

2021 EWEB GREENPOWER GRANT APPLICATION

Contact Information:

Friends of Trees

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

Erik Burke

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Eugene Director

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Friends of Trees Eugene Neighborhood
and Community Tree Project

PROPOSAL TITLE

\$50,000

GRANT AMOUNT REQUESTED

Erik Burke

6/4/21

SIGNATURE

DATE

Email completed application and proposal to:

Cheryl Froehlich

Cheryl.Froehlich@eweb.org

Application deadline:

Must be submitted **no later than**

MONDAY, MAY 31, 2021

Questions?

Contact Cheryl Froehlich

cheryl.froehlich@eweb.org

541-685-7676

Proposal: Please write a proposal containing the following elements. Submit the proposal as a PDF with your application.

1. Background:

- Mission of the organization
- The needs your organization addresses
- The population your organization serves
- A brief description of your current programs and operating budget

2. Project Description

- Statement of the primary purpose of the project and its relationship to EWEB's mission
- The population you plan to serve and how they will benefit from the project
- Strategies you will employ to implement the project

3. Project Evaluation

- Your criteria for a successful project
- The results you hope to achieve by the end of the funding period
- The method by which you will measure effectiveness

4. Budget and Timeline

- A budget for the project for which funds are requested, **including any additional funding which has been secured at the time of application.**
- Timeline of the project

5. Attachments

- Proof of nonprofit status (copy of IRS letter)*
- List of board of directors*
- One-paragraph resumes of key staff working on the project
- Amount and source of any other funding support previously received from EWEB (if applicable)
- Proof of ownership or authority to install equipment at or otherwise modify building, if request for facility construction project

*Optional or not needed for public and academic institutions.

EWEB Greenpower Grant Proposal 6/3/21,

Friends of Trees Eugene Neighborhood and Community Tree Project

Background

Mission

Friends of Trees inspires people to improve the world around them through a simple solution: Planting Trees. Together.

Needs

Friends of Trees (FOT) work addresses community needs in multiple areas. The proposed work helps EWEB promote its commitment to the environment and community. The Neighborhood and Community Tree Project will plant 500 new trees, and leverage the planting of hundreds more. The project also draws on decades of local experience to design an approach that will lead to low tree mortality, and ensure the longest tree survival possible through community stewardship. By planting trees in appropriate locations and building a network of community stewards, trees will live longer and provide more public health, economic, cultural, and ecological benefits. By emphasizing native and large shade trees that are climate resilient, and cultural methods that lead to longer lived trees, more carbon will be sequestered. Perhaps most importantly, this project will deliver equity in urban forestry, planting in areas that have low canopy, low income, and relatively high racial diversity. The high level of community and neighborhood involvement designed into this approach, grows skill, ownership, and responsibility for neighborhood trees, and addresses historic inequities in urban forestry.

Friends of Trees' community forestry model is nationally recognized and copied around the country. Yet it has historically been based on land ownership and failed to serve residents at rental properties. In Eugene, the consolidation of Eugene Tree Foundation (ETF) within FOT in 2011 signaled increased focus on equity in tree planting. ETF and Eugene's previous tree programs such as the city's NeighborWoods program focused on Eugene's core, south Eugene, and getting trees to property owners. When ETF became FOT in 2011, our focus moved to serving all areas of Eugene as well as Springfield. Last year's multiple stressors of a pandemic, fires, and social justice upheavals forced FOT staff to critically examine our model, and change it to address equity, climate change, and to make it serve community in more effective ways. This project incorporates and scales up these changes.

By using open source and shared ownership software that allows block and census block level examination of canopy coverage, income, demographics and other community characteristics, prioritization of work areas can truly serve disadvantaged sections of Eugene and its neighborhoods. For example, it is a local convention that west Eugene, or Bethel neighborhood is poor and underserved, ignoring the data showing that Bethel neighborhood is diverse and segregated, with pockets of high need and racial diversity, and pockets of wealth and low

diversity. The approach proposed here will serve the areas of greatest need that have low canopy, low income, and high racial diversity. Properties that are rentals will use FOT's opt in model for yard trees, and use the notification model for street trees, allowing the most trees as possible to be planted at rental properties, while being respectful of property rights.

