

FY 2025 | Community Grant Application
Deadline April 30, 2026
3:30 P.M.



Organization Name: Engaged Community Offshoots, Inc dba ECO City Farms

Executive Director/Officer Margaret Morgan-Hubbard

Fiscal Sponsor Name:

Mailing Address 6010 Taylor Road Riverdale, MD 20737

Phone Number 2406066306 Email info@ecocityfarms.org

Federal ID# 26-4196401

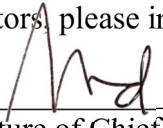
Incorporation Date June 26, 2009 501 (c) (3) Registration Date June 26, 2009

Project Title Sustaining Urban Farming to Support Fresh Food Access in Bladensburg

Project Location 6100 Emerson Street Bladensburg, MD 20710

CERTIFICATION

"I certify that I have reviewed this application and that, to the best of my knowledge, all statements and figures contained herein are true, accurate, and complete. If your organization does not have a Board of Directors, please indicate "NA" on the signature line and have the Organization's Director sign.


Signature of Chief Executive Officer

4/30/2026

Date

Print Name Margaret Morgan-Hubbard Title CEO

Address 6010 Taylor Road Riverdale, MD 20737

Phone 2028123901 Email info@ecocityfarms.org

Provide the following information about your clients based on your most recent data. Information current as of (date) 4/30/2026

RESIDENCE OF CLIENTS SERVED (Preference will be given to agencies serving Bladensburg residents)

Town of Bladensburg

X

Prince Georges County

X

Port Towns (Edmonston, Cottage City, Colmar Manor)

X

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - Provide a brief summary of your project and organization. Please include the following: the project purpose, the number of people in **the Town of Bladensburg** to be served, and how the Town grant funds will be used.

ECO City Farms is seeking an operating grant from the Town of Bladensburg to sustain its mission of promoting food security, community health, and environmental stewardship through urban farming. Intentionally located in Prince George's County, ECO aims to serve the community of Bladensburg by providing access to affordable, local, and chemical-free produce, educating beginner farmers in sustainable farming practices, and fostering a deeper connection to nature to promote environmental stewardship.

The grant funds will support critical aspects of ECO's operations, including community events, utilities, and farm supplies. The primary beneficiaries include the hundreds of Bladensburg residents who participate in ECO's programs and events. This encompasses the students who participate in our 6-week Summer Youth Program, 10-15 rising sophomores at Bladensburg High School; the community growers who cultivate plots at the Bladensburg Farm, as well as their families and community; our farm staff; and our dozens of CSA members. Additionally, ECO will use this funding to support our Summer Open House, which connects hundreds of Bladensburg residents, especially our immediate neighbors, with our offerings, growing practices, and dialogues about our food system. We estimate that this funding will support us in serving 300 Bladensburg residents through fresh food access, farming education, and community events.

ECO City Farms has been a pioneer in urban agriculture for over 15 years, transforming underutilized suburban and industrial spaces into thriving farms that address food insecurity, soil remediation, and environmental education. Our Bladensburg Farm, where our farmers produce fresh vegetables, compost, and community on three and a half acres of previously-vacant land, is the only urban farm in the Town of Bladensburg.

Through partnerships with local institutions and advocacy efforts, ECO has positioned itself as a leader in sustainable agriculture in Prince George's County, contributing to policy change and increased community resilience. The grant will enable ECO to continue and expand upon these efforts.

PROGRAM INFORMATION - Describe the overall or general purpose of your agency and how it serves the residents of Bladensburg.

Engaged Community Offshoots, Inc. (better known as ECO City Farms or ECO) is a teaching and learning urban farming nonprofit in Prince George's County whose mission is to grow great food, farms, and farmers in ways that protect, restore, and sustain the natural environment and the health of local communities. Working with area children, youth, and adults, ECO educates and trains the next generation of urban farmers, eaters, and environmental activists.

More than 15 years ago, ECO first brought the concept and the reality of urban agriculture to Prince George's County and the DC metropolitan area. We transformed two abandoned sites in low-income, low-food-access neighborhoods in the County's Port Towns into vibrant urban farms, where community comes together around fresh food, farming and nutrition education, and growing and green space access. We pioneered urban farming to enhance local food security, remediate polluted soils, reconnect area residents to nature, provide new livelihoods for those in need, overcome past violence and heal our relationship with the land, and grow the next generation of environmental leaders and entrepreneurs. We pursue this important work – refining farming techniques and food access, and teaching and learning from fellow farmers – because our overarching goal is to ensure that all of us, collectively and individually, will have a safe, equitable, and healthy food future.

