

Trees for Nebraska Towns Program

*Providing trees
for fall tree-planting events & celebrations
across Nebraska*

Application Deadline: July 31. Western NE (Panhandle) recipients should have trees planted by October 15. Trees in other locations should be planted by November 15.

The purpose of the Trees for Nebraska Towns Program is to help celebrate and enable the planting of trees in fall, the best time of the year to plant trees. For this program, trees can be planted any time between tree receipt and November 15, 2026 (October 15 for Panhandle).

Goals of the Trees for Nebraska Towns Program:

- Award trees to project sponsors (tree boards, civic organizations, non-profits, neighborhood associations, government agencies, etc.) to be planted in public spaces in their communities.
- **Prioritize tree planting in high impact areas, such as along streets and neighborhoods of highest need.**
- Promote the value of healthy trees for a healthy community and proper siting, planting, establishment, and long-term care through community-led educational events and projects.
- Increase resiliency of the community forest by promoting a broader diversity of native and well-adapted non-native tree species. Focus will be on using reliable, yet underutilized, large-maturing shade tree species.

Trees for Nebraska Towns Program is supported by:
PlantNebraska's Trees for Nebraska Towns Initiative, funded by
the Nebraska Environmental Trust,
and the Nebraska Forest Service's
Landscape Scale Restoration grant,
funded by the US Forest Service.



Trees for Nebraska Towns Program Details

The Program Provides Trees: the program provides pre-selected trees, along with educational and technical support. The program **does not** provide direct funding for trees or other materials.

Who Can Apply: Potential applicants include tree boards, civic organizations, non-profits, neighborhood associations, government agencies, schools, and arboretum curators. Individuals must represent a group or organization. **Priority will be given to high-impact projects, such as street trees and neighborhoods of higher need.**

NOTE: All applicants must receive written permission from property owners/managers before planting.

Project Location(s): **Projects must be located in Nebraska and on property of civic importance that provides clear public benefit.** Eligible planting sites include, but are not limited to street ROW, parks, school campuses, the grounds of civic buildings, recreation areas, neighborhood common areas, and fairgrounds. Trees can be planted in front yards of private property if they will provide significant shade to public streets and sidewalks AND there is no ROW option.

NOTE: Previous recipients are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to propose projects on new sites. Priority will be given to new applicants and sites.

Tree Request Quantity: As in previous years of this program, the focus is small projects of 1-10 trees. However, requests for more than 10 are allowed. Applicants requesting a quantity of over 10 will be required to complete a more extensive application. Recipients MAY be required to pick up from a nursery regional drop site, especially those receiving more than 10. High impact projects (especially street trees) and projects with an extensive outreach component will be given priority to receive the maximum number of trees.

Plant Quality & Size: Emphasis will be placed on high-quality trees and root systems—smaller trees with better roots. The expected size for most trees will be .75 -1.25" caliper and 4-10' tall. Size is large enough to be healthy and have impact, yet small enough to easily move and plant.

Species Selection: Emphasis will be on a diversity of large-maturing trees (over 40 feet). Recipients will be assigned multiple species appropriate for their region and site.

Outreach Requirement: **Projects are required to contribute** outreach efforts to increase public awareness of the benefits of trees and the need for diversity and proper tree care. **Educational resources and assistance promoting your event are available, including a press release template.** Community Forestry staff or other tree advocates may be available to attend events upon request.

Site Plan: A map/image (such as Google map) showing the proposed planting must be submitted with the application.

Post-project reporting: All grant recipients must report evidence of outreach component(s) and total number of volunteer hours.

Post-Planting Maintenance: All trees will be expected to be properly maintained after planting.

Project Completion Deadline: Projects should be implemented between tree receipt and November 15, 2026 (October 15 for Panhandle) unless an extension has been requested and granted. If possible, projects should be implemented and/or promoted around selected outreach events.

Application Deadline: July 31; qualifying projects/applicants will be assisted on a first-come, first-served basis and by the priorities described above.

How the Program Works and Timeline

June-July 31	Applications are accepted
August 1-14	Applications are reviewed Priorities are given to street tree projects, areas of clear public benefit and need, new applicants, and new locations for previous applicants. Earlier submittals and proposed outreach can be tie-breakers.
By August 25	All applicants notified of acceptance or denial Recipients receive additional information and next steps guidance
Mid-late September	Trees are delivered by NFS/PlantNebraska or nursery, OR are picked up by recipient
By Oct. 15 (Panhandle)	Trees are planted, outreach activities occur
By Nov. 15 (all other)	Trees are planted, outreach activities occur
By November 30	Recipients submit required reporting information