The proposed project also serves the need for FOT and local urban forestry to become more sustainable, and reduce use of carbon and motor vehicles. By focusing on working to plant as many trees as possible in an area as small as five or 10 square blocks, more of the planting and stewardship work can take place on foot and by bike. By engaging neighbors to plant and care for their own trees as much as possible, the system becomes more self-sustaining, has fewer costs, and needs fewer inputs and money spent to maintain it. Trees also address the need to improve habitat for declining wildlife species, and provide important habitat for all kinds of wildlife, including birds, mammals, insects, and a variety of pollinators.

Many of the proposed work areas, such as the section of Bethel neighborhood immediately north of the Baxter creosote plant, are disproportionately polluted. By increasing canopy cover in this area, trees will catch some of this pollution and help clean air and soil and water.

Increasing tree canopy provides a plethora of ecological, public health, cultural and economic benefits. Planting trees has been shown to significantly reduce air pollution, reduce asthma, and improve respiratory health. Research increasingly shows a wide array of public health benefits from trees such as reduced depression, stress, and anxiety. Other physical benefits include lower blood pressure and faster healing. Research also shows that people exercise more in well-treed environments. Two large scale randomized controlled trials found that children born in well treed areas have higher birth weights, a proxy for better health outcomes over their lifetimes. When tree canopy drops following insect infestations, birth weight drops. This project specifically will help address the need to improve food security by providing fruit and nuts.

As a community-building nonprofit, FOT meets the community need to connect people to each other and to local nature through work that leaves tangible results that provide lasting benefits. Many of the cultural and community benefits of FOT events revolve around community building through engaging volunteers and making volunteering fun and productive.

This project will contribute to increasing canopy in some of Eugene's lowest canopy areas. Despite perceptions to the contrary, Eugene is a low canopy city, with a great need for tree planting in public and private spaces. Most people seem to think that Eugene is a well-treed community, but it actually has a low canopy cover of around 26% city wide, and low income and industrial neighborhoods in Eugene where planting in this project will take place are as low as 7%.

This project will address many local needs related to climate change. Where appropriate, many of the trees planted in this project will be large, long-lived trees selected for their ability to sequester and hold carbon for long periods. As climate change heats up our cities in the summers, trees shade buildings and roads and reduce urban heat island effects. Research on heat islands in Eugene show significant association with under 5 year old and over 64 year old

populations and low income. By prioritizing these areas, this project will begin to address heat island issues.

Another need this proposal addresses is for urban forestry to begin to shift focus from street trees to yard or private land. Typically cities are 75-85% private and 15-25% public, yet most funding is for public tree planting, usually in “planting strips,” the area between sidewalks and curbs. This is the worst place for trees. Here they contend with severely compacted soils, conflicts with utilities, not enough root volume for growth and many other issues. Private land, particularly yards, have adequate root volume for trees to thrive with few of these conflicts. This project proposes half of the trees to be planted on public land and half on private.

Population Served

The specific focus of this project is getting trees to populations in Eugene’s highest need areas, particularly areas of high racial diversity, low income, and low canopy. The benefits of cleaning the air and water, other ecological services and beautification will redound to the entire population of the metro area of Eugene-Springfield and its visitors

Current Programs and Budget

The Eugene Friends of Trees office is part of a region wide organization that works in 20 cities from southwest Washington in the north to Eugene-Springfield in the south, with offices in Portland and Eugene. The Eugene office serves the Eugene-Springfield metro area. Friends of Trees is nationally recognized for its award winning community forestry programs, and the Eugene office is fortunate to be able to leverage the strength and achievements of the larger Portland office.

The Eugene office has two full time staff and two part time staff. Being part of a regional organization strengthens the Eugene office. Our website and online store were created and are managed through our Portland office. Specialized staff in each program area in the Portland office are able to provide guidance, training and assistance to Eugene staff.

The primary Friends of Trees programs are Neighborhood Trees and Green Space. Within these two programs and supporting them are FOT’s development and communication, volunteer and outreach, and stewardship and monitoring programs. The 2018 Greenpower grant that FOT received supported FOT’s Greenspace program to plant and care for trees in west Eugene. The current proposal will fund FOT’s Neighborhood Trees program work.

