Urban Greening

![Gateway Cities Council of Governments logo] ![Institute for Local Government logo]

What is the Urban Greening Grant Program?

The Urban Greening Grant Program is a competitive program that supports projects that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by:

- Establishing, enhancing and expanding neighborhood parks and community space.
- Greening public lands, streets, alleyways and rooftops using natural solutions to improve air and water quality, and/or reduce energy consumption.
- Creating walkable and bikeable trails that enable residents to safely access work, schools and commercial centers without having to drive automobiles.
- Mitigating heat islands.

Who Is Eligible to Apply? Cities, counties, non-profit organizations, joint power authorities and special districts are eligible to apply.

What is an Eligible Urban Greening Project?

Eligible projects must do **at least one** of the following:

1. Acquire, create, or enhance community parks and green spaces; and/or
2. Use natural systems or systems that mimic natural systems to achieve multiple benefits.

Eligible projects must have **at least one** GHG reduction activity including:

1. Sequester or store carbon by planting trees;
2. Reduce building energy use by strategically planting trees that shade buildings; and/or

3. Reduce community Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by constructing bicycle paths and lanes, and/or pedestrian facilities that provide safe routes for travel between residences, workplaces, commercial centers and schools.

What Does a Successful Urban Greening Project Look Like?

Lynwood Urban Bicycle Trail, City of Lynwood ($2,853,000) This project will improve the city's cycling connections and provide safe routes for cyclists. The trail will feature sustainable green elements, lighting, permeable pavers and bioswales designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water.
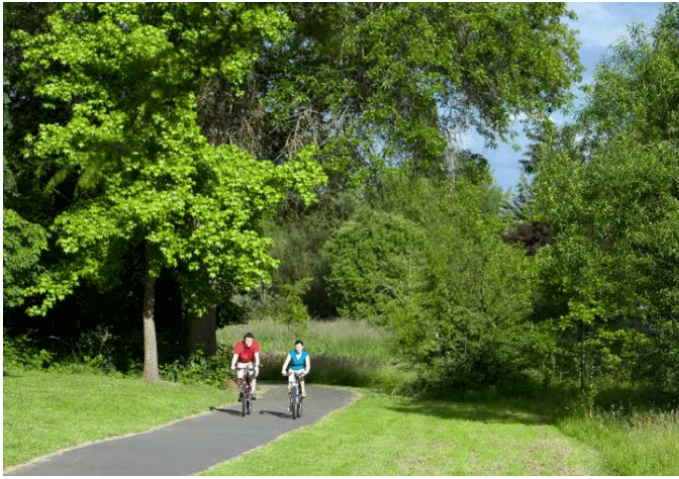

What is the Anticipated Application Timeline?

Round 3 of Urban Greening funding is expected to begin soon. Interested applicants should start planning no later than Fall 2019 to meet the following key milestones:

- Revised program guidelines: Winter 2019
- NOFA release: in January 2020.

The application process includes three phases:

  » Concept proposal: January
  » Site visits: April - June (qualifying projects only)

- » Submission of supporting documentation: July - September (if selected)
- Grant awards announced: in November 2020

How Much Funding is Available?

$19 million was awarded through the Urban Greening Program in 2019. The 2020 budget allocation is undefined at this time. A minimum of 75% of the Urban Greening Program funds will be awarded each funding cycle to projects located within the top 25% disadvantaged communities per CalEnviroScreen3.0 and AB 1550 low-income communities. More than 90% of funds have been awarded to disadvantaged communities during the first two funding cycles.

How can Applicants Maximize Their Score?

Go Green. Significantly reducing GHGs compared to the other project applicants in each cycle will greatly increase your project application score.

Benefit Disadvantaged / Low Income Communities. Additional points will be awarded to projects located within, and benefiting, disadvantaged and low-income communities.

Provide Multiple Benefits. Providing multiple benefits will net your project application a higher score. Multiple benefits include, but are not limited to, economic, social and health benefits.

Develop Partnerships. Applicants should identify relevant partners early and engage community stakeholders to identify needs, project components and additional benefits. Potential partners may include other agencies, non-profits, schools, local businesses or community based organizations.

Demonstrate Capacity. Provide information about your organization's previous experience with similar projects; disclose additional fiscal sponsors, list previous state agency grants, signed MOUs, etc.

Be 'Shovel Ready'. Provide preliminary project designs, permits, environmental compliance documentation, and/or seller letters (for land acquisition projects). Review your city's Capital Improvement Program to ensure the proposed project would be included in the long-term operational plan.

After Selecting an Eligible Project — What's Next?

Start Early

- Read the program guidelines to identify application requirements and scoring criteria.
- Review past successful applications to understand the project scope and complexity that may be required.
- Identify potential community partners.

Receive Timely Information

- Sign up for the California Natural Resources Agency listserv to receive timely information about technical assistance workshops, webinars, deadlines, updated program guidelines, etc. **http://resources.ca.gov/ grants/urban-greening/**

Leverage Existing Funds *(or In-kind Contributions)*

- Leveraged funds (and in-kind contributions) will make a project application more competitive. If you are not leveraging funds, explain why in the application.

Tell the Story about How Your Project Creates Multiple Benefits

- Describe more than just the obvious project benefits, such as planting trees or creating a bike path. Explain how your project will also contribute to benefits like:
  - » Reducing air and water pollution or energy consumption;
  - » Increasing safety and physical activity; or
  - » Improving mental health and local job opportunities.

Plant Native Species

- Native species require less water and provide vital habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Contact Melissa Jones, grant administrator at the California Natural Resources Agency with any questions regarding your potential project (916) 651-7583, **Melissa.Jones@ resources.ca.gov**

For more detailed information regarding project eligibility, scoring criteria and related requirements refer to the Urban Greening Program guidelines: **http://resources.ca.gov/grants/urban-greening/**