For an organization with a small footprint and only six full-time staff, we continue to have a large reach. ECO co-founded the Prince George's County Food Equity Council; served on the County's Agricultural Advisory Commission; and has forged enduring partnerships with large and small local institutions, from M-NCPPC and a dozen County Public Schools, to the Soil Conservation District, the Chesapeake Bay Trust, a number of County municipalities, and local churches and nonprofits. Prince George's County nonprofits fulfill the unmet needs of our community and improve the quality of life of resident families. We do so with integrity, innovation, and collaboration to find new solutions. At ECO City Farms, we pursue environmental and food justice – improving the physical environment while demonstrating new ways for people to better interact within it. We consider ourselves what Grace Lee Boggs, famed Civil Rights leader, called "solutionaries." Through our mission of growing great food, farms, and farmers, ECO replenishes County soil and trains our youth and new farmers how to grow food in ways that are mutually nourishing in order to assure the healthy food and chemical-free environment that our communities deserve.

PERFORMANCE HISTORY (Prior Grant Award Applicants Only) - If you received Town Grants last year, please evaluate the progress you have made in implementing the project. Please discuss factors that may have hindered your progress

In 2025, ECO City Farms received a general operating grant from the Town of Bladensburg to sustain operations at our Bladensburg Farm. The \$2,000 that we received was used to further our mission of promoting food security, community health, and environmental stewardship through urban farming. This grant supported conducting the Summer Open House, training Bladensburg High School youth, and covering water costs for community growers.

We hosted the 2nd annual Summer Open House at the Bladensburg Farm, drawing in over 200 residents. Our Summer Youth Program of Bladensburg High School students were instrumental in planning and conducting the event. Along with managing the event activities, they help to administer community feedback surveys to help us better serve our residence. Survey participants were entered into a raffle to receive a CSA share for the season. The raffle was won by a Bladensburg family.

In addition, the funding subsidized water use to support our community gardeners and covered the general operating expenses that contribute to the fresh, chemical-free produce that feeds our community. This funding was especially critical as the federal funding climate has become increasingly unstable. Overall, this contributed to the Town's goals of promoting environmental sustainability, localized economies, and food security for Bladensburg residents. We are grateful for our continued partnership with the Town and look forward to exploring future opportunities to collaborate.

COMMUNITY NEED/POPULATION BEING SERVED- Describe the issue or community that needs to be addressed. Provided the demographic data and geographic information used to determine the extent of the problem or the need not being addressed.

In the context of the greater United States, Prince George's County is a unique amalgamation of cultures, demographics, languages, and land use strategies. The Town of Bladensburg itself is highly diverse, in many ways making it the perfect living laboratory for addressing long term issues of food security, equity, and environmental restoration. Despite attempts to frame our modern-day society as a "post-agricultural economy," food is at the very heart of our relationship with our bodies, communities, ecosystems, and institutions. Considering our country's painful history, where the same systems of power perpetrated violence against both people and our planet, our mission of cultivating healthy food creates intertwined pathways to healing.

According to Capital Area Food Bank's 2025 Hunger Report, 49% of Prince George's County residents are food insecure. Reflective of larger socioeconomic inequities within the United States, Black and Hispanic populations in the Greater Washington area are 3 times more likely to be food insecure when compared to White populations, highlighting the vulnerabilities of communities of color to food insecurities and related disparities in income, education access, and health outcomes. The selection of our sites in the Port Towns was highly intentional as a strategy for establishing nourishing produce, educational opportunities, and nature access directly into the neighborhoods most in need. Our Bladensburg Farm is located in a disadvantaged community as is defined by the White House's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. The farm's census tract is in the 87th percentile for diabetes, 98th percentile for housing cost, and 74th percentile for low income. The site is in immediate proximity to three Title 1 public schools, Bladensburg Community Center, and a senior living community. All of these reasons highlight exactly why healthy diets are so necessary for Bladensburg residents – making their bodies more resilient to the array of socioeconomic and geographic factors that have a tremendous impact on their long-term health outcomes. However, the otherwise limited access to fresh and healthy foods in our area has all of the characteristics of a food desert. Stepped up local food production alone cannot ensure a future where food is accessible to all. Creating an equitable and viable food system requires intentional community improvement strategies, like proliferating urban farms and farming. Deliberate efforts and policies need to center on assuring healthy food for all as a basic human right.

Growing local food is a strategy for strengthening and restoring our communities, economy, and planet. To do so requires Town of Bladensburg support.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION- Please provide a detailed description of the program you are proposing. Please include the group of people you plan to serve, the expected number of participants, the activities or services you will provide, and the location of the program/project.