Neighborhood Trees Program

The Neighborhood Trees (NT) program engages volunteers to plant street and yard trees in urban neighborhoods. The majority of trees have historically been planted in public right-of-ways (ROW’s) adjoining houses, but trees are also planted in industrial and commercial right of ways and in front and back yards for “treecipients.” The proposed grant funded project is an improved approach to Neighborhood Tree program work.

NT plantings in Eugene are on Saturdays from 9am-noon about every other weekend from the end of October through the end of April. At these events, all the trees are planted by volunteers. Volunteer leaders called crew leaders are trained to lead general volunteers at plantings. In Eugene and Springfield, about 50 trees are planted at an average planting with about 50 or more volunteers, who break into multiple teams of 6-15 members. Volunteer pickups and bike trailers haul the trees and stakes and tools. Volunteers' car and bike pool on a route to plant 6-10 trees per team, typically going to 3-5 homes along a route. Many community building strategies are practiced, such as placing tree recipients on teams with their neighbors, so they carpool and plant together and have a chance to get to know each other. FOT provides the trees, stakes, tree tags, tools, gloves, refreshments and proper safety and tree planting instruction, and takes care of organizing the events and supporting volunteers, as well as working with the local municipality to follow all tree selection and siting rules. Each planting season starts off with a crew leader training followed quickly by the first planting. Each season a larger core of returning crew leaders and general volunteers provides the base of leaders and volunteers for planting teams. Individuals and groups of volunteers join plantings from many parts of the community, with a lot of children, youth, and college volunteers, as well as business, church, and other community groups.

Friends of Trees supports tree recipients to care for their trees in multiple ways through the NT program. Volunteers called summer inspectors check on every tree planted twice each dry season during the first two years of the tree's life, collecting health and mortality data and leaving door hangers at each visit for tree recipients that feature a thumbs up or thumbs down for watering, weeding, and mulching, and advice on tree care. Tree recipients also receive a tree care guide, a watering reminder postcard, and watering reminder emails with tips on tree care. These forms of support for tree recipients leads to a documented survival rate of greater than 96% through the first dry season. Each tree receives a colorful tree tag that has tree care information, the variety of tree planted, and the logo of the business sponsor of the planting event.

Funding for the program comes from a mix of municipal contracts, grants, business sponsorships, individual donors and tree fees. There is a tree fee of \$45 dollars per tree, a small part of the cost, primarily as a way of having each tree recipient have some skin in the game, making them more likely to care for the tree. A scholarship program is available to anyone who asks that will give a 50 or 100% discount for the trees, so no one is ever turned away from receiving trees because of cost.

An additional element of the NT program is the pruning program. Volunteers are trained to skillfully prune young trees at events in the summer in small groups. The emphasis in this program is to prune as many of the NT trees that FOT plants as possible. All pruning is from the ground with no tree climbing or ladder use to ensure safety of the volunteers. The primary pruning objectives are establishing good structure and a central leader on trees, and to raise limbs over sidewalks and roadways. Experts in urban forestry state that there is no more cost-effective way to reduce the damage and costs of storms and increase return on investment in trees than young tree structural pruning.

Green Space Program

The Green Space program (GS) brings volunteers together to restore watersheds in urban natural areas, parks, roadside waste areas and other open areas. In Eugene and Springfield, most GS plantings are native trees with native shrub and wildflower understories, although some climate resilient trees that are exceptional in carbon uptake like giant sequoia are used. Unlike the northern valley, which restores closed forests, in our area we tend to restore to more of a savanna model, since closed forests were rare under indigenous management in the southern Willamette Valley. Local examples of FOT Green Space plantings are along the Union Pacific railyard in Trainsong neighborhood, along Northwest Expressway, along Beltline and I-105, and in Alton Baker Park. All the trees in this program are also planted by volunteers, but instead of breaking into teams and travelling around neighborhoods, volunteers break into teams and all work in a section of one cohesive project. During the late spring and summer volunteers take part in Green Space tree care events where they weed and mulch and prune the trees to ensure their health and survival. Summer inspector volunteers also monitor GS projects.

Budget

The operating budget for the Eugene office has recently hovered around \$240,000 per year. About 80% of the expenses are staff time, with about 13% event and tree costs, and the remaining 7% office and administration costs. On the revenue side, 55% of income is municipal contracts, 9% from grants, 21% from business support, 8% from individual donations, and 7% from tree fees and other sources.

For Friends of Trees as a whole, the annual budget is 2.5 million, the majority being for the Portland office and it's neighborhood trees program. Eighty percent of funding for the organization as a whole comes from municipal contracts and the other 20% about equally divided between grants, business support, and individual giving.

Neighborhood and Community Tree Project Description

Purpose of Project and Relation to EWEB's Mission

The primary purpose of this project is practicing a new model of community forestry to best serve the Eugene citizenry. The goal is to get free or highly discounted street and yard trees to parts of our city that are low canopy, low income, and have relatively high racial diversity. We will take a targeted block by block approach, using software to identify census blocks that meet these criteria, and then focusing on 4-10 square block areas of high need for planting. The approach will work closely with neighbors, residents of the prioritized areas, community groups and neighborhood associations to make the plantings as community-centered and as grass roots as possible.

This approach addresses FOT's goals and EWEB's mission by contributing to the vitality of Eugene's community, and taking a new more equitable approach to urban forestry. The project

reflects FOT's and EWEB's deep commitment to Eugene's natural and human community. The targeted neighborhood focus of this project will help reduce our carbon footprint. Improvements in FOT's model in this project will help with energy conservation, by helping residents locate shade trees so that they serve to cool houses during the summer and let in light in the winter, conserving energy, while avoiding conflicts with power lines and solar energy production. Unlike solar panels or other hard infrastructure, trees are green infrastructure that become more valuable over time as they age and provide more beneficial structure.

Friends of Trees received a Greenpower grant from EWEB in 2018 to focus on planting trees in public open spaces in west Eugene and to fund their maintenance in the first growing season. Since then, FOT has been watering and holding work parties to weed, mulch, prune, and restake these trees. After success in engaging volunteers to plant and care for greenspace trees, FOT is pivoting from our Greenspace program, to focus on our Neighborhood Trees program for this Greenpower grant application. In response to the multiple challenges of the past year, FOT has critically evaluated and changed our model to better serve the community, be more resilient, and address equity issues, and we are excited to bring this approach to as many residents of underserved parts of Eugene as possible.

Population Served and Benefits

Friends of Trees serves all members of our community. As an organization, FOT is actively engaged in equity, diversity and inclusion work to provide the benefits of trees to all fairly. As described above, this project will focus on planting trees in sections of Eugene with low income, high diversity, and low canopy. Often these traits overlap. We will also prioritize plantings where they have the greatest possibility to benefit children and the elderly. By emphasizing trees that are climate resilient and provide habitat benefits, this project also serves non-human plants and animals, for example pollinators and other creatures that are diminished. While focused on planting in underserved areas, more canopy in these areas benefits all citizens of Eugene by contributing to cleaner air, water and soil, and improving public health.

Engaging the community in planting and care, and incorporating education in every part of tree work is part of a long-term effort to build an educated, caring, skilled populace that supports healthy ecosystems and helps maintain them.

Strategies to Implement the Project

This project will use a highly localized neighborhood planting approach that takes advantage of our team's decades of community forestry experience in Eugene and makes improvements to our proven approach. The new approach combines the block-by-block approach we used more than 20 years ago to transform neighborhood streets, by planting nearly every available planting space in the public right-of-way, with use of software that allows highest-need areas to be prioritized, and adds yard trees to the street tree focus. We believe this new approach will be lower impact, more sustainable, more equitable, and more resilient.

Five plantings will take place in each of the 2021-22 and the 2022-23 planting seasons. A total of 500 trees will be planted as part of this project, with half public trees and half private. Each event

will plant roughly 50 trees with 25-50 volunteers. Neighbors and residents will be consulted about the trees that are offered. Street trees have to follow the City of Eugene's approved street tree list. But yard tree selections will be more diverse and focus on native trees, shade trees, fruit, nut, and other useful trees.

