



**City of Springfield Urban Forestry Commission
Minutes
1:00 p.m. January 24, 2024
Room 203, Municipal Center West and via Zoom**

The meeting was called to Order.

In attendance were Susan Allen, Randy Belville, Jan Von Qualen, Dave Fuchs, Brad Hamel, and Amy Rasing, from the City of Springfield; Susan Helm and Chuck Smith, from the Springfield Park District; Michael Clark for Sustainable Springfield; and Colette Copic from Chicago Regional Tree Initiative, present by Zoom. There was not a quorum and no business was conducted.

The parties discussed the City's and the Park District's ideas for the Inventory and Management Plan Grant for Communities Over 75,000. Grant funding is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service through the Inflation Reduction Act under the direction of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Urban & Community Forestry Program. The Grant will be administered by the Morton Arboretum. The Grant can be as much as \$3,000,000. All funded projects must be completed by September 1, 2027. The Grant is for nature deprived populations and disadvantaged communities.

A complete digital inventory and a Community Forest Management Plan that includes one or more components that focus on maintaining or improving the tree canopy in disadvantaged areas of the community, are the primary required deliverables. Applicants must also propose they must focus their engagement, outcomes, and action on disadvantaged areas. All projects must be accompanied by a request for funding for on-the-ground implementation work in disadvantaged areas of the community, based on the new management plan.

Municipalities and their associated park districts are encouraged to both apply for funding using the same contractor(s) to reduce costs of inventory work and gain a more complete picture of the publicly owned tree canopy in the area. Each government entity must submit an independent application. All communities must specify the disadvantaged census tracts in which work will be performed in their application. Community outreach and responsiveness to community needs are required.

Grant recipients may use contractors and/or Sub Awardees for implementation.

In addition to the Inventory and Community Forest Management Plan, projects suggested for the City included: Tree Ambassadors through a Sub Awardee; Food Forest through a Sub Awardee; tree maintenance through a contractor; education and training events.

Applications are due on March 1, 2024. Ms. Copic is available to answer questions and help with completing the application.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30.