ECO's Bladensburg Farm is the organization's largest staff-run operation, located on three and a half acres in the middle of a residential community. The site contains growing space used for commercial distribution and donations; our hot compost and vermicompost infrastructure, where all of our on-farm compost is produced; nine community growing plots, cultivated independently by Bladensburg residents; and our food forest, orchard, and apiary. This site is central to our aspirations as a teaching and learning farm, where educators, trainees, and community members come together to work side-by-side. As a nonprofit organization, our operations are designed to support community. In a country where large-scale agriculture is heavily subsidized – where the US public pays proportionally less for food than any other country in the developed world – it is difficult to turn a profit while properly valuing the labor and investment that goes into our produce. However, we know that our mission of establishing food security in the underserved communities that we reside in is a necessary one. Therefore, in a time where so much is stacked against work like ours, we turn to the support of our local governments to increase our organization's capacity in our day-to-day operations.

ECO is requesting general operating funds to support our daily farm operations. These funds would act to support events, staff time, and equipment. We estimate that 2,500 people are touched by our organization each year, whether that is through our produce, events, trainings, or workshops. By supporting our core operations, the Town of Bladensburg will ensure our offerings continue to reach our community. Last July, ECO held our annual Summer Open House at our Bladensburg Farm, where we re-introduced our farm to the community, educated our neighbors on our mission and growing practices, learned more about how to meet community needs, and created space for coming together. We welcomed our neighbors onto the farm so they could get to know us and each other. We estimate that 200+ people attended the event, including both long-time supporters and people who had never stepped foot on our farm. Now, as we approach summer 2026, we intend to host another Summer Open House celebration. At this event, we will have ECO-grown produce sales, free food, a CSA raffle, a cooking demonstration, kids' activities, tours, vendors, and more. We also intend to use portions of this grant to fund staffing costs for the event. We hope to bring out another 200+ people, not only to enjoy themselves at the farm, but to inspire continued engagement in our programs and offerings.

ECO is working with many stakeholders to establish the Bladensburg Community Garden. We've received approval from the Town Council and M-NCPPC. For the design process, we've contracted with Neighborhood Design Center to create a conceptual design and assist with collecting community feedback. We've done sessions with parents from Port Towns Elementary School and residences who attended Town events. Currently, we're negotiating and MOU with PGCPs for water access that will be crucial to the success of the garden. This funding would support staff time to continue to work with PGCPs and PTES reach and agreement and begin construction of the garden.

Finally, funding would go towards general farm needs, such as necessary equipment replacements. With our resources shared amongst our farmers, trainees, and community growers, we are in need of additional supplies to compensate for old and degraded equipment. There are many individuals and groups that our organization touches who would be supported by this funding. This includes our farmers and farming apprentices, members of our Beginning Farmer Training Program and Summer Youth Program, community growers and their families and community networks, our CSA members, people who purchase our produce, and attendees of our public events. Close to 50 farmers – across our farms and programs – would be supported through an expanded farming capacity. The community reach extends even farther. We have relationships with neighbors at many of the surrounding apartments, including Emerson House, Parkview, and Autumn Woods, who would be supported through this funding by increased food access and community events. We are building relationships with local public schools and their students. As the only urban farm in Bladensburg, we are providing a crucial resource to the Town and to Prince George's County more generally – meaning that hundreds would benefit directly and indirectly from the Town's support.

METHODOLOGY- Describe the methodology (or approach) for the proposed program/project, e.g., the procedures, tasks, techniques, or tools you will use to develop the program.

ECO City Farms' theory of change is based on the belief that community values and long-term health are shaped by and reflect the land use, industries, resources, and institutions inside its borders. Local food production can be a powerful stimulus for economic and social transformation. ECO's presence in the Bladensburg community is designed to create pathways for change through increased community resiliency, education, and sovereignty.

In these rapidly changing times, as everyday people cope with inflation, economic instability, and the felt realities of climate change, our organization is looking to mold to our community's ever-changing needs. A foundational piece of serving our community is to properly gauge how best to tailor our offerings to match the present-day climate, which this grant will help to serve. Our Summer Open House was designed, in part, to engage our community about what they would most like to see from ECO through a series of conversations and surveys. This community engagement and stakeholder consultation will enable us to understand broader community goals and align our initiatives accordingly. This community dialogue is central to dictating the best path forward to make our organization's mission into a reality. Collective decision-making is a core principle of a community-embedded organization such as ours. The direction of the produce and event offerings that will come out of this grant can only be properly defined after properly quantifying community interests and needs through neighborhood dialogue.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND IMPACT - Please provide activities and events that your organization has held within the Town of Bladensburg and the Port Towns. Tell us about the impact of your community activities.

