



This assistance package is designed to help municipalities that have achieved Tree City USA standards meet tree maintenance, i.e., pruning and removal, and planting needs. This package includes assistance to complete a tree inventory to identify tree maintenance needs and planting sites, develop work plans and complete the tree maintenance and planting.

- Eligible organizations
  - Municipalities and tribal governments that meet the standards for Tree City USA recognition
- Application period
  - The application period opens Jan. 1, 2026, and closes March 1, 2026.
- Eligible project practices/activities/deliverables -- Engage a qualified professional(s) to guide you and complete the following practices and activities. Guidance for identifying and securing urban forestry professionals can be found on our [Urban Forestry Professionals webpage](#), and minimum qualifications for professionals can be found on our [Financial Assistance Program webpage](#). Specifications and guidance documents can be found on our [U&CF Resources and Specifications webpage](#) under the urban forestry section.
  - Outreach – An outreach program plan and product(s) and/or event(s) that engage, educate and inform the public about the project are required.
  - Tree maintenance – Complete the tree pruning and removal work.
    - Tree inventory -- An inventory of trees to identify maintenance needs completed by an urban forestry professional is required.
    - Tree inventory tools – eligible.
    - The N.C. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry (NCFS U&CF) tree inventory specification or approved equivalent is required.
    - Practice plan – a plan that details how the tree maintenance work will be completed based on the inventory results and the budget are required.
    - Use of the NCFS U&CF tree pruning and removal specification or approved equivalent is required.
    - A tree maintenance inspection and report completed by a qualified urban forestry professional is required.
    - If tree removal work is completed, replacement trees must be planted.
  - Tree planting – Complete tree planting work.
    - Use of the NCFS U&CF tree supply and planting specification or approved equivalent is required.
    - Tree species to be planted must be on the NCFS urban tree list.
    - A two-year warranty on tree plantings is required.
    - Practice plan – a plan detailing the location, tree species to be planted and post-planting care are required. Tree planting site and tree species selection



- must meet tree planting best management practices as defined by the [NCFS U&CF Urban Forestation and Tree Planting webpage](#), specifications and guidance documents.
- Tree delivery supply, and planting inspections and reports completed by a qualified urban forestry professional are required.
- Supervision of the tree maintenance and/or tree planting work by an urban forestry professional is required.
- Final report - A professionally published two-to-eight-page infographic-style report summarizing and illustrating the project need, goal, objectives and accomplishments is required.
- Funding program options and requirements
  - A grant will be funded by one of the three funding programs. You will need to select one. Contact NCFS U&CF program staff for guidance, if needed.
  - Hurricane Helene Recovery (HHR)
    - Tribal government or a municipality located in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Henderson, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania or Yancey counties.
    - Cost share %
      - Reimbursement of 100% of eligible purchased goods and services.
    - Indirect administration – 15% de minimis/total purchased goods and services.
    - \$2.2 million in assistance is available for award of all HHR funded RFAs.
  - Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
    - 100% of the Tribal government or municipality's incorporated lands fall within the boundaries of [NCFS U&CF Financial Assistance Program Inflation Reduction Act project areas](#).
    - Cost share %
      - Reimbursement of 100% of eligible purchased goods and services.
    - Indirect administration – 20% de minimis/total purchased goods and services.
    - \$5.6 million of assistance is available for award of all IRA funded RFAs.
- Award, grant contracts and schedules
  - Project/grant contract duration -- up to 2 years.
  - Award – See our [Financial Assistance Program webpage](#) for awarding information.
  - Applicants should plan for a project start date of July 1, 2026.
  - Conditional award notices will be issued by March 31, 2026. Final awardees will enter a grant contract with the N.C. Forest Service.
  - Working with the NCFS U&CF program, conditional awardees must complete all work necessary to execute the grant contract by May 31, 2026.



- The awardee will complete the work, pay for the agreed goods and services and submit a reimbursement request to the NCFS U&CF program for approval and payment.
- Reporting
  - Reporting instructions and documents can be found at [NCFS U&CF Resources and Specifications](#) webpage under the financial assistance section.
  - Awardees will be required to maintain and submit documentation proving project expenses, provide interim progress reports, deliverable accomplishment and a final report in accordance with respective federal ([Code of Federal Regulations](#)), state and N.C. Forest Service policies and procedures. Reporting instructions and documents can be found on our [U&CF Resources and Specifications](#) webpage under the financial assistance section.
- Application
  - The application is an online electronic application.
  - A copy of the application for planning purposes is available on the [U&CF Resources and Specifications webpage](#) under the financial assistance section.
  - Prepare your application responses and required documents before opening the online application for completion. The application must be completed and submitted in one online session.
  - The following information will be required to complete your application.
    - The funding program selection.
    - A single proposal/quote for services from a consultant(s) to guide the municipality, and complete the project practices/activities/deliverables.
    - Quotes from providers for goods or services not provided by the consultant(s) for notation in your budget form.
    - A list of your project team members' names, titles and project roles.
    - Needs and opportunities narrative statement.
    - Project deliverables schedule by project quarter.
      - List of the practices/activities/deliverables that will be completed in the project quarter.
      - Narrative describing the work that will be accomplished.
    - Project cost and completed RFA Budget Form – Cost Share.
    - Name of the NCFS county ranger who you have contacted and informed of your intent to submit this application.
  - Click the link below to begin when you are ready to apply.

**[Apply for Tree Maintenance and Planting Project by clicking here](#)**