

# Community Trees Initiative

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*FY 2018 Buncombe County Community  
Funding*

## ***Asheville GreenWorks***

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# Application Form

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## Project Name\*

Name of Project

Community Trees Initiative

## Amount Requested\*

Amount Requested

\$50,000.00

## Service Area\*

Which Commissioner Districts are served by this program?

Access a map of Buncombe County Commissioner districts [here](#).

District 1

District 2

District 3

## Which county sustainability goal aligns best with the goals of this project?\*

Based on the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan, select a Category, Goal & Objective that align with the focus of the project and the specific results that will be achieved.

Access the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan [here](#).

Economy > Sustainable Local Food Systems > Promote sustainable agricultural production and personal and community gardening

## If applicable, select a second sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.

**Result 2 is optional** - Select if project aligns with more than one Sustainability Category, Goal & Objective.

Environment > Partnerships for Conservation/Preservation/Restoration of Natural Resources > Protect ecological systems/wildlife

**If applicable, select a third sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.**

**Result 3 is optional** - Select if project aligns with more than one Sustainability Category, Goal & Objective.

Environment > Partnerships for Conservation/Preservation/Restoration of Natural Resources > Conserve and protect water resources

## ***Project Description***

### **Project Description\***

#### Description of Project

Buncombe County's residents love trees as evidenced by the four cities in its boundaries that have achieved Tree City USA status – Asheville (36 years), Weaverville (26 years) Black Mountain (11 years), and Montreat (1 year). Asheville GreenWorks has actively supported the creation and maintenance of the county's urban forests for 43 years. Our current community forestry programs and activities include establishing and caring for Community Orchards, planting trees in public spaces such as school grounds, greenways, parks and city streets and educating students and residents about the environmental and social benefits of trees.

The overarching goal of the proposed program is to encourage residents in Buncombe County to be “stewards of the environment who advocate the conservation, preservation and restoration of resources” as stated in the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan vision statement. We aim to reach this goal by:

- Planting 800 trees on public lands throughout the county.
- Installing and maintaining community orchards in low-income communities to provide equitable access to fresh, healthy food.
- Planting native trees and gardens to support local pollinators.

These actions will increase the ecosystem benefits provided by trees, such as capturing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, cooling the local environment, reducing surface water runoff from storms and increasing ground water recharge. Strategically planting trees will also provide myriad health, social and economic benefits by improving air quality, reducing crime, lowering heating and cooling costs and increasing property values.

### **How many people will this project serve?\***

State the number of individuals or households in Buncombe County that will be served by this project. Also state the number of people that will experience the desired result. For example, if dropout prevention services are being delivered to 100 students, how many will successfully graduate from high school?

The proposed project will serve the entire county and all 247,912 residents. The results of our Community Trees Initiative will be of benefit to not only those individuals who directly participate in our programs, but to everyone who lives, works and visits Buncombe County through enhanced environmental benefits.

## Describe the people this project will serve.\*

Characterize the demographics of the project's target population in terms such as age, gender, income, race, ethnicity, geographic area, etc. Include information about method of referral/recruitment of the target population.

We intend to serve the entire County population. The 2012 demographics were found to be as follows:

Black or African American alone, 6.5%

Two or More Races, 1.9%

Hispanic or Latino, 6.3%

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, 84.1%

Persons under 18 years, 20.1%

Persons between 18-65 years, 62.9%

Persons 65 years and over, 17.0%

More than 2,500 individuals volunteer with GreenWorks to implement community projects, including tree planting and community orchard installations and workdays. GreenWorks reaches out to a wide range of audiences in our community through a variety of methods, including tabling at events, door-to-door outreach, direct mail, email, press, television, radio and social media. We have been uniquely successful in fostering the involvement and participation of communities of color and individuals from low-wealth neighborhoods in environmental conservation projects.

## What key steps will you take to achieve the results of this project?\*

Describe the core elements of your implementation plan, including milestones that will take place within the funding timeframe.

Jul-Oct 2017

Tree Keepers – residents from low-income backgrounds that are hired as orchard caretakers – maintain and water both shade trees and fruit trees, assisted by volunteers during the summer months. The GreenWorks Urban Forest Program Coordinator (UFPC) leads tree identification workshops and coordinates tree inventories with volunteers to map the urban forest and identify areas in need of trees. The UFPC also works with volunteers on planting and caring for pollinator gardens.

