



## NCFS U&CF Financial Assistance Project Planner

Project Name: **2025 Hendersonville Urban Forest Inventory and Community Engagement Project**  
Date: **October 2024**

### **Project Needs Statement:**

Hendersonville's urban forest, valued at \$6.7 million annually, has experienced a 2% canopy decrease from 2014 to 2022. A comprehensive tree inventory of public trees and community engagement program are needed to assess the current state of the urban forest, identify priority areas for maintenance and planting, engage residents, and inform the development of an urban forestry management plan. This need was identified through a recent canopy assessment and the city's commitment to improving urban forest management, particularly in Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) census tracts. To effectively manage this valuable resource, a robust tree inventory software system is essential for data collection, work order management, community engagement, and long-term urban forest planning.

### **Project Goal:**

- **Primary Objective:** Inventories and Assessments
- **Project Goal Statement:** Complete a professional tree inventory of Hendersonville's ~16,000 public Right of Way (ROW), Park, and Municipal Land trees using advanced tree inventory software, develop a community outreach program, and create preliminary recommendations for tree maintenance and planting, with a focus on CEJST areas, within one year.

### **Project Objectives:** (In order of completion)

#### **1. Tree Software**

##### **a. Practices & Activities:**

- Research and select appropriate tree inventory software (e.g., ArborPro)
- Procure software licenses and necessary hardware
- Train staff on software use

**b. Objective Statement:** Implement a comprehensive tree inventory software system with work order management, community engagement features, and robust data analysis capabilities by the end of Q1.



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### **2. Tree Inventory**

#### **a. Practices & Activities:**

- i. Select and contract with a qualified tree inventory company
- ii. Conduct tree inventory of all public trees using the selected software
- iii. Compile and analyze inventory data

**b. Objective Statement:** Complete a professional tree inventory of ~16,000 public trees in Hendersonville, including GPS locations, Species, Zones, Recommended Maintenance, Tree Condition, DBH, Height, and Hardscape Damage by the end of Q2.

### **3. Community Engagement**

#### **a. Practices & Activities:**

- i. Develop community engagement materials
- ii. Host meetings with stakeholders
- iii. Create and maintain digital presence for project updates
- iv. Utilize community sharing feature of the inventory software
- v. Inform community and developers of tree canopy preservation ordinances

**b. Objective Statement:** Implement a comprehensive community engagement program to inform and educate residents about the urban forest inventory project throughout the project duration.



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### **4. Tree Maintenance Plan**

#### **a. Practices & Activities:**

- i. Analyze inventory data to identify priority maintenance needs
- ii. Develop recommendations for tree removal and pruning, focusing on CEJST areas
- iii. Create a preliminary management plan
- iv. Generate reports using the software's integrated reporting features

**b. Objective Statement:** Develop preliminary recommendations for tree maintenance and planting, with a focus on CEJST areas, by the end of Q4.

#### **Project/Advisory Team:**

- Team Lead: Scott Harmon- Tree Board Member, Consulting Arborist
- Administrative Lead: Janet Thew- Hendersonville Tree Board Chairperson
- Urban Forestry Professional/Lead: Corbin Prebe- ArborPro Inc.
- Community Forestry Professional/Lead: Bill Leatherwood- Arborist, Land Management
- Municipal Project Team Member: Mark Stierwalt- City Hendersonville Public Works Superintendent
- Project Team Members and Roles: Mary Jo Padgett- Marketing/Communications Consultant, Glenn Lange- Tree Board Member, Public Relations, Brayton Harmon- Ivacrest Corp, Technical support
- Advisory Committee members: Rebecca Dolls, Lyndsey Simpson, Tammy Ledford, Tom Wooten



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### **Partners**

ArborPro Inc

### **Supporters**

Brightheart Foundation

### **Project Duration:**

- 12 months

**Scope of Work Narrative:** The project will begin with the selection and contracting of a qualified tree inventory company with experience in North Carolina and in-house ISA Certified Arborists. During the first six months, this company will conduct a comprehensive inventory of all ~16,000 public trees in Hendersonville. Concurrently, the project team will implement the community engagement plan, including public meetings, workshops, and digital outreach.

In the latter half of the project, the inventory data will be analyzed to identify priority maintenance needs, with a focus on CEJST areas. The tree inventory company will work with the city and Tree Board to develop preliminary recommendations for tree maintenance and planting. Throughout the project, regular updates will be provided to the community through various engagement channels.

The project will culminate in a final report presentation to stakeholders, including inventory results, community engagement outcomes, and recommendations for future urban forest management. This project will lay the groundwork for the city to consider hiring a city forester to implement the plan and oversee future urban forestry initiatives.



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### **Project Strategies/Notes:**

- Ensure all contracted work is performed by companies with experience in North Carolina and in-house ISA Certified Arborists.
- Prioritize engagement and improvements in CEJST areas to align with funding requirements.
- Use the inventory data and community input to inform the development of a comprehensive Urban Forestry Management Plan beyond this project's scope.
- Consider the long-term maintenance of the tree inventory database and potential for hiring a city forester as part of the project's recommendations.
- Ensure the selected tree inventory software (e.g., ArborPro) includes the following features:
  - Ability to identify regions and properties of trees
  - Work Order System for tree management and work history recording
  - Community sharing feature for public engagement
  - Integrated reporting features
  - Data export capability in CSV format
  - Ability to import high-resolution imagery
  - GPS location plotting of trees
  - Unlimited software training and support
  - Capability to upload files and photos to individual tree records
  - Prioritize staff training on the software to ensure maximum utilization of its features
  - Use the software's community sharing feature to enhance public engagement and education efforts
  - Leverage the software's reporting and data analysis capabilities to inform decision-making and future urban forestry planning



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### **Other Comments:**

- Utilizing this grant, and completion of the project will play a crucial role in enforcing and supporting Hendersonville's recent City Ordinance aimed at preserving tree canopy. By implementing this comprehensive approach to urban forest management, Hendersonville aims to become a leader in urban forestry within Western North Carolina, creating a model program that can be replicated and adapted by other communities across the state, thereby fostering a broader movement towards sustainable urban forestry practices. We have shared this vision with our NCFS county rangers and look forward to working together.
- **Contact information for the grant payments if awarded is as follows;**

City of Hendersonville Public Works- Tree Board

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