

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**

# 2022 Request for Proposal

## **General Information**

**Proposal ID:** 2022-280

**Proposal Title:** Trees for Equity

## **Project Manager Information**

**Name:** Rebecca Rice

**Organization:** Metro Blooms

**Office Telephone:** (612) 865-0248

**Email:** becky@metroblooms.org

## **Project Basic Information**

**Project Summary:** Pilot project engaging residents in environmental justice areas of concern in three cities statewide to plant native trees in bioswales to maximize environmental benefits and stewardship and to measure impact.

**Funds Requested:** $598,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30 2025

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Environmental Education (C)

## **Project Location**

**What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?** Region(s): Metro, SE,

**What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?** Region(s): SE, Metro,

**When will the work impact occur?** During the Project

## **Narrative**

**Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.**

Tree canopies provide a wide range of environmental, health and social benefits, yet a legacy of inequities have left low-income communities across Minnesota with a lack of tree cover, resulting in heat islands and poorer air quality than higher income neighborhoods. The loss of urban ash trees compounds this problem in environmental justice areas of the state. This project will support and leverage community efforts to remove and replace ash trees, and engage residents in stewardship of installed projects, including boulevard bioswales with native ground plantings where ash trees have been removed; and with multi-family affordable housing communities.

**What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? i.e. What are you seeking funding to do? You will be asked to expand on this in Activities and Milestones.**

This project prioritizes tree plantings that will protect residents in some of the most heat-vulnerable demographics that have few to no trees. This project proposes to use the Planit Geo Tree Plotter software to support local community partners and government agencies to engage communities in native tree and ground plantings, and to measure the estimated impact of this work related to temperature reduction and other microclimatic effects; removal of air and stormwater pollutants to further increase stewardship and equitable investment in the environment. This project builds on the success of a Boulevard Bioswales project in Minneapolis and the LCCMR-funded Lawns to Legumes (L2L) Program. These programs prioritize native trees and shrubs in residential planting designs (L2L) and adjacent public right of ways (blvd bioswales), and with multi-family affordable housing communities who are too often left out of environmental projects.

**What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state’s natural resources?**

Planting will be conducted in boulevards, public right of ways and at affordable housing sites, with a goal of planting 350–500 new native trees, many in conjunction with 135 newly-installed boulevard bioswales filled with 10,000 ground-layer native plants. The project works with local communities to engage 3,000 residents and volunteers in a citizen outreach and engagement effort to expand stewardship of local trees. It supports local economies with 18 green infrastructure summer jobs and workforce training by hiring local contractors and providing expert oversight and training, to gain highly sought skills in the green economy.

## **Activities and Milestones**

### **Activity 1: Collaborate with cities in pilot effort to engage environmental justice communities to expand native tree and ground plantings**

**Activity Budget:** $83,000

**Activity Description:**Planning and coordination with city public works and forestry departments, including focus area planning, tree removal and replacement. Contracting, communication, plan development, administration, record keeping, invoicing. Map, track and evaluate approach and impact, data collection and mapping.

**Activity Milestones:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Completion Date** |
| Community approach finalized, partner roles and timelines established and mapped. | September 30 2022 |
| 30% of project stewards educated and engaged, sites finalized. | December 31 2022 |
| 100% of project stewards educated and engaged, sites finalized. | June 30 2023 |
| Source all landscape materials, including native trees and ground plantings | December 31 2024 |

### **Activity 2: Subcontract to provide technical assistance and local community and contractors; source local landscape materials, native trees and ground plants**

**Activity Budget:** $485,000

**Activity Description:**Virtual and onsite technical assistance for property owners to discuss project, site design, native tree and ground planting selection, and maintenance training. Boulevard Bioswale installation following tree removal and stump grinding, tree and ground cover plantings (in some cases) and follow-up maintenance visits. This includes sourcing materials

**Activity Milestones:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Completion Date** |
| Multi-Family site designs completed and approved | March 31 2023 |
| Site assessment with 50% residents to discuss project, native tree and ground plantings and care | June 30 2023 |
| Site assessment with 100% residents to discuss project, native tree and ground plantings and care. | October 31 2023 |
| 50% Boulevard bioswales excavated and ground plantings installed | October 31 2023 |
| 100% Boulevard Bioswales excavated and ground plantings installed | October 31 2024 |
| 100 trees planted in boulevards and in multifamily affordable housing sites | November 30 2024 |

### **Activity 3: Collaboration with Local Community Partners**

**Activity Budget:** $30,000

**Activity Description:**Collaborate with local community based partners to co-create engagement protocol and timelines, resident and volunteer educational, planting and maintenance events

**Activity Milestones:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Completion Date** |
| Community partner agreements and plan co-creation and timelines finalized. | December 31 2022 |
| 50% resident participants engaged, attend educational trainings and sign maintenance agreements. | May 31 2023 |
| 100% resident participants engaged, attend educational trainings and sign maintenance agreements | September 30 2023 |
| Community planting events engaging 1,000 of volunteers | October 31 2023 |
| Community planting event, engaging 1,000 volunteers | October 31 2024 |

## **Project Partners and Collaborators**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Organization** | **Role** | **Receiving Funds** |
| Dan Shaw | Board of Water and Soil Resources | Plant ecologist advisory and coordination with state and local conservation agencies, city public works and forestry departments to establish structure for statewide collaboration around the topics of urban tree canopy and equity. | No |
| Stephanie Hatzenbihler | City of Rochester | Project contact for local collaboration. | No |