Programs offered at our farms this past year:

- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) – 1,000+ shares distributed in 2025
- Beginner Farmer Training Program – 25 graduates in 2024
- SEED2FEED Summer Youth Program – attended by 12 Bladensburg High School students in 2025

Events held at our farms this past year:

- Bladensburg Farm Summer Open House
- Earth Day Celebration and Seedling Sale
- Think Locally, Connect Globally: Community Networking and Movement Building Roundtable Discussion
- 10+ volunteer days
- 10+ farm tours and farm-to-school visits

Events where ECO attended or contributed produce this past year:

- Bladensburg Day
- Town of Edmonston Unity Rally
- Town of Edmonston Garden Tour

ECO is deeply integrated into the communities of Bladensburg and Edmonston. We cultivate an array of offerings for residents of the Port Towns. Our CSA shares provide fresh, local, chemical-free produce for members of our community in order to combat food insecurity and diet-related illnesses. We offer a sliding scale payment system, free shares for our neighbors, accept SNAP/EBT, SUN Bucks, FMNP, SFMNP, and eWIC, and offer discounted rates with Maryland Market Money to make our produce as accessible as possible. Our youth and adult educational opportunities – including our free Summer Youth Program and Beginner Farmer Training Program – offer farming and nutrition education to historically underserved communities. We host a wide variety of public workshops each year. These workshops act as collaborative spaces for teaching and learning. Our tours, field trips, and farm-to-school visits connect Port Towns youth to the origins, cultural connections, and joys of food. Our volunteer days engage youth and adults in the realities of urban farming and provide nature access and education to our community. Additionally, we strive to be a presence at Town events to inform our community about our offerings and educational opportunities. All of these offerings are intended to install fresh food in our neighborhoods through food distribution, growing education, and modeling local food access strategies to be replicated throughout the County

ORGANIZATION CAPABILITIES - Describe the organization's ability to implement the program/project

ECO City Farms has been operating in the Port Towns for 16 years. At the time of the organization's establishment, urban farming was practically non-existent in our region. Over this time, Prince George's County has seen huge steps forward in public education and policy to support urban farming, in part due to ECO's advocacy. ECO has played a key role in moving local farming forward, changing zoning laws across Prince George's County to allow for farming on 80% of county land and assisting in the establishment of Prince George's County's Food Equity Council. In that time, ECO has continued to offer fresh, local produce and expanded our programs and operations, acting as a stable supporter of food sovereignty and land access for our communities throughout major shifts in the economy, local and national government, and a global pandemic. ECO was created not just as an urban farm, but as a model for urban farming intended to be replicated locally and globally.

Our Bladensburg Farm was established over a decade ago, and has seen significant financial and labor investment in that time. As a mission-driven organization, ECO has proved its continued dedication to developing our soils and community relationships in the town of Bladensburg, and we plan to continue this investment for decades to come. We have seen many iterations of our programs, staff, and organizational direction over time, but have always operated primarily via grant funding. We manage a dozen small, medium, and large-scale grants in any fiscal year. Each year, we successfully run our ten-month Beginning Farmer Training Program and 6-week SEED2FEED Summer Youth Program, distribute our CSA to over 50 families year-round, and hold community events centering farming and nutrition education. We have 6 full-time staff members and several part-time employees who will support in the implementation of this funding if awarded.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS: Please attach any materials that will provide more context for your activities and events in the Town of Bladensburg and the Port Towns. *Examples include event flyers, social media posts, links to media articles, and other information on your organization.*

Bladensburg Farm Open House (flyer): https://www.instagram.com/p/DLqHLfxuXV3/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

Summer Youth Program recap: https://www.instagram.com/p/DM0kIBMRqYT/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

PROJECT BUDGET

Please see the project budget template, which includes all budget items and the total for each.

Note the funding cap of this grant is **\$2000.00**.

Budget Category	Description	Requested Amount (\$)
Personnel	(Stipends for project staff, if applicable)	\$800
Supplies & Materials	(List project-related items such as tools, equipment, or materials)	\$400
Contractual Services	(Payments for external services such as consultants or instructors)	
Event Expenses	(Venue rental, permits, marketing, refreshments, etc.)	\$800
Printing & Outreach	(Flyers, posters, online ads, or other marketing materials)	
Transportation	(Mileage reimbursement or rental costs, if applicable)	
Other Costs	(Miscellaneous expenses essential to the project)	
Total Requested	(Must not exceed \$2,000)	\$ ²⁰⁰⁰ <u> </u>