

CITY OF TWO RIVERS

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ESTABLISHMENT OF A

TREE PLANTING GRANT

PILOT PROGRAM FOR 2023

WHEREAS trees, both on public and private property, have numerous benefits to our communities, including:

- Cleaning our air, taking in carbon dioxide and various pollutants and particulate matter, while producing life-giving oxygen;
- Deadening noise from traffic, construction, and other noise sources
- Absorbing excess water from storm events and Spring snowmelt, thereby reducing the volume of runoff and soil erosion and reducing sediments in our surface waterways;
- Helping cool the air in summer, when the “heat island effect” from concentrations of paved surfaces, buildings, vehicles, etc. raises the temperature of urban centers, large and small;
- Reducing home and business energy consumption; in our northern climate, deciduous trees planted on the south or west side of a building provide cooling shade in the summer, while letting the sun shine through for solar gain in the Winter;
- Benefitting our physical and mental health; studies have shown that living in a tree-filled urban environment can reduce stress and anxiety and also reduce the incidence of various illnesses;
- Providing habitat for songbirds, beneficial insects and other creatures that inhabit the urban tree canopy, contributing to the biodiversity of our cities
- Beautifying our neighborhoods and improving property values in the process; and

WHEREAS, the City of Two Rivers has recently recognized the need to step up its urban forestry activities on public properties, along streets and in parks, both as the result of years of minimal investment and the tree losses being incurred due to the advance of Emerald Ash Borer; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Environmental Advisory Board has also recommended that the City more actively encourage the planting of trees on private properties throughout the city, expanding on an underutilized incentive program offered for several years through our municipal electric utility;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE City Council of the City of Two River does hereby authorize the establishment of a **Tree Planting Grant Program**, on a **pilot basis** for 2023 and subject to review for continuing in future years, with key provisions as follows:

1. Funding Level: \$10,000, with \$5,000 from Electric Utility “Commitment to Community” funds and \$5,000 from the City’s Tree Planting Fund.
2. Eligible Applicants: Any property owner in the City of Two Rivers
3. Grant Amount: Two-thirds of the cost of an eligible tree, up to a maximum grant of \$100 per tree and a maximum of three trees per property owner
4. Pre-Approval Process: Property owners must file an application with the City, identifying the property where the trees are to be planted, and acknowledging the terms that must be met in order to receive a grant payment reimbursing them for the cost of their qualifying trees. Such

application must be received and approved by the City in advance of the purchase of any tree for which grant assistance is requested.

5. First Come, First Served. Once the City has received and approved applications totaling \$10,000 for 2023, no additional applications will be pre-approved. Such applications will, however, be placed on a waiting list, in the event that not all authorized funds are spent by the deadline date in 6. below.
6. Tree Purchases Eligible for Reimbursement: Must meet all requirements of the current Electric Utility Tree Grant Program, including:
 - Must be a deciduous tree
 - Must be a variety that has a height of at least 25 feet at maturity
 - Must be planted on the south or west side of the primary structure on the property, or in a location that provides significant shade for an air conditioner
 - Must be nursery grade stock
 - Must be at least 1.25 inches caliper (trunk diameter as measured 6-12 inches above the soil surface)
 - Planting must have been preceded by a call to Diggers hotline
 - Receipt(s) for the tree purchase, clearly showing the name of the seller, must be provided
7. Deadline for Reimbursement: Trees must be purchased, planted and all necessary documentation provided to the City not later than 4:30 PM on Friday, June 16, 2023; after that, the City reserves the right to revoke the applicant's pre-approval; remaining available funds may then be offered to persons on the waiting list, if any, and/or be used for additional public property tree plantings; and
8. Other provisions as may be deemed appropriate by City staff.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby directed to provide the Environmental Advisory Board and the City Council with a final report on this pilot program not later than September 30, 2023, to allow time for consideration of whether to continue this pilot program in 2024.

Adopted this 6th day of February, 2023.

Council Member

Gregory E. Buckley
City Manager