## **Long-Term Implementation and Funding**

**Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this be funded?**The use of

## **Project Manager and Organization Qualifications**

**Project Manager Name:** Rebecca Rice

**Job Title:** Sustainable Landcare Manager

**Provide description of the project manager’s qualifications to manage the proposed project.**James Wolfin graduated from the University of Delaware with a Bachelor’s degree in Ecology, and minors in Biology and Wildlife Conservation. James then went to the University of Minnesota for his Master’s degree in Entomology, where he focused on describing the bee communities that forage on flowering bee lawns in Minneapolis. James joined Metro Blooms in 2019 as project manager for the Minneapolis Boulevard Bioswales project, a collaboration between the City of Minneapolis and MPRB forestry staff's Emerald Ash Tree replacement program to engage residents to create boulevard bioswales wherever ash trees have been removed in the environmental justice community of North Minneapolis. Thirty five households engaged to care for 35 boulevard bioswales, 15 ash removed and trees replanted and more than 6,000 sq ft of habitat to improve water quality, provide forage for pollinators, and engaging more than 100 residents in stewardship of the new plantings.

**Organization:** Metro Blooms

**Organization Description:**Metro Blooms is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, since 1983. We partner with communities to create resilient landscapes and foster clean watersheds, embracing the values of equity and inclusion to solve environmental challenges. Our 16 member staff, includes a registered landscape architect, 4 landscape designers, project managers, administration, education and engagement staff. In 2020, our community based programs engaged 160 residents in 25 communities to install beautiful, native plantings in clean water projects, building stewardship and changing societal norms around traditional lawns. In 2021, we are working with 9 multi-family affordable housing sites with more than 6,500 residents to create more livable outdoor spaces including native habitat, clean water projects and natural play spaces. We are committed to creating opportunities that center equitable engagement and bring natural resource investment to underserved communities. We intentionally reach out in underserved communities that include – but are not limited to – people of color, lower-income neighborhoods and affordable housing communities.

## **Budget Summary**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category / Name** | **Subcategory or Type** | **Description** | **Purpose** | **Gen. Ineli gible** | **% Bene fits** | **# FTE** | **Class ified Staff?** | **$ Amount** |
| **Personnel** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Project Manager |  | Planning and coordination with city public works and forestry departments, including focus area planning, tree removal and replacement. Contracting, communication, plan development. |  |  | 28% | 0.42 |  | $30,800 |
| Office Manager |  | Administration, record keeping, invoicing. |  |  | 28% | 0.06 |  | $3,000 |
| Technology Associate |  | Map, track and evaluate approach and impact, data collection and mapping. |  |  | 28% | 0.06 |  | $4,200 |
| Engagement Manager |  | Outreach and engagement with residents of environmental justice communities, including residential neighborhoods and multi-family, affordable housing communities. Partnering with local community based partners. Co-create engagement protocol with local community partners, including social media, project signage, education materials, maintenance guides. Dedicated web page link on home page with project information. |  |  | 28% | 0.45 |  | $32,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **$70,000** |
| **Contracts and Services** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Metro Blooms Design + Build | Sub award | Technical Assistance for landscape architecture, construction oversight and materials sourcing. |  |  |  | 0.72 |  | $334,000 |
| TBD | Professional or Technical Service Contract | Boulevard Bioswale installation following tree removal and stump grinding, local contractors (18 green infrastructure, seasonal jobs) removes and disposes of sod and soil, reshapes boulevard, install mulch and other erosion control, plants or overseeds, and plants new tree, includes follow-up maintenance visit in year |  |  |  | 0.6 |  | $164,000 |
| TBD | Sub award | Community engagement |  |  |  | 0.3 |  | $30,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **$528,000** |
| **Equipment, Tools, and Supplies** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Capital Expenditures** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Acquisitions and Stewardship** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Travel In Minnesota** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Travel Outside Minnesota** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Printing and Publication** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Other Expenses** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Grand Total** | **$598,000** |

### **Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category/Name** | **Subcategory or Type** | **Description** | **Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request** |

### **Non ENRTF Funds**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Specific Source** | **Use** | **Status** | **Amount** |
| **State** |  |  |  |  |
| In-Kind | Board of Water and Soil Resources | Project collaboration and coordination | Secured | $3,500 |
| In-Kind | Board of Water and Soil Resources | Communications collaboration and assistance | Secured | $2,500 |
|  |  |  | **State Sub Total** | **$6,000** |
| **Non-State** |  |  |  |  |
| In-Kind | City of Rochester | Tree planting and mulch | Secured | $7,500 |
| In-Kind | City of Winona | Project management and coordination, tree removal and stump grinding. | Secured | $10,000 |
| In-Kind | City of Brooklyn Park | Project collaboration and establishment period maintenance | Secured | $10,000 |
| In-Kind | City of Minneapolis | Communications and promotional materials development | Pending | $10,000 |
|  |  |  | **Non State Sub Total** | **$37,500** |
|  |  |  | **Funds Total** | **$43,500** |

## **Attachments**

### **Required Attachments**

#### ***Financial Capacity***

File: [cda8cafd-96f.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/financial_capacity/cda8cafd-96f.pdf)

#### ***Board Resolution or Letter***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **File** |
| board authorization | [87a95411-558.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/87a95411-558.pdf) |
| Trees for Equity: Equitable Urban Forests with Measurable Impact | [e908897e-770.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/e908897e-770.pdf) |

## **Administrative Use**

**Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?**
 No

**Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?**
 No

**Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?**
 N/A

**Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?**
 N/A

**Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?**
 No

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**
 No