



URBAN FOREST PRODUCTS MARKETPLACE MINIGRANT

ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RELEASE DATE: MARCH 19, 2018
PROPOSALS DUE: APRIL 16, 2018

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Since 2004, the [Sustainable Resources Alliance](#) (or SRA, previously known as the Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council) has been working to help communities and businesses safely create products and find economic value in trees once thought of as waste. Whether killed by the emerald ash borer or removed from urban landscapes due to storm damage or development, Michigan's community and backyard trees have historically been chipped or cut for firewood once they were cut down. In the last decade, a growing industry has developed to salvage wood from tree care operations, turning it into products that can support local businesses, reduce community wood disposal costs, and create new sustainable products for Michigan consumers. At this time, SRA is accepting proposals from businesses, communities, and/or other organizations to support the development of a new retail operation for urban forest products.

A single \$1,000 grant will be awarded to the selected applicant. At least \$1,000 in matching contributions is required in the form of cash or in-kind services toward project expenditures. Proposals should be submitted by April 16, 2018 to be considered for funding. The funded project will follow a three-month timeline, with a kickoff of the retail effort implemented by August 1, 2018.

This grant is offered in partnership with the multi-state *Bringing Urban Forestry Full Circle* grant project. Funding for this grant is from the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Surprisingly, high-quality wood is in large supply in Michigan's urban and suburban regions, with millions of board feet of marketable logs available annually from the dead and dying trees in and around developed areas (MacFarlane 2007). Forest health concerns such as the emerald ash borer only add available resources to this already huge opportunity. According to research by Sherrill and MacFarlane (2007), roughly half of the tree residues generated in southeastern Michigan are discarded as waste. The wood that moves into that region's 180 wood disposal yards does not fare much better, with only 30% of the material recycled into other products (Nzokou 2009). While the area's tree care operations often practice good urban forest management strategies, their plans rarely include wood recovery and use beyond options such as mulch, firewood, or fuel. Supporting new markets for urban wood could help incentivize more recovery of material and help create more demand for new and existing urban forest products.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This grant opportunity is offered in conjunction with the launch of the regional [Urban Wood Network](#) and [Michigan Urban Wood Network](#). These organizations work to support and build capacity for stakeholders in every part of the urban wood supply chain. The networks firmly believe that urban trees have their highest value while living, but work to find the highest and best uses for wood resources once trees need to be removed. A robust and diverse urban wood industry has the potential to create economic, environmental, and societal benefits for people in urban areas and beyond. The emergence of markets like Recycle Ann Arbor's Urbanwood Project, urban lumber sales in numerous

Habitat for Humanity ReStores, and the successes of many other small urban wood businesses are proving these benefits in Michigan today.

In response, to growing consumer interest in these locally produced and sustainable products, SRA is providing support for the launch of a new urban forest products marketplace. It is hoped that this grant-funded project will provide more visibility for the state's growing urban wood industry and provide yet more capacity in the supply chain. The grantee will receive \$1,000 as a reimbursement of project expenses for the creation of a *new* urban wood retail initiative that will produce market innovation, retail opportunities for one or more urban forest product producers, public access to the sale of urban forest products, demand for urban forest products, and public awareness about urban forest products. The grant funds must support costs for establishing a new retail space, such as site overhead, coordination for bringing together producers and/or securing products, point-of-sale displays, and/or advertising for a new retail initiative. The project must result in the establishment of a new urban wood retail marketplace in Michigan, with sales available to the public by August 1, 2018.

The funded retail project must comply with any applicable existing state (MDARD) and federal (APHIS) invasive pest regulations and best management practices for urban forest products (as a minimum, as defined by membership standards with the [Urban Wood Network](#)). This grant is intended for the exclusive development of markets for urban forest products (wood products reclaimed from urban, community, or other landscape trees that were removed for reasons *other* than their timber value). Marketing of traditionally harvested wood products, wood from other reclaimed sources (barn wood, deconstruction wood, etc.), or non-wood products are not permitted under this grant.

The grantee will have access to technical and networking assistance through SRA as needed. These services will include help in connecting with local industry partners, understanding best practices for urban wood use, and networking with other experienced urban wood use project managers.

