

# CommuniTrees Guidelines

## ABOUT:

CommuniTrees is a tree grant and education program available to individuals or groups wishing to plant trees in publicly accessible areas within a thirty-mile radius of Austin, Texas. Planting projects must be on publicly accessible land in order to qualify. Publicly accessible land includes but is not limited to schools, churches, community gardens, housing projects, medians, parks, and property owned by a non-profit organization. TreeFolks will not plant trees on a home-owners' personal property. If you have a group of dedicated people and a potential planting site, submit an application for the 2011-2012 Season.

## TIMELINE:

TreeFolks will accept applications for the CommuniTrees program from June 1 through August 15. Applications received after August 15 will not be considered. A committee from TreeFolks' Board of Directors will review all completed applications and select grant recipients. Grant recipients will be selected and all applicants notified in September. The planting season in Central Texas is between October 1 and March 31, therefore all planting dates must be scheduled during this time. A follow-up maintenance day will be scheduled for the following dormant season.

## TREEFOLKS PROVIDES:

- **Site Planning and Guidance** – Staff will perform a site visit to assist in planning the location, quantity and size of trees for your tree planting.
- **Trees** – A variety of native shade and ornamental trees are available each year. Please see below for a current list of available trees. To ensure a variety of project locations are chosen each year, we ask that applicants request between 5-30 trees. Applications requesting over 15 trees will be required to install an irrigation system (i.e. drip irrigation, bubblers, etc.) before their planting date.
- **Use of Tools** – A variety of tools are needed for both the planting day and follow-up maintenance workshops. We will provide the appropriate tools upon request including: adult and youth gloves, shovels, rakes, rock bars, pick-mattocks, pruners and loppers.
- **Planting Supervisor** – TreeFolks will demonstrate the proper planting and maintenance for the trees. They will discuss the environmental and social benefits of planting trees in public spaces and will be available to answer questions regarding trees from the volunteers and site coordinators.
- **Education Materials** – Educational materials are provided for each planting project as a resource for proper tree care and maintenance, pruning, tree species information and the environmental benefits of the newly planted trees. Tree growing guides will also be available for the volunteers.
- **Follow-up Maintenance Workshop (Required)** – Staff will contact the site coordinator to set up a workshop with the planting volunteers for the following dormant season. The workshop will cover basic pruning strategies and mulching the tree. The information in the workshops should provide the volunteers with enough knowledge to care for the trees on their own in future years.

## RECIPIENTS PROVIDE:

- **Completed Application** – All interested planting groups must submit a completed application by August 1<sup>st</sup> to be considered for the CommuniTrees program including the additional required items.
- **Volunteers** – You must coordinate volunteers on the planting date and follow-up maintenance day. We do not require the same volunteer group to participate in both activities, however, the connection between the community and the trees are strengthened when the same people are involved long-term.
- **Mulch** – Recipients must provide their own mulch on the planting date and follow-up maintenance workshop. Failure to provide mulch may result in the cancellation of the tree planting. Mulch maintains soil moisture and temperature, feeds the soil, reduces competition from other plants, and reduces damage from lawn equipment and foot traffic. We estimate you will need at least 1.5 cubic feet per tree. TreeFolks can provide mulch upon request as available, but grant recipients must load, deliver and unload the mulch before the planting/maintenance day.
- **Tree Maintenance and Irrigation** – Your group is responsible for any tree maintenance after they have been planted. Maintenance will include watering each tree 15-20 gallons every 7-10 days for the first 2 years unless they receive at least one inch of rain. There are a number of ways to irrigate your trees and we largely base our grant decisions on how dependable your irrigation plan is.

## SPECIES SELECTION:

For more information regarding each species, please view our Tree Growing Guide in the resources section of our website at [www.treefolks.org](http://www.treefolks.org) or view the LBJ Wildflower Center's Native Plant Database at [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).

### **Large Trees:**

**Bur Oak** (*Quercus macrocarpa*) – A great shade tree with an impressive crown, massive trunk, stout branches, and coarse texture. It's large acorns are covered with a furry, bur-like cap. Mature height: 70-90'

**Cedar Elm** (*Ulmus crassifolia*) – A great deciduous shade tree for the urban environment with small rigid leaves that turn gold in the fall. Mature height: 50-70'

**Live Oak** (*Quercus virginiana*) – Large, wide-spreading evergreen tree. Mature height: 60-80'

**Mexican Sycamore** (*Platanus mexicana*) – A large, fast growing shade tree with a fuzzy light leaf undersurface and a patchy light colored trunk. Mature height: 75-90'

**Mexican White Oak** (*Quercus polymorpha*) – A fast growing, semi-evergreen oak which has large dark green leaves. Mature height: 55'

**Montezuma Cypress** (*Taxodium mucronatum*) – A large, needle-leaved semi-evergreen tree with a broad pyramidal crown. Mature height: 40-70'

### **Small Trees:**

**Anaqua** (*Ehretia anacua*) – Semi-evergreen tree bearing edible fruit and fragrant white flowers in clusters at the end of the branches. Mature height: 20-45'

**Anacacho Orchid** (*Bauhinia congesta*) – Fragrant and showy white blooms appearing in the spring. Occasionally blooms intermittently in the fall. Mature height: 15'

**Desert Willow** (*Chilopsis linearis*) – Trumpet-shaped blooms at tips of branches which are fragrant and orchid-like in shades of lavender and pink. A favorite tree of hummingbirds. Mature height: 15-25'

**Mexican Buckeye** (*Ungnadia speciosa*) – Multi-trunk tree which is noted for its clusters of pinkish, orchid-like flowers in the spring and yellow foliage in the fall. Mature height: 15-25'

**Texas Persimmon** (*Diospyros texana*) – Easily identified by its smooth, gray trunk, peeling bark and dark green deciduous leaves. Bears edible black fruit. Mature height: 15-20'

**Texas Redbud** (*Cercis canadensis var. texensis*) – Small deciduous, understory tree with delightful pink blossoms in early spring before leaves emerge. Mature height: 15-20'

## HOW DO WE DECIDE WHICH APPLICATION TO APPROVE?

The number of applications accepted by the CommuniTrees program varies each year according to funding. To provide the greatest benefits to the community while utilizing limited funds, TreeFolks will evaluate each application based on your maintenance plan, community support/need and current tree canopy. Your group can either provide matching funds for the project through fundraising or demonstrate the need for TreeFolks to provide full funding (i.e. low income area, lack of financial resources, etc.). TreeFolks does not discriminate against the race, age, or religion of participants.

TreeFolks uses the following point system to evaluate complete applications:

Criteria	Points Available
Maintenance Plan – describe in detail how your group will provide the maintenance for the trees (weed, mulch, water, prune, etc.)	40
Community Support and Need – explain your plan to raise matching funds or demonstrate why TreeFolks should provide full funding. Include why the community is in need of trees on your site	40
Current Canopy	20
	100

**SUBMITTALS:**

A completed proposal will include the application, property owner consent form, letter of support and site map. If you have any questions regarding the CommuniTrees program, please contact TreeFolks at (512) 443-5323 or E-mail: [Carly@TreeFolks.org](mailto:Carly@TreeFolks.org).

Completed proposals should be mailed to:

**TreeFolks, Inc.**  
**Attn: CommuniTrees**  
**P.O. Box 704**  
**Austin, TX 78767**