



MDOT Urban Tree Program Frequently Asked Questions

This document provides answers to commonly asked questions for the MDOT Urban Tree Program. If you do not see your question in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) please reach out to Nick Kurtz at nkurtz@mdot.maryland.gov

OVERVIEW

Q: What is the Urban Tree Program?

A: The MDOT Urban Tree Program (UTP) is a grant program that provides funding for tree planting in communities that had trees removed from the construction of transportation facilities or transportation projects.

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, schools, community/neighborhood associations; places of worship; businesses; community business associations; homeowners associations; business service, youth, and civic groups; institutions of higher education; counties; municipalities; and forest conservancy district boards.

Q: What are the eligibility requirements of the program?

A: Applications must be submitted by an eligible organization and include planting sites that are within an urban area (as defined by the most recent US Census) and take place in communities impacted by current or past transportation facility projects. Projects are prioritized if they support environmental justice initiatives, reduce the Urban Heat Island effect, and/or support the urban tree canopy.

Q: How can I know if my community is in an urbanized area?

A: To check if your project site is an urban area, please use the [Maryland Census Designated Areas – Urban Areas 2020](#)

Q: How do I know if my project location is near a transportation facility?

A: MDOT will accept projects within one mile of a state transportation facility, two miles for larger projects (e.g. Purple Line). Eligible transportation facilities are those defined in the state Transportation article ([Transportation - § 3-101](#)). Mapping layers of state transportation facilities are available via the [MDOT Open Data Portal](#). If you are unsure if your site is eligible, we can provide an initial location check ahead of submission. Please reach out if you have any questions on this component.

Q: What planting material can I plant?

A: MDOT and MUCFC will only fund native plant species. Additionally, applications are allowed up to 15% (by count) of true shrub species.

Q: What are eligible funding requests?

A: Eligible requests include plant material, materials to support planting (mulch, stakes, deer guard, etc.), maintenance expenses, outreach materials (limited to 5% of total budget), site preparation costs, and tool rentals.

Q: Are there any ineligible funding requests?

A: There are a few items MDOT is unable to fund, including snacks and waters for volunteers, outreach costs beyond the 5% cap, and any sort of giveaways for volunteers. Non-eligible plant materials include wildflowers, ornamental flowers, or other decorative species.

Q: Do I need to develop a maintenance plan?

A: Yes, each project must provide a one-year maintenance plan to support the survival of the trees. Maintenance-related costs are an eligible expense under the program, if you would like funds to support maintenance activities, please include these in the budget request. An example maintenance plan can be found in the example application on the [MDOT Urban Tree Program website](#).

Q: Is there a minimum or maximum funding requests?

A: There is no minimum funding request, however awards are capped at \$5,000.00 for tree planting projects. For a pocket forest project, additional funding is available.

Q: What is a pocket forest?

A: A Pocket Forest is a small, high-density, native-shrub and tree planting project in an urban environment that recreates or restores layers of forests, including a canopy layer comprised of taller trees, a mid-height shrub layer, and ground cover. These projects can also include soil augmentation and other restoration techniques to encourage low maintenance in urban spaces. Pocket Forests are designed to integrate forests into the urban environment.

Q: Can projects be funded on private or public land?

A: Projects can take place on both public and private land. Please be sure to provide any permits or landowner permission letters with your application.

Q: Do I need my application to be signed off by the local county forestry board?

A: Yes, all applications must receive sign off by the local county forestry board. To identify the correct forestry board contact, please see information available [here](#). There is a section in the application where you will add in the contact information and the system will automatically send your application to the forestry board member when you submit the application. If you need any support with the forestry board approval, please contact Nick Kurtz at nkurtz@mdot.maryland.gov.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Q: When can I apply for funding?

A: The application will be open year-round on a rolling basis to provide greater flexibility for communities to apply. There will be two application review periods, one for spring plantings and one for fall plantings. All applications received before January 15, 11:59pm and July 15, 11:59pm of each year will be considered for the spring and fall planting seasons, respectively.

Q: Where do I apply for UTP funding?

A: The application is available on the [Maryland OneStop portal](#). Search MDOT Urban Tree Program.

Q: Do I need an account on the OneStop Portal to apply?

A: Yes, applicants will need an account with OneStop to apply. To register for an account, you can use the [OneStop Registration page](#), and there is no fee to register for an account. If you have applied to other applications via the OneStop portal, you should already have an account.

Q: Is there a fee to apply to this opportunity?

A: No, there is no fee to apply.

Q: What information do I need to include in the application?

A: Applications are required to include a site plan or project design, including a photo or map of the proposed planting site; a list of the proposed plants (including species, size, and quantity); description of any permits; and a maintenance plan, including expected maintenance costs, who is responsible for maintenance, and the maintenance activities.

Q: How much detail should I provide when filling out the application?

A: Please provide as much detail as possible. This will help reviewers to better understand the scope of the project.

RESOURCES/SUPPORT

Q: How can I receive support in developing a planting plan and application?

A: DNR is available to help develop tree planting projects and support your application. If you would like DNR support for your application, please reach out to Daniel Coy at daniel.coy@maryland.gov If you have any questions on the application or the program requirements, please reach out to Nick Kurtz at nkurtz@mdot.maryland.gov.