We will begin this approach by using open-source software and apps shared from the City of Eugene that allow us to overlay three forms of prioritized need: low canopy cover, high racial diversity, and low income. Then we will meet with residents in the neighborhoods to further prioritize and choose work areas, for example 8 square blocks to focus on. Then we will schedule dates to do surveys, canvas and prepare for the planting. At these events, neighborhood volunteers will go door to door offering free or discounted street and yard trees to every resident in every house in the work area. While this canvassing is going on, FOT and City of Eugene staff will mark every city-approved planting space in the right-of-ways for street trees. FOT staff on bicycles will be available to come to any house that has questions about trees or siting to help ensure that trees are planted in appropriate locations. Printed and online information on tree offerings, siting guidelines and tree care will be available. By paying so much attention with educational materials and on-site consultations, trees will be more likely to be placed in appropriate locations. This will benefit EWEB and the community by avoiding conflicts between trees and structures, powerlines, and solar panels, and increasing the ecological, energy conservation, and other benefits of well-sited trees.

On planting days, events will be staged within the work areas at a park or open space. Here FOT will follow its typical planting day approach of dividing into teams that plant roughly 10 trees, each team led by two FOT trained crew leaders who insure safety and engagement for volunteers, and teach proper planting techniques. Teams will largely walk and ride bikes from site to site, minimizing truck and car use. FOT will provide all tools and supplies. FOT and the neighbors helping organize the plantings will provide potluck food before and after the planting events.

To create the greatest impact, FOT will work with our excellent partner the City of Eugene for complimentary plantings. The city's internal planting program can plant right-of-ways along arterials close to the areas planted through FOT's project making a major combined positive impact.

This block-by-block approach will not replace FOT's city wide approach, so anyone in Eugene can still get trees at annual plantings for west, north, and south Eugene. But this model will add a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient element to our annual plantings. It will be more equitable by focusing on areas of greatest need, and by using fine grained tools to look at neighborhoods at the block or census block scale rather than neighborhood or city level. It will be more sustainable by scouting and identifying sites all at once, reducing driving to scattered individual sites. It will also reduce car and truck use on planting days by focusing on a tight area where most sites can be planted on foot or by bike. Maintenance of the trees will also be easier by having all the sites close together so they can be watered, mulched, pruned and monitored quickly with minimal travel time. The sense of neighborhood and community will be enhanced by engaging neighbors in the full process, choosing locations, finding sites, planting, and tree care. FOT staff will water street trees in the project areas that neighbors are unable to. FOT will

also organize and support setting up watering systems so neighbors can water areas with their own watering systems. Neighbors will be engaged to help neighbors water, monitor, mulch, prune and take care of trees.

By diversifying the funding for this project, EWEB customers effectively leverage business funding, individual giving, other grant funding, and city contract funding. By funding this work through such a diversified pool, FOT can engage more volunteers and plant more trees in high need areas.

Project Evaluation

Criteria, Results, Methods

The objective criteria that will be used to determine the success of this project are the amount of carbon likely to be sequestered in the newly planted trees and shrubs, the amount of volunteers engaged, and the quantity of trees planted. The goal is to plant 500 new trees using over 1,000 volunteer hours.

Importantly, we also will look at subjective criteria to examine this projects success. For instance, do residents, treeceipints and project partners feel respected and valued? Did the trees meet their needs? Did the project make low income residents have greater access to the benefits of trees? Do neighbors feel good about the project and pleased with its impact on their neighborhood?

Friends of Trees will track all volunteers participating in the project in a Salesforce database. Trees and native shrubs planted in the project will be tracked in a project spreadsheet. Carbon sequestration can be evaluated using the CFUR tree carbon calculator (CTCC) available from the USDA and US Forest Service. Street trees will be entered into the City of Eugene GIS urban forestry database.

Budget and Timeline

Budget: See attachment.

Timeline

Aug-Dec 2021: Meet with neighborhood groups, residents, City of Eugene, community groups and other project partners to identify work areas, goals, sites, and plans. Identify planting sites using city and open source software. Ground truth and scout potential planting sites. Place tree and supply orders. Hold weekend events to identify and mark street tree planting locations, support neighbors going door to door offering and talking about trees, meet with neighbors to help with site and tree selection. Inspect sites. Answer phone, email, and in-person community questions about the project, trees, issues and opportunities.

