



7203 Jackson Road Ann Arbor MI 48103-9506
Phone: (734) 761-6722 X 105 Fax: (734) 662-1686
Web Site: www.semircd.org

*Serving Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland,
St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties*

CITY LOGS TO CITY LUMBER

A grant program to develop partnerships and reclaim value in removed urban trees

MINI-GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST 4, 2008

GRANT SUMMARY

The Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council has been working since 2004 to identify value-added uses for urban wood residues, driven largely by the need for wood disposal options following the state's emerald ash borer outbreak. At this time, the Council is allocating \$500 mini-grants to foster the growth of partnerships between municipalities and urban wood businesses. The funds will allow community managers to hire a local sawmill to process removed city trees into lumber or other products.

Grantees are expected to follow a tight timeline, with projects to be completed shortly after the award announcement. Funding preference will be given to local governments, public institutions, community groups, and tree care industries within the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council area (Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties). Qualified proposals will be awarded funding on a rolling basis as they are received, with preference given to projects with milling activities scheduled to occur before September 30, 2008. Therefore, prompt applications are strongly encouraged. Additional proposals received after this date may be considered if adequate funds remain.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In every community across the nation, trees from streets, parks, backyards, and other public areas are removed due to old age, disease, and mortality from a variety of causes. Even though many of these trees are of grade lumber quality, most municipalities consider them a waste, and therefore a disposal problem. Even larger trees from popular species such as maple and walnut are typically sent to a chipper or grinder, regardless of the market value that these logs might otherwise have. Communities suffer in this situation because:

- They pay large fees for chipping, transporting, and disposing of wood.
- They receive no economic return for these trees that were bought and cared for with public funds.
- They still have to purchase wood products from other sources for municipal projects.

According to a 2007 report from Michigan State University, dead trees removed from Southeast Michigan's communities could produce 4.7 million board feet of lumber each year. That's enough wood to build 362 average-sized homes. Additionally, wood disposal costs communities and businesses in the region nearly \$9 million each year. Recycling removed urban trees into valuable products makes sense – it can create local jobs, save resources, make valuable products, reduce wood disposal costs, and build stronger communities.

Many small sawmills are willing to work with local communities to process removed urban trees; however, municipalities and private arborists are often hesitant to allocate funds for this largely uncommon practice. These \$500 mini-grants (worth a half-day or more of typical milling services) are intended to provide an incentive for those who are interested to finally try out contracting with a local mill and to encourage them to develop partnerships with local sawmill operations.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Council anticipates making at least seven \$500 awards to local communities or businesses. Funds are to be used to hire a local sawmill service to process removed public trees into lumber or other value-added products that will be used for the community's benefit.

Funds for any project approved under this program are granted using a 1:1 matching ratio. That means for every \$1 granted by the RC&D Council, an equivalent \$1 must be provided to the project by the grant recipient as additional cash, staff/volunteer time, or other in-kind service toward the milling project. Applications with greater matching amounts are encouraged.

EVALUATION CRITERIA & SELECTION PROCEDURES

Parties seeking funding under this grant program must submit a completed application packet for funding consideration. A review committee appointed by the RC&D will evaluate each application thoroughly based on the following criteria:

1. Interest in/commitment to finding higher value uses for removed urban trees.
2. Technical feasibility and likely success of proposed project – adequate staffing and log harvesting/handling capability, availability of potential milling contractors, planned uses of final products.
3. Amount of local matching funds.
4. Potential for continuing a wood use partnership in the future.
5. Perceived benefit for the community.

The review committee will not evaluate incomplete applications. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of each proposal. Applicants may also be asked to complete additional application forms or other documents, as necessary. Subsequent grant and/or contract procedures will be in accordance with all RC&D Council policies and procedures. A summary statement of the review and evaluation by the committee will be provided to applicants upon request.

GRANT PERIOD & PROGRESS REPORT

The entire grant award will be issued as a single reimbursement check upon the RC&D Council's receipt of the grantee's final report. Final reports should provide detail on the project's expenditures, the amount and quality of wood processed, the contractors used, the final uses planned for the products, and a testimonial of whether or not the grantee would consider milling their removed trees again in the future. Digital photos should accompany the final report. If possible, projects should be completed by September 30, 2008.

ITEMS ACCEPTABLE FOR MATCHING FUNDS

At least \$500.00 in matching funds must be provided by the applicant for this project. These funds must not be derived from any federal funding sources. Matching funds may consist of additional cash toward the contracting service with a local sawmill or may be in-kind services (use of staff time, equipment, etc.) toward the project. All matching funds must be documented and reported to the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council.

ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS

Any municipality, institution, organization, tree care industry is eligible to submit an application for funding under the grants program, provided that the group can demonstrate that its proposal will serve to add value to removed urban trees.

Applicants do not have to be located in the RC&D Council area, but applicants from Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties will receive priority consideration when their applications are reviewed.

REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR THE GRANT APPLICATION

Grant application materials can be recreated on your computer as long as they follow the exact format as the enclosed forms. Handwritten application materials will not be accepted. An editable, MS Word version of the application can be obtained by contacting the RC&D Office. The following materials must be submitted to the RC&D Council as a complete package for consideration under this program:

- ___ RFP PART A – PROGRAM INFORMATION FORM
- ___ RFP PART B – PROJECT BUDGET & FUNDING SOURCES
- ___ RFP PART C – SPECIFIC PLAN FOR UTILIZATION OF GRANT FUNDS

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES & DEADLINES

Qualified proposals will be awarded funding on a rolling basis as they are received, with preference given to projects with milling activities scheduled to occur before September 30, 2008. Therefore, prompt applications are strongly encouraged. Additional proposals received after this date may be considered if adequate funds remain. Electronic proposal submissions, e-mailed as an MS Word attachment or PDF, are required.

SEND THE COMPLETED GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE TO:

Jessica Simons
Southeast Michigan RC&D Council
Phone: (517)851-2372 – E-mail: jessica.simons@semircd.org

About us –

The emerald ash borer has killed approximately 15 million ash trees in southeastern Michigan, causing massive environmental and economic damages to this region of the state. In response to the destruction, the Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) began work on its Ash Utilization Options Project in early 2004. This project aimed to reduce wood waste disposal costs for communities, promote sustainable use of urban wood resources, and create economic development opportunities for the area. Through continued additional financial support from the U.S. Forest Service's Wood Education and Resource Center, this project has been very successful in creating new market opportunities and building public support for urban wood utilization.

The Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council is a non-profit organization that helps the people of southeast Michigan care for, conserve, and protect their natural resources in a way that will improve the community's economy, environment, and quality of life. RC&D provides a framework for partnerships between local citizens, governments, and technical experts to solve resource concerns and to manage and utilize resources wisely. Although Resource Conservation and Development Councils exist nationwide, each one is organized and directed by local people to meet local needs. The Southeast Michigan RC&D Council is made up of representatives appointed by 18 sponsor organizations within the council area: Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties. More information about the Ash Utilization Options Project may be found on the Council's website at: www.semircd.org/ash. The website also features a link to sign up for the project's periodic e-newsletter.

Funding for the urban wood mini-grants is provided by the USDA Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC). The WERC mission is to facilitate interaction and information exchange with the forest products industry to enhance opportunities for sustained forest products production in the eastern hardwood forest region of the United States. WERC's primary goals are to improve the knowledge, skills, and capacity of the forest industry management and workforce; increase communication, cooperation, and collaborative problem solving within the forest products industry; and improve efficiency in forest product manufacturing and wood utilization. For more information, please visit: <http://na.fs.fed.us/ea/werc/werc.shtm>.

Significant technical assistance for this project is also provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

RFP PART A - PROGRAM INFORMATION FORM

FOR RC&D USE <hr/> GRANT APPL. #

Date: _____

Name of Company/Organization submitting application: _____

Name of Owner or Chief Operating Officer: _____

Contact Person (if different than above): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ County: _____

Daytime Business Telephone #: _____ Business Fax #: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Project Title or Purpose of Grant: _____

Amount Requested from RC&D Council: \$500.00

Amount of Matching Funds from Applicant: \$ _____

Total Project Costs (Grant + Match): \$ _____

Source of Matching Funds: _____

Project Start Date: _____ Project Completion Date: _____

Note: Any funds awarded from this grant program must be matched with funds from the applicant. (See grant guidelines for additional information on grant matching requirements). Please complete attached budget and project plan outlines.

Authorized Signature: The signature below is that of the person authorized to testify as to the accuracy of this application.

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

FOR RC&D COUNCIL USE ONLY

Date Reviewed: _____ Grant Approved: ___ Yes ___ No Grant Amount Approved: \$ _____

Signature of Review Committee Chairman: _____

Signature of RC&D Council Officer: _____

RFP PART B - PROJECT BUDGET & FUNDING SOURCES

Budget Item	RC&D Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Sawmill Services (____ hrs @ \$____/hr)	\$500.00		
Personnel	\$0		
Equipment	\$0		
Other:	\$0		
Other:	\$0		
Other:	\$0		
Total	\$500.00		

RFP PART C - SPECIFIC PLAN FOR UTILIZATION OF GRANT FUNDS

In the space below, indicate how your business/organization will use funds granted through this program. Please provide as much detail as possible about the following questions:

1. Has your community ever tried to find higher value uses (other than mulch) for the trees you remove?
 - a. If so, how has this occurred? What benefits did you see? What obstacles did you face?
 - b. If not, why?
2. Where trees will be harvested from for this project? Why are they being removed? Is tree removal in this area an ongoing concern?
3. Will this milling project help lower your wood disposal costs?
4. How many logs are likely to be milled? What do you know about the quality of this wood?
5. Have you identified any sawmills to work with on this project? (If not, we may be able to assist you in this process.)
6. What end product(s) would you like to create through this project? How they will be used in your community? What benefits are you likely to see?
7. Please use this space for any other details that you would like to share: