

**MONTANA URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
‘Continuum of Tree Care’ Small Grants Announcement**

The Montana Urban and Community Forestry Association (MUCFA) Small Grants Program, funded through the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) under the Montana Forest Action Plan, supports small, rural Montana communities in strengthening the health and resilience of their urban forests. This program aligns with key objectives of the Montana Forest Action Plan:

1. **Increase the health and resilience of urban trees**
2. **Expand urban tree canopy**
3. **Mitigate the financial impact of emerald ash borer (EAB)** by supporting proactive management strategies.

Our grant program aims to meet each community where they are at in a continuum of community tree care. Our grants provide funding for essential tree management practices such as:

* Establishing or rejuvenating a tree board
* Writing or updating a tree ordinance
* Conducting a tree inventory or updating existing inventory
* Keeping the inventory up to date
* Using the inventory to develop a tree care and maintenance plan
* Help implementing the plan
* Large tree pruning
* Hazard tree removals and replacement

Communities are required to provide matching funds unless they demonstrate a compelling need for an exception. Additionally, the program helps build local capacity through training and workforce development for municipal staff, tree board members, and community volunteers to ensure continued urban forest management.

**Grant Management**

MUCFA will directly manage grant funds by covering contractor and operational expenses on behalf of awarded communities. Funds will not be distributed to communities; instead, MUCFA will handle payments to reduce the administrative and financial burden on communities. However, communities are encouraged to contribute matching funds, including personnel time or volunteer labor, to enhance project impact and demonstrate local investment in its success

**Grant Timeline**

**April 22:** Call for Applications

**May 31:** Application Deadline

**June 1 - June 15:** Review Committee Evaluation

**June 15:** Award Notification & Grant Agreements

**June 15, 2025 – June 15, 2026:** Grant Implementation

**July 31, 2026:** Final Reporting

**Eligibility**

* Communities with populations under 3,500
* Eligible entities:
	+ Montana cities, towns, counties including incorporated and unincorporated towns
	+ Community-based organizations, public/state institutions of higher education
	+ Nonprofits, tribal governments, conservation districts
* Preference for communities east of the Continental Divide
* Preference for communities demonstrating the desire to further their tree continuum of care and to use the grant to increase capacity for managing community trees on their own
* Preference for communities with high percentage of ash trees (>20%) rated as “large tree -immediate” and that are in “poor” or “dead and dying” condition
* Applicants must become MUCFA members before or after award acceptance

**Funding & Match Requirements**

* **Grant Amounts:** $2,000 - $10,000
* **Fund Management:** MUCFA will directly manage grant funds, covering contractor and operational expenses. Communities will not receive direct disbursements.
* **Matching Funds:** Communities are required to provide a match unless they demonstrate a compelling need for an exception. Match contributions can include cash, in-kind services, personnel time, or volunteer labor.

We encourage a tiered approach to matching funds, where communities with larger populations contribute a higher percentage. However, we recognize that each community has unique circumstances, and we will consider flexibility in match requirements based on demonstrated financial need.

**Suggested match contributions by population size:**

* Above 3,000: 60% match
* 2,000 – 3,000: 40% match
* Under 2,000: 25% match

**Application Process**

**Submission:** Applications can be submitted online or via email to MUCFA.web@gmail.com

**Technical Grant Writing Assistance:** Applicants may receive up to three 1-hour coaching sessions for grant writing and project planning. Please make requests to MUCFA.info@gmail.com

**MONTANA URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
‘Continuum of Tree Care’ Small Grants Application**

**Application Deadline:** May 31, 2025

**Submission Instructions:** Submit completed applications via email to mucfa.web@gmail.com with the subject line:*"CTC Small Grant Application – [Community Name]"*

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

1. **Applicant Information**

**Community/Organization Name:
Primary Contact Person:
Title:
Mailing Address:
Phone Number:
Email Address:**

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

**Secondary Contact Person:**

**Title:**

**Phone Number:**

**Email Address:**

1. **What activities will you undertake with this grant?** (Select all that apply)

[ ]  Tree Board revival or establishment

[ ]  Ordinance development or updating

[ ]  Conducting a Tree Inventory or updating an existing inventory (must provide personnel to help do inventory and update it)

[ ]  Keeping inventory up to date

[ ]  Use inventory data to develop a Tree Care & Maintenance Plan

[ ]  Help implement the plan

[ ]  Large tree pruning

[ ]  Hazard tree removal and replacement

1. **Describe your project and how it will address urban forestry needs in your community.**
2. **How will you sustain this work beyond the grant period?**
3. **Describe any partners that will be involved in the project and how they will play a role in the project.**
4. **Provide a project timeline.** Outline key activities for your project between June 2025 and June 2026.
5. **Provide a budget overview:**
*MUCFA’s funds must be used for operational expenses and contracted professional services. Personnel costs may be provided as an in-kind match.*

*Use the tables below to outline your project budget. Describe how funds will be allocated and any matching contributions your community or organization will provide.*

 **MUCFA-Funded Expenses (Operations & Contracted Professional Services)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Expense Category** | **Description** | **Amount Requested** |
| Operational Costs | *(e.g., man-lift, bucket truck, or rental equipment for tree pruning, pruning tools, tablet for conducting tree inventory, tree purchases for replacement)* | $ |
|  | $ |
|  | $ |
|  | $ |
| Contracted Professional Services | *(e.g., Tree Board and Ordinance writing contractor, tree inventory and management plan consultant, arborist and their equipment, hazard tree removal services, stump grinding contractor, etc.)* | $ |
|  | $ |
|  | $ |
|  | $ |
| ***Total*** | **$** |

**Matching Funds (Personnel, Operations, Contractual, Volunteer Time)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Expense Category** | **Description** | **Matching Amount** |
| Personnel (In-Kind) | *(e.g., municipal employees)* | $ |
| Operational Costs | *(e.g., use of city equipment, tree planting materials donated by the community)* | $ |
| Contractual Services | *(e.g., contribution towards consultant costs)* | $ |
| Volunteer Labor | *(e.g., estimated hours at volunteer rate)* | $ |
| *Total* |  |

* **If you are unable to provide matching funds, please explain your financial constraints or barriers.**
* **If applicable, please list any local contractors you recommend for hire?**
1. **If your community lacks capacity, how can MUCFA assist.** *(check all that apply)*

[ ]  Help establishing a Tree Board

[ ]  Revising or developing an ordinance

[ ]  Completing a new inventory

[ ]  Maintaining and updating existing tree inventory

[ ]  Developing a Tree Care & Maintenance Plan

[ ]  Help preparing a draft tree care budget from plan for submittal to city council

[ ]  Engaging volunteers

[ ]  Trainings on small tree pruning

[ ]  Trainings on medium to large tree pruning

[ ]  Training on tree planting

[ ]  Other needs? Please explain

1. **Attachments (optional)**

[ ]  Maps or photos of project area

[ ]  Other supporting documents

**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.

**Thank you for applying to the MUCFA Small Grants Program!**
MUCFA will review applications and notify awardees by June 15, 2025.

For questions, please contact Kelly Franklin at mucfa.info@gmail.com