



For Immediate Release: 4/26/2024

GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR HOCHUL AWARDS MORE THAN \$2 MILLION IN URBAN FORESTRY GRANTS AS NEW YORK CELEBRATES ARBOR DAY

Funding Supports Governor's '25 Million Trees by 2033' Planting Goal to Cultivate Greener, Healthier Communities

New York State Agencies Deployed to Plant Trees Across the State

In celebration of Arbor Day and Earth Week, Governor Kathy Hochul today announced grants totaling more than \$2.4 million are being awarded to 32 urban forestry projects in communities across New York. The grants build upon the Governor's 2024 State of the State commitment to plant 25 million trees by 2033 and are being amplified by a multi-agency initiative led by dozens of commissioners and other State agency leaders planting trees across New York.

"This Arbor Day, we're sowing the seeds of a greener, more sustainable future for all New Yorkers while inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards across the state," **Governor Hochul said**. "New York's 25 million tree goal is a critical component of our comprehensive efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and green our urban landscapes, one tree at a time."

Today's forestry grants build on Governor Hochul's goal set in her 2024 State of the State Address to plant 25 million trees by 2033. To invigorate the State's tree planting efforts that will be instrumental in reducing the greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change, the 2024-25 Enacted State Budget includes \$15 million to fund grants to plant trees and support resilient reforestation and urban forests. Further celebrating the importance of getting all New Yorkers involved in protecting the environment, Governor Hochul is directing Commissioners, Executive Directors, and other agency leaders to travel the state planting native trees over the next few weeks.

Department of Environmental Conservation Interim Commissioner Sean Mahar said, "As proud stewards of New York's natural resources—during Earth Week and all year long—DEC is thrilled Governor Hochul continues to recognize the countless benefits of urban and community forests in nurturing healthier environments for residents and wildlife alike. I look forward to joining my colleagues in the statewide, multi-agency effort to increase public awareness of the benefits of trees in our

communities and helping strengthen the environmental roots of a new generation of New York leaders.”

State Parks Commissioner Pro Tempore Randy Simons said, “Trees and forests support our parks and our environment by helping clean air and water, providing wildlife habitat, fighting climate change and sometimes just offering a place to relax in the shade. I’m thrilled to take part in Governor Hochul’s initiative to plant 25 million trees across the state – including our state parks and historic sites. I encourage New Yorkers to get involved and get their hands dirty by planting a tree in their own communities.”

The \$2.4 million in Urban and Community Forestry grants administered by DEC are specifically for tree planting and maintenance projects that provide critical support for urban forest managers to sustain and expand green infrastructure. The forestry grants complement DEC's ongoing initiatives to address invasive species, climate change, environmental degradation, environmental justice, and urban sprawl. Over the last 12 years, New York State funded more than \$16 million in grants to support urban forestry projects, with a total value of more than \$23 million with local matching investments. The 2024 Urban and Community Forestry grant recipients by region include:

CAPITAL REGION

Albany County

- City of Albany Department of General Services: \$75,000 - Tree planting

Schenectady County

- City of Schenectady: \$100,000 - Tree maintenance

Saratoga County

- City of Saratoga Springs: \$75,000 - Tree planting
- Village of Ballston Spa: \$41,360 - Tree maintenance
- Village of Round Lake: \$73,882 - Tree maintenance

CENTRAL NEW YORK

Cayuga County

- Town of Owasco: \$75,000 - Tree maintenance
- City of Auburn: \$22,500 - Tree planting

Cortland County

- Cortland County Soil & Water Conservation District: \$47,954 - Tree maintenance

Onondaga County

- Town of Geddes: \$31,259 - Tree planting

FINGER LAKES **Monroe County**

- Village of Brockport: \$10,632 - Tree planting

LONG ISLAND **Nassau County**

- Village of Valley Stream: \$75,000 - Tree planting

Suffolk County

- Village of Patchogue: \$75,000 - Tree planting

MID-HUDSON VALLEY **Ulster County**

- Village of Saugerties: \$24,326 - Tree planting

Westchester

- Town of Bedford- \$44,000: Tree maintenance
- Village of Briarcliff Manor: \$71,004 - Tree maintenance
- City of Mount Vernon: \$48,600 - Tree planting

MOHAWK VALLEY **Oneida County**

- Village of Clinton: \$75,000 - Tree maintenance

Otsego County

- Village of Cooperstown: \$17,440 - Tree planting

NEW YORK CITY **Bronx County**

- Woodlawn Conservancy, Inc.: \$100,000 - Tree maintenance

Kings County

- Prospect Park Alliance: \$100,000 - Tree maintenance
- New York City H2O, Inc.: \$100,000 - Tree planting
- Big Initiatives Incorporated: \$99,760 - Tree maintenance
- The Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation: \$100,000 - Tree planting

New York County

- Outstanding Renewal Enterprises, Inc.: \$100,000 - Tree maintenance
- Madison Square Park Conservancy, Inc.: \$100,000 - Tree maintenance

NORTH COUNTRY

Jefferson County

- Village of Sackets Harbor: \$44,000 - Tree maintenance

St. Lawrence County

- Village of Canton: \$75,000 - Tree maintenance
- Village of Potsdam: \$13,536 - Tree planting

SOUTHERN TIER

Broome County

- City of Binghamton: \$25,000 - Tree planting

WESTERN NEW YORK

Chautauqua County

- City of Dunkirk: \$66,500 - Tree planting

Erie County

- Village of Lancaster: \$34,086 - Tree planting
- Town of Tonawanda: \$100,000.00 - Tree planting

The [grants](#) are part of [DEC's Urban and Community Forestry Program](#), which works to increase public awareness of the importance of trees and helps communities to create healthy forests while enhancing quality of life for residents. The grants are supported by the State's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). The 2024-25 enacted State Budget will maintain EPF funding at \$400 million, the highest level of funding in the program's history. The EPF is a critical resource for environmental programs such as land acquisition, farmland protection, invasive species prevention and eradication, recreation access, water quality improvement, and environmental justice projects.

Arbor Day is a nationally celebrated observance held on the last Friday of April each year. It was originally established in 1872 to encourage farmers and homesteaders to plant trees for shade, fuel, and beauty in open areas. Today, it is an opportunity to promote tree planting and care while celebrating everything trees do for communities. From a several hundred-acre rural forest to the street trees of an urban forest, all trees are important for providing invaluable ecosystem services and societal benefits that affect our everyday lives. To learn more about Arbor Day, visit [DEC's website](#). In addition, DEC's current episode of the recently launched podcast, "DEC Does What?!" features a discussion of New York State's forestry initiatives to help mitigate and adapt to climate change and ongoing engagement with private forest landowners, among other topics. Learn more at dec.ny.gov/podcast.