Dec 2021-Apr 2022: hold 5 planting events. Continue inspections and neighborhood support. Continue volunteer recruitment and training (ongoing throughout).

May-Oct 2022: Weekly watering of project sites. Inspections of issues with trees, identify failing trees or trees in poor health for replanting in fall. Weeding, mulching, and restaking trees. Community stewardship events. Free tree walks in project areas. Monitoring of health and survival. Summer inspector program. Identify planting areas for 2022-23 planting season. Hold events to identify and inspect sites. Outreach to community and neighborhood groups.

Nov 2022-March 2023: hold 5 planting events. Continue inspections and neighborhood support. Continue volunteer recruitment and training (ongoing throughout).

Project Budget

PROJECT EXPENSES: Item					
Payroll-Salaries, Wages & Benefits:	Description. Notes.	Cost	Unit	Units	Total Cost
Eugene Director	Lead project. Program and outreach, staff supervision.	\$75.00	Hour	500	\$37,500.00
Planting and Program Manager	Procure trees, organize and lay out plantings, all phases of project.	\$75.00	Hour	500	\$37,500.00
Development and Communication Director	Help with business sponsorships and press releases.	\$75.00	Hour	30	\$2,250.00
Neighborhood Tree Program Staff	Project implement, event prep and support, summer mtce, monitor, report	\$52.00	Hour	500	\$26,000.00
Volunteer & Outreach Staff	Project promo, vol recruit, training, waiver tracking, thanks, social media.	\$52.00	Hour	500	\$26,000.00
Field Staff	Watering	\$40.00	Hour	800	\$32,000.00
Subtotal					\$161,250.00
Materials/Supplies/Equipment:					
Trees	Container or bare root cost ave.	\$60.00	Trees	500	\$30,000.00
Tree stakes, twine, tags		\$6.00	per tree	500	\$3,000.00
Wood Chips / Mulch (1 cubic yard= \$30)		\$30.00	Yards	85	\$2,550.00
Printed or other promotional materials				2	\$300.00
Other Vol Event Supplies (3 * \$200)	Misc gloves, flagging, shovels etc,		Events		\$500.00
Penske truck rental	Event day rental	\$125.00	rental	10	\$1,250.00
Port a potty		\$115.00	Events	10	\$1,150.00
Subtotal					\$38,750.00
Total Project Expenses					\$200,000.00
Expenses minus Match					\$50,000.00
Income and Match					
Business funding, Mountain Rose Herbs, Rainbow Valley Construction, small business donations	Confirmed				\$10,000
Business funding	Unconfirmed				\$20,000
Individual donors	Confirmed				\$12,250
Individual Donors	Unconfirmed				\$20,000
Grants: International Paper. Arbor Day Foundation. Confirmed.	Neighborhood tree planting				\$31,500
City of Eugene street tree contract	Confirmed. 250 trees @ \$225 per tree.	\$225.00	trees	\$250	\$56,250
Total					\$150,000
Volunteer Labor: In-Kind	250 volunteers * 4hrs *\$28	\$28.00	Hour	1000	\$28,000.00



Friends of Trees Board of

2020-21

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Previous Funding From EWEB to Friends of Trees

- 8/17/11: \$400 for replanting 9 trees under power lines in Trainsong neighborhood.
- October 2011. Friends of Trees coordinates the 100 tree EWEB Legacy 100 Year Anniversary Planting. \$1,000 contribution to Friends of Trees and \$2,849.50 for tree costs.
- 6/4/12, \$80 for planting two replacement trees.
- 11/9/13, \$2,500 sponsorship for Hyacinth/Irving Elementary community tree planting.
- 4/9/14, \$2,500 sponsorship of West University community tree planting, UO Day of Service.
- 4/25/15, \$2,500 sponsorship of West and South University community tree planting, UO Day of Service.
- 3/19/16, \$2,500 sponsorship of Midtown community tree planting.
- 11/7/16, \$5,000 sponsorship of two community tree plantings.
- 4/29/17, \$2,500 sponsorship of All-Eugene community tree planting.
- 2018-19, \$23,000, Greenpower Grant
- 2/27/21, \$1,758, time and materials tree planting at E 40th site.