Oct 2017-Mar 2018

The bulk of tree planting efforts take place during this time that presents ideal planting conditions. GreenWorks coordinates 500 volunteers to plant 800 shade and fruit trees.

Apr-Jun 2018

GreenWorks coordinates an Arbor Day Celebration in April. Tree Keepers resume watering and maintenance of trees. The UFPC continues leading workshops and conducting tree inventories with volunteers. Pollinator gardens, bee hotels /habitats are planted and maintained by volunteers.

## Describe the evidence of success that backs this project's approach.\*

What evidence of success (i.e. evidence-based research, practice model, accreditation, industry standards, and/or other framework) are you using as a basis for your project design?

Buncombe County is experiencing unprecedented population growth and development as more and more people are drawn to the scenic beauty, the outdoor recreation opportunities and cultural offerings found in the mountains of Western North Carolina. In the next few years, ground will be broken on the ambitious network of greenways that will connect residents throughout Buncombe County, providing access to run, bike, walk and even canoe for miles and miles. With strong roots in urban forestry, community tree planting, orchard installation and care and volunteer management, GreenWorks is uniquely positioned to ensure the best interests of the county's forest ecosystem and its community residents are being met amid rapid development. GreenWorks and its highly-skilled staff are members of the National Arbor Day Foundation, Alliance for Community Trees and the North Carolina Urban Forest Council, keeping abreast of the latest developments in best practices for community forestry.

### **Describe your data collection, tracking, and reporting procedures.\***

Explain your methods for documenting project, service and client information. Include a description of any software or other tools utilized.

GreenWorks utilizes QuickBooks accounting program to track income and expenses. We will obtain Memoranda of Understanding with our project partners with clearly stated and mutually agreed upon guidelines for participation. In addition to creating a detailed timeline to guide the project, GreenWorks will maintain Excel spreadsheets specific to this project to track progress towards project goals. GreenWorks uses an online time clock application to track project hours for staff and interns, and a volunteer management program to track any volunteer time related to the project. Our staff maintains a detailed log of number of participants or volunteers, number of hours of engagement, and physical improvements such as number of trees and shrubs planted. We are using GIS to map tree locations.

### **Explain your technological resources and capacity.\***

Explain your current technological strengths and barriers and how this impacts your ability to track data and report outcomes. Who is responsible for adaptation and use of technology within your organization?

We have fully functional technology and all staff members keep records up to date on project metrics. The Office Manager, in consultation with the Executive Director and the Director of Operations, is responsible for adaptation and use of technology within our organization. Our Urban Forest Program Coordinator is skilled in the use of GIS.

## **Organizational Profile**

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### **How does the proposed project support your mission and strategic plan?\***

State your mission and the date of your most recent strategic plan, and explain how the proposed project helps advance your organizational goals.

Our new mission statement, adopted in October 2016, is: Asheville GreenWorks inspires, equips and mobilizes individuals and communities to take care of the places we love to live. With more than 200 members and thousands of volunteers, we engage the community in grassroots projects such as tree plantings and the care and preservation of Buncombe County's natural resources. The proposed project advances our organizational goals of keeping Buncombe County "clean and green" by enhancing existing and

creating new green spaces within the county. With volunteers, we plan to plant 800 trees that will provide many ecological, public health, social and economic benefits for our entire community. Some of these trees will establish and expand community orchards that provide access to fresh, healthy, local food. Individuals involved with tree planting and orchard care learn valuable lessons about their local ecosystem, local agriculture and the benefits of trees.

## **What expertise/accomplishments do you have that are relevant to the proposed project?\***

List your organization's strengths as well as accomplishments from the past 3 years that position the organization to be successful with the proposed project.

GreenWorks is the leader in Buncombe County in community forestry initiatives. Drawing upon decades of experience while keeping abreast of the County's changing needs, we lead the way to a clean, green and healthy environment. From young children to retired adults, people participating in our community forestry efforts are actively engaged in making Buncombe County a better place to live, work and play.

Urban and Community Forestry Program accomplishments in the past 3 years include:

- ☒ Hiring the organization's first Urban Forest Program Coordinator in September 2016;
- ☒ Installing five Community Orchards (with about 150 fruit trees and 300 berry bushes) in primarily low-income neighborhoods;
- ☒ Employing six Tree Keepers to maintain Community Orchards;
- ☒ Merging with Bee City USA – Asheville to manage its pollinator planting and education initiatives;
- ☒ Planting 1,679 trees; and
- ☒ Launching a tree inventory for the City of Asheville.

## **Describe partners that are critical to the success of your organization.\***

List any external partners, intermediaries or advisors important to your success, and describe their role and evidence of their commitment. Describe successful collaborations with these people or groups.

The North Carolina Forest Service provides advice, resources and funding to support GreenWorks' Urban and Community Forestry Initiative. Buncombe County General Services, Parks & Recreation and public schools partner with GreenWorks to facilitate the planting of trees on county property. The Tree Commission of the City of Asheville, of which GreenWorks serves as a voting member, is dedicated to maintaining trees, removing damaged or dead trees and trimming trees in the right-of-way to enhance the city's natural beauty in partnership with the City of Asheville's Department of Public Works, through its Street Services Division. Also, the City's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department partners with GreenWorks to plant and maintain trees in City parks and on the grounds of their facilities. The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville contributes land for establishing orchards in public housing developments and supplements pay for Tree Keeper employees.

## ***Financial Information***

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### **Nonprofit financial assurance requirements:**

Financial statements, prepared using a recognizable basis of accounting (i.e., modified accrual) and IRS Form 990s must be submitted to Buncombe County annually.

- Organizations with annual revenues of \$300,000 or greater must submit financial statements audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.
- Those with revenues between \$100,000 and \$300,000 must submit financial statements reviewed in accordance with SSARS 19.
- Those with revenues of less than \$100,000 must submit non-disclosure financial statements compiled in accordance with SSARS 19.

All financial statements must be reported on by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

These requirements are considered minimum requirements. Organizations may submit a higher level of assurance than is required.

### **IRS Form 990 - Upload Here**

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the 990 form you most recently completed.

990 FY14-15.pdf

### **If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.**

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

### **Financial Statements - Upload here**

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements (audit, compilation or review).

Audited Financial Statement 2015 - PDF.pdf

### **If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.**

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

## Complete Budget Worksheet - Upload Here\*

Download the budget form [Here](#).

Complete the budget form for this project/program and the overall agency. Save it to your computer, then upload it by clicking Choose File.

fy18-community-funding-budget-form-trees.xlsx

## Budget Narrative\*

Describe all differences between current year and proposed year. List all pending funding sources with expected date of notification. Please detail any other information that may help clarify the budget.

While planting trees has been core to our mission since 1973, our Community Trees Initiative just launched in 2016 with dedicated full-time staff and budget. This expansion included hiring a full-time Urban Forest Program Coordinator, bringing on a second AmeriCorps member and hiring paid Tree Keepers. With this added capacity we are able to plant more trees and establish community orchards, with additional related expenses. We also have opened a second office and have additional rent and related expenses.

Pending Funding Sources (Expected Amount)

Duke Energy Foundation: \$50,000

Sustainable Forestry Initiative: \$10,000

North Carolina Forest Service: \$15,000

City of Asheville: \$15,000

TD Green Streets: \$20,000

TD Tree Days: \$6,000

Z. Smith Reynolds: \$25,000

## What (if any) portion of requested funds will be used to support capital expenses?\*

Capital projects are defined as those used to acquire or upgrade physical assets such as property, buildings, or equipment. Please detail.

No portion of requested funds will be used to support capital expenses.

## Employee Wages

Please provide information about the wage breakdowns of your employees. Living wage for Buncombe County has been identified as \$11.00 per hour for employees with employer-provided health insurance and \$12.50 per hour for employees without.



### Employees with employer-provided health insurance\*

List the number of employees in your organization with employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

\$7.25 - \$10.99 per hour

\$11.00 - \$14.99 per hour

\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour

\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour

\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour

\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour

\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour

\$40.00+ per hour

Not applicable.

### Employees without employer-provided health insurance\*

List the number of employees in your organization without employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

\$7.25 - \$12.49 per hour

\$12.50 - \$14.99 per hour

\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour

\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour

\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour

\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour

\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour

\$40.00+ per hour

\$7.25 - \$12.49 per hour: 20 youth interns working part-time in the summer months

\$12.50 - \$14.99 per hour: 2 adult interns working part-time (less than 20 hours/week)

\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour: 6 full-time employees

\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour: 1 full-time employee

GreenWorks also has two AmeriCorps volunteers through Project Conserve serving an 11-month term of service. Each AmeriCorps member receives a living allowance of \$8,870/year.