The **Grow Boston Greener (GBG)** program is a competitive mini-grant program of Boston Natural Areas Network (BNAN) in partnership with the City of Boston, that provides funding of up to $2,500 for tree plantings in neighborhoods throughout the City. Funding for the GBG program is provided by the support of corporate and philanthropic donors through the Fund for Parks and Recreation in Boston.

The application deadline for the fall grant round **is <u>October 3, 2011.</u>** There will be a GBG *Briefing Session* on September 22 from 6pm – 7pm to help applicants plan their projects and answer questions. The meeting will be held at the BNAN office, 62 Summer St, 2nd Floor, Boston, MA 02110. Please RSVP at 617-542-7696, ext 20.

Overview

The **Grow Boston Greener** program was launched on Arbor Day, April 30, 2007. An inventory of the City's trees showed that Boston had an overall tree canopy cover of 29%. The GBG vision is to plant an additional 100,000 trees by 2020 to increase the urban tree canopy to 35% and make Boston a cooler, cleaner, healthier city. The goals of GBG are to increase tree canopy, mitigate heat island effect, reduce energy consumption, improve air quality and improve storm water management. GBG focuses not only on planting trees, but also on the community-based stewardship activities necessary to ensure the trees' survival.

Who Can Apply

Grants ranging from $500 to $2,500 are available to non profit organizations with 501(c)3 status and their partners, such as community gardeners, friends of parks, schools and library groups, civic and neighborhood associations, etc. Organizations without tax-exempt status can apply with a 501(c) 3 organization serving as the fiscal agent.

How to Apply

Complete and submit a GBG application form, a property owner consent form and a signed watering agreement **by <u>October 3, 2011</u>**. Site visits for all applications will be conducted from October 4- 14. Applicants will be notified of decisions on October 17, 2011.

What are Eligible Projects

Trees must be planted in the City of Boston, with volunteers, on public property or privately held publicly accessible areas such as schools, parks, greenways, gardens, grounds of health and social service agencies, and in projects of community development corporations (CDC), etc. This year the program is focusing on neighborhoods underserved by tree canopy as identified in the report: State of the Urban Forest, UEI, Spring 2008 (*www.urbaneco.org/StateoftheUrbanForestReport.pdf)*.

Many different trees can be planted with grant funding. See attached tree list for suggested varieties. In order to maximize the amount of tree canopy provided by the grant, eligible projects will have a minimum tree caliper of 1". Larger tree sizes are encouraged. To increase environmental impact, group plantings of five or more trees are encouraged.

A maintenance plan must be completed and submitted which includes a signed watering agreement for the first three years after planting, and a signed property owner consent form, to show permission for site access and use. Trees need to be planted by December 15, 2011.

What is NOT Eligible

GBG funds cannot be used for private, no-access locations. GBG funds cannot be used to buy seedlings. Street tree plantings are not eligible for funding under this grant program. Funds must be used only for tree purchases, delivery costs and initial planting supplies (e.g. mulch, compost, stakes, tree gators). Funds cannot be used for tools, contractor costs, or other labor involved in planting the trees. Funds are for the initial tree costs only, not for the follow up maintenance period.

Training and Support

If funded, at least one representative of each project is required to attend a mandatory two-hour training session regarding site selection, planting and maintenance of trees, and the management of volunteers on October 15, 2011 (Location and time TBD)

Financial Information

To ensure proper completion of the project, while providing enough capital to begin, the grant will be awarded in a 60% pre-project, 40% post project distribution. Upon the project's completion, copies of receipts must be mailed to BNAN. . If the project costs less than the initial grant distribution, the grant recipient must refund the excess distribution to BNAN. BNAN representatives will complete a follow-up site visit to ensure the satisfactory completion of the project.

Timeline

9/15/11 Request for Proposals

9/22/11 Briefing Session

10/3/11 Application deadline

10/4/11 to 10/14/11 Site Visits

10/17/11 Application Decision

10/15/11 Training Session

10/17/11 Projects begin; initial funds released

12/15/11 Project wrap up; follow-up site visits conducted; final funds released.

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