

Neighbourhood Planting Program

2026 Spring Program Guidelines

Environment, Climate and Forestry
Urban Forestry

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Purpose

This program supports community-led tree giveaway and planting events that will increase canopy cover in Toronto through resident engagement and leadership in tree planting and stewardship on private land.

Types of Support Available

Through this program, eligible community groups can receive one or more of the following supports:

- Free native trees and shrubs.
- Financial assistance of up to \$500 (to fund expenses as deemed eligible by Urban Forestry based on the event deliverables).
- Education, training, and technical support for planting and caring for new trees/shrubs.

Duration

Events must take place between April – June 2026.

Eligibility

Applicants must be a grassroots, community-based not-for-profit group or organization (incorporated or unincorporated) based in Toronto with annual operating budgets of less than \$500,000.

Applicants must have at least one year of experience as a group/organization.

Groups must be accountable to, and representative of the community they serve.

Groups must be in good standing with the City of Toronto. Previously funded groups who have failed to meet the terms and conditions of a past grant or who have any outstanding requirements may be ineligible.

Unincorporated groups that are requesting financial assistance must work with a trustee organization. A trustee organization is not required for incorporated groups, or unincorporated groups that are only requesting free trees and shrubs and technical assistance (no financial assistance).

A trustee is an incorporated not-for-profit organization and/or registered charity based in Toronto with audited financial statements and the organizational structure to administer other groups grant funds. A trustee will hold funds and disburse monies to the group, assume liability for project activities, and provide insurance, administrative support, and mentorship.

The following costs and/or activities are not eligible for funding:

- **General**

- Activities that duplicate, conflict with, or fall within the scope of another program or service being delivered or developed by the City of Toronto or another organization (e.g. Ravine Strategy).
- Activities that are contrary to the policies of the City of Toronto and/or applicable federal, provincial and municipal legislation, regulations and policies.
- Activities that are not consistent with good arboricultural practices.
- Activities that meet any tree planting requirement or obligation under the City of Toronto's tree bylaws, as a condition for planning and development approval, or any other laws or regulations.
- Research projects, summer camps, political or religious activities/services.
- Purchase, care or maintenance of invasive species.

- **Location**

- Activities taking place outside the City of Toronto.
- Tree planting on lands managed by the City of Toronto.
- Activities taking place on lands without the prior written approval of the property owner.
- Activities taking place on or adjacent to an Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA), Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), Provincially Significant Wetlands, protected areas under the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law, or any other protected or sensitive natural area without the prior written approval of Urban Forestry.
- Activities taking place on lands owned or controlled by the Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board, or Toronto Community Housing Corporation without their prior written approval.

- **Costs**

- Core operating funding or costs related to ongoing programs/services.
- Internal or external salaries or other people-costs
- Overhead and administrative costs
- Taxes such as GST and HST for which the recipient is eligible for a tax rebate, and all other costs eligible for rebates.
- Contingency costs.
- Capital costs or infrastructure (building repairs or renovations, construction of sheds or garden beds, purchase of computers or audio/visual equipment etc.).

- Other costs deemed ineligible by Urban Forestry including summer camps, land purchases, political activities, religious activities/services, advocacy expenses, research projects, fundraising activities, endowments or endowment building, scholarships, grants or bursaries, awards and prizes, and alcohol purchases

The following are examples of the types of costs and/or activities that are typically eligible for funding:

- Permit fees/rental fees for event location
- Mulch
- Promotional materials such as printing flyers, posters, or signage
- Health and safety materials for volunteers such as first aid kits, sunscreen, hand sanitizer, high visibility vests, gloves, light refreshments
- Event registration platform fee
- Materials and supplies such as clipboards, pens, paper, etc.
- Other expenses deemed eligible by Urban Forestry. If you have a question about eligible expenses, please contact Urban Forestry staff

Event Details & Requirements

All trees and shrubs must be planted on private land within the City of Toronto and cannot be planted on City-owned or managed land, including parks, ravines, natural areas, and the road right of way.

The event must take place within the City of Toronto in a location accessible by public transit and must adhere to the City of Toronto's Human Rights and Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy.

Groups must have the staff or volunteer capacity to plan, promote, and deliver an event.

The Process:

Eligible groups can apply to host either a free tree and shrub giveaway to private properties in Toronto or a planting event held on privately-owned land in Toronto.

In the application, applicants will specify a first and second choice for an event date.

Applicants will also specify how many plants they will request for their event in the application. There is a minimum order requirement of 50 plants. The maximum order size may be capped by Urban Forestry based on the applicant's prior experience and/or the total amount of plants requested by all applicants. Please note that applicants are expected to meet but not exceed the number of plants requested in the application. Any additional plants above the number originally requested must be approved by Urban Forestry staff.

Urban Forestry staff will select a variety of native tree and shrub species and circulate an order form of available species to the successful applicants. Applicants are responsible for pre-registering participants for a tree giveaway event or producing an attendee list for a planting event. Participants may also be invited to participate in a voluntary City-directed post-planting success survey.

Applicants can offer multiple plants to each participant but should not provide more than 5 trees/shrubs to one address for tree giveaways. Completed order forms must be returned to Urban Forestry staff at least 2 weeks in advance of the event date. Please allow adequate time to register participants using the registration method/platform of your choice.

Urban Forestry staff will coordinate the delivery of the plant materials to your event location on the day of your event and will be on-site to receive the plant delivery. One or more members from your organization must be on-site to receive the delivery and help unload the plants. Urban Forestry staff will do their best to accommodate preferred delivery times, however, please note that the delivery may be scheduled as early as 7:00 a.m. on the day of your event to accommodate multiple events that may be occurring on the same day. Urban Forestry staff will reach out to you directly to organize delivery details.

Successful applicants will be required to submit a final report on TGRIP one month after the event date.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted online through the [Toronto Grants, Rebate, and Incentives Portal \(TGRIP\)](#) by **4 pm on February 13, 2026**. A link to the TGRIP portal can also be found at www.toronto.ca/treegrants. Please allow time to create an account and organizational profile within TGRIP if you have not done so already.

Applications will be reviewed and assessed by Urban Forestry staff and all applicants will be notified of the decision.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on four areas: Concept, Feasibility, Impact, and Budget if applicable.

- The project must closely align with the stated purpose of the program.
- The application should clearly demonstrate the applicant's experience and capacity to successfully deliver the event, along with clearly defined deliverables and a feasible process for how they will be achieved.

- Event costs should be reasonable to achieve the proposed deliverables.
- The application should demonstrate the impact of the event as it relates to the purpose of the program, increasing canopy cover, and increasing resident engagement and leadership.

Additional assessment considerations include:

- Geographic representation across the City of Toronto.
- Locations with low canopy cover or a high need for tree planting and/or stewardship.
- Community impact and equity impacts of proposed activities.

Accommodation

Accommodation (e.g. documents in alternate formats, off-hour meetings) is available as required to ensure that groups can fully participate in the program. For accommodation, please email forestrygrants@toronto.ca.

Information Sessions

Monday, January 19, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. – [Registration Link](#)

Interested in learning more about this program and the application process? Register for an information session on the Neighbourhood Planting Program. Participants are welcome to join or leave at any time throughout the information session. This information session will include:

- Program Summary (~15 min)
- Application Process (~15 min)
- Open Q&A Period (~1hr & 15 min)

Application Support

Prospective applicants can contact Urban Forestry for support in determining if the project and organization are eligible to apply for this program. Applicants can also contact Urban Forestry with any questions, comments, or complaints regarding the program.

Please email: forestrygrants@toronto.ca