

Community Tree Planting Grants

February 24, 2026

Legislative Appropriations

2024 appropriation \$5 million

- Direct awards of \$300,000 for St. Peter and \$300,000 for Northfield have been processed
- \$4.4 million available for competitive grants

2025 appropriation \$900,000 available for competitive grants

2024 and 2025 appropriations for competitive grants were combined into one Request for Proposals (RFP) offering for Community Tree Planting Grants.

Community Tree Planting Grants Application Process

Request for applications for the combined RFP opened on August 13, 2025 and closed on October 27, 2025.

All awardees received updated status notification by December 12, 2025.

DNR is currently processing pre-award risk assessments ahead of executing contracts. No contracts have been fully executed as of February 17, 2026.

Eligible applicants included Tribal governments, cities, counties, townships, as well as park and recreation boards in cities of the first class within Minnesota. The following activities are eligible for grant funding:

1. removing and planting shade trees on public or Tribal land to provide environmental benefits;
2. replacing trees lost to forest pests, disease, or storms on public or residential land;
3. establishing a more diverse community forest better able to withstand disease and forest pests on public or residential land.

Consistent with legislative direction, priority for Community Tree Planting Grant awards was given to:

- (1) projects removing and replacing ash trees that pose significant public safety concerns; and
- (2) projects located in a census block group with a supplemental demographic index score in the 70th percentile or higher as identified using the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool methodology provided in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's environmental justice screen technical documentation dated July 31, 2024.

The supplemental demographic index is a combination of five socioeconomic factors averaged together for each Census block group. The supplemental demographic index can provide an additional perspective on potential community vulnerability. The formula is as follows: supplemental demographic index = (% low-income + % persons with disabilities + % less than high school education + % limited English speaking + low life expectancy) / 5.

Total Request

DNR received 52 applications requesting \$10,858,045.11 with final award decisions anticipated for spring 2026.

- Applications were received from a Tribal government, several municipalities, some counties, and a park and recreation boards in cities of the first class within Minnesota.
- Applicants came from across the state, from cities as large 400,000 people and some with less than 1,000.