EVALUATION CRITERIA & SELECTION PROCEDURES

Any business or organization is eligible to submit an application to participate in this program. Qualified applicants in the Sustainable Resources Alliance's service area – Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties – will receive priority consideration, but applicants from other regions are eligible for selection. A review committee appointed by the SRA will evaluate each application based on the following criteria:

- Technical feasibility of proposed plan,
- Ability to showcase innovation in urban forest product sales,
- Visibility and demonstration potential,
- Perceived benefit to community,
- Perceived benefit to the urban forest products supply chain,
- Ability to complete the work during the required timeline, and
- Qualifications of project team.

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 provide tax id information & complete additional forms or documents, as necessary. Subsequent grant and/or contract procedures will be in accordance with all SRA policies and procedures. A summary statement of the review and evaluation by the committee will be provided to applicants upon request.

GRANT PERIOD, MATCHING REQUIREMENT, & EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

AWARD: The organization selected for this demonstration program will receive a cash grant award of \$1,000. The grant award will be distributed as a reimbursement upon the approval of the final report.

MATCHING REQUIREMENT: At least a 1:1 matching contribution of \$1,000 is required. Matching funds may consist of additional cash toward the project or be provided in the form of a variety of in-kind services from cooperators such as staff, equipment, and/or facilities support for project

activities. Matching funds may *not* be derived from any federal funding sources and must be directly applicable to the funded project. Items purchased and/or services rendered prior to the date on your acceptance notification letter will not qualify. All matching funds used must be documented and reported to the SRA through records of in-kind services, invoices, and/or other forms of traceable evidence.

PROJECT TIMELINE: The project's execution is expected to follow a tight timeline. The retail effort must have public sales available as of August 1, 2018. When the project is completed and all related measures implemented, the award recipient will be asked to submit a final report by August 15, 2018. The final report should include details of all grant expenditures and matching contributions and an overview of the project's accomplishments.

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 via the contact information below. The following materials must be submitted to the SRA as a complete package for consideration under this program:

PART A – PROGRAM INFORMATION FORM
PART B – BUDGET & FUNDING SOURCES
PART C – PROJECT PLAN

DEADLINE

All application materials must be received by the SRA no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 16, 2018. Incomplete applications will not be evaluated. Electronic proposal submissions, e-mailed as an MS Word attachment or PDF, are required. Applicants will be notified of the status of their applications by May 1, 2018.

FOR QUESTIONS OR TO SUBMIT THE COMPLETED GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE, PLEASE CONTACT:

jessica.simons@semircd.org

ABOUT US

The [Sustainable Resources Alliance](#) (formerly the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council) advocates for sustainable communities in southeast Michigan by delivering programs that protect natural resources, empower people, and improve the economic climate and environment of the region. SRA efforts serve Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties and the City of Detroit.

This project is part of the Bringing Urban Forestry Full Circle grant program, a partnership of urban forest product advocates in Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, and Wisconsin. The project is supported by the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area, State and Private Forestry Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Program. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at [\(202\) 720-2600](tel:2027202600) (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call [\(800\) 795-3272](tel:8007953272) (voice) or [\(202\) 720-6382](tel:2027206382) (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

PART A - PROGRAM INFORMATION FORM

Name of Organization: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Amount of Matching Funds from Applicant: \$ _____

Source(s) of Matching Funds: _____

Project Start Date: _____ Project Completion Date: _____

Authorized Signature:

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

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PART B – BUDGET & FUNDING SOURCES

Budget Item	SRA Funds	Matching Funds	Source of Matching Funds
Salaries & Wages			
Consultants/Contractual			
Supplies/Materials			
Other (specify)			
Total	\$1,000		

PART C – PROJECT PLAN

Please briefly, but clearly, address the following questions. Use as much space as needed.

1. Tell us a bit about your organization or business:

2. Please describe your experience (if any) with urban wood and/or retail sales:

3. Tell us about the specific project you will undertake if funded:
 - a. What will the retail effort entail (including location, products, target customers, etc.)?

 - b. How will this project benefit your operation?

 - c. Have you identified wood producers for this project? Please describe the partners, products, and how your supply chain relationship will be managed.

 - d. Please describe how you will engage the public to promote this effort and encourage sales.

 - e. Please offer a brief timeline of your expected activities.

4. Briefly identify the name(s) and qualifications of the staff member(s) who will coordinate and implement the project.

5. Describe how this project is innovative and/or why you think it will be successful.

Optional:

Please feel free to provide additional supporting information that we should take into consideration when reviewing your application. Letters of support are welcome.