoping to learn a lot working with the people who help us with this inventory to identify trees that should be removed, identification of trees, and trees to introduce into the community with future plantings.

We would like help in developing a working urban forest management plan that would require somewhere between \$800-\$1000.

Another goal is investing money into purchasing more trees to increase the species diversity within the forest canopy of the city and building out a connected tree canopy in tree barren areas of the city. Our estimates are \$1500-\$2,500.

Future financial needs include: 1. Have an arborist more involved with the management of damaged and hazardous trees. 2. More diverse trees. 3. Development of a fund maybe based on matching that can be used to help manage trees that are not managed by the city of Conrad. Many older residents own property with old trees that need to be more actively managed but they do not have sufficient funds to take care of these problem trees.

**6. Please list the staff, volunteers, or partners who will participate in the project related activities and their roles.**

Mayor of Conrad: David Cates

Public works director: David Zimbelman

Public works staff: Eight staff counting David Zimbelman

Urban forest committee: Lida Holst, Maria Cates, Kelsey Lastowski, Bonnie Hjelm, and Paul Ekness

**7. Explain in detail what type of training or additional capacity support (as indicated in Question 4 above) will your staff, tree/park board, volunteers, or community members need?**

1. How to prevent disease? We need training in how to take care of trees to prevent disease as well as treatment methods available to treating an already diseased tree. When we first started the tree committee an employee (Hannah) of the DNRC came and helped us plant two trees for our Arbor Day initial training session. She informed us that using gravel and having grass around the trunk of a tree was not the best method of preventing a tree from disease or aiding it in acquiring water. She taught all of us that using bark mulch around the base of the tree was better than what we had. She also helped us understand some necessary steps we could take in preparing the hole for the tree and prepping the roots of the tree for a more successful introduction into the new environment.

2. Direction in developing a community involvement program. We would like to have an educated and active group of people within the community who want to create and maintain a diverse urban forest. We could use support in bringing in people who could give educational forums to interested people to build a solid group of like-minded people in Conrad so our city will have a healthy urban forest well into the future.

3. An Arborist who could train and or be hired to help prune and manage some of our problem trees. There is a lot of thought and expertise that goes into managing a healthy forest let alone a healthy urban forest that has both public and private trees. We need help and training on some of the complexities and workings to reach the goal of having a healthy diverse urban forest for Conrad.

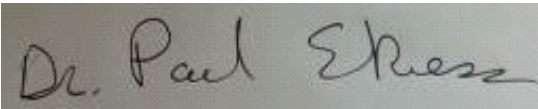
**8. How will you ensure the maintenance and sustainability of the project, and move towards the next step in your continuum of tree care based on this support.**

All of the people mentioned in question 7 have the intentions of being involved and staying within the city of Conrad. Though many are retired their family and roots are in this area. We have common goals of making this community better and one way is our involvement in improving our urban forest. Having the director of public works leading the charge on helping with the tree ordinance and managing the tree plantings and tree maintenance in the city is and will be instrumental in the sustainability of the program.

**Certification & Signature**

By signing below, I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and that our organization/community is committed to implementing this project if awarded funding.

9/22/2026

X 

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Signed by: 88c7997d-273e-4a2a-beeb-cff636728a89

**Thank you for applying to the Continuum of Tree Care Community Support Program!**

For questions, please contact Kelly Franklin at [mucfa.info@gmail.com](mailto:mucfa.info@gmail.com)