Guidelines for Scoring Grant Applications

2022 America the Beautiful Program Development (ATB-PD) Grant

Minimum Requirements:

Each grant application is screened for minimum requirements prior to submission to the Grant Review Committee for scoring. Projects which fulfill the following minimum requirements will be considered for grant funding:

1.	**ORIGINAL application -** including photos & maps, if applicable.
2.	One (1) copy of the city tree ordinance or similar document, or a pledge to develop one (NOT required for Tree City USAs, we have one on file).
3.	Name of NDFS Community Forestry personnel contacted.
4.	Provided legal land description for project, if applicable.

Scoring Criteria and Levels:

Projects will be ranked according to the quality of the application as a whole and how well the specified scoring criteria are addressed. The committee will score from 0-4 for each criterion:

[4 Excellent]   [3 Good]   [2 Fair]   [1 Poor]   [0 Unacceptable]

1. Project Description, Purpose, Need and Scope

Excellent: Project is thoroughly described leaving no doubt as to intention of project. Narrative indicates a well-planned project. If applicable, maps are included.

Good: Similar to above but narrative could provide more detail about the project description, purpose and/or justification. Maps, if applicable, are included.

Fair: Project intent is stated, but narrative description limited, leaving some questions regarding certain aspects of the project. Maps, if applicable, are sketchy.

Poor: Project intent is vague and poorly planned. Planning appears to have been an afterthought. No maps.

Unacceptable: Project intent is not stated. Narrative does not have specific project focus. Serious doubt as to whether applicant could successfully implement this project.

2. Function of Project in Development of Community Forestry Program

Excellent: Role of project is vital to the continuing development of local forestry program. Narrative clearly defines role of project in context of existing program.

Good: Similar to above but narrative could provide more detail.

Fair: Project shows merit and may stimulate additional community forestry projects.

Poor: Project, if completed, would contribute nothing to existing program.

Unacceptable: No program in place. Unlikely that project will be successful.

3. Project Innovation / Community Benefits

Excellent: Project is unique to the community and/or provides three (3) or more types of benefits, such as economic development, beautification, wildlife enhancement, outdoor classroom, screening, or other benefits identified by community.

Good: Project is unique to community and/or provides at least two (2) types of benefits.

Fair: Project is not necessarily innovative or unique but provides at least one type of benefit to the community.

Poor: Project is not unique to the community and its benefits are questionable.

Unacceptable: Project provides no obvious community benefits.

4. **Project Personnel**

      Excellent: Project personnel identified by name or title with duties clearly assigned. Includes people with tree planting and care experience.

      Good: Similar to above but duties not clearly assigned.

      Fair: Personnel identified but no duties assigned.

      Poor: Personnel not clearly identified and duties not assigned.

      Unacceptable: No personnel listed.

5. **Use of Volunteers**

      Excellent: Project provides a clear definition of the number of volunteers and the tasks they will be expected to carry out; includes a diversity of volunteer groups.

      Good: Same as above but less diversity of volunteers.

      Fair: Number of volunteers is not clear or appears inadequate. Tasks are indicated but may lack detail.

      Poor: Volunteers will be involved but number and tasks not clear.

      Unacceptable: Volunteers not included as part of project.

6. **Project Planning and Implementation (Project Schedule and Plan of Action)**

      Excellent: Thorough description of how the project will be implemented. Includes a detailed plan of work and timetable indicating approximately when each activity will be carried out and project completed.

      Good: Similar to above but may lack timetable, tasks that need to be completed, or other minor information.

      Fair: Includes a project implementation description but lacks detail and timetable.

      Poor: Project implementation plan and/or timetable is vague. Project will probably get done but planning appears to be lacking.

      Unacceptable: Project implementation plan is unrealistic or nonexistent. Doubtful that project will be completed.

7. **Project Budget**

      Excellent: Project budget leaves no doubt that the associated costs are adequate and realistic to complete the project. The amount and type of match meets the project requirements.

      Good: Similar to above but less detail.

      Fair: Some questions regarding the use of budget funds though still a good project.

      Poor: Vague detail as to the use of budget funds.

      Unacceptable: Poor justification for utilization of funds.

8. **Program Development Priority**

    First Priority   *4 points for implementation of an EAB Community Forestry Action Plan*

    Second Priority   *3 points for development of an EAB or Community Forestry Action Plan; Tree Inventory*

    Third Priority   *2 points for tree removals: DED, trees identified as high risk*

    Fourth Priority   *1 point for master planting plans/ educational outreach; other projects*