



PUBLIC GREEN SPACE GRANTS

2026 GUIDELINES

(March 2, 2026)



An Imperial Irrigation District Public Benefits Program

Purpose: This program provides greenhouse gas reduction benefits by supporting nonprofit and community-based organizations with funding for tree planting projects that meet the critical need of reducing Greenhouse Gases (GHGs). This program is specifically designed to provide resources for community groups that want to green their communities.

Eligible Applicants: Cities, counties, special districts, nonprofit organizations located inside the Imperial Irrigation District’s energy service area (Imperial Valley and Coachella Valley). Energy service map can be found at: <https://www.iid.com/power/about-iid-power/power-service-maps>

Eligible Costs: Personnel, contractors, and consultants, direct and indirect costs related to the planting of trees and related vegetation, and maintenance associated with the projects’ plantings during the grant period.

Award Limits: \$35,000 maximum grant amount.

Matching Fund Requirement: Although matching funds are not required, five (5) points will be issued to grant applications that include matching or “cost-sharing” funds. (including volunteer assistance and in-kind donations).

- Application Opening: **Monday, March 02, 2026**
- Application Deadline: **Tuesday, March 24, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.**
- Grant Notification Deadline: **Thursday, April 23, 2026**
- Milestone Documentation Submission: **Thursday, May 14, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.**
- Program Installation and Submission of Closing Documents Deadline: **Monday, November 30, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.**

Grant Payments: 50% funding upon award and 50% funding at project completion. Grant recipients will be required to use their own operating funds to cover expenses until final invoices are reimbursed by Imperial Irrigation District (IID), which may take up to 20 days from the date that documents are submitted for final review.

Adherence: IID’s Vegetation Management Program www.iid.com/power/vegetation-management

- Contractor and Developers; Developer Energy Planning Guide (REV. 5.24), Tree Clearances, Section 8 (pdf pages 244 - 258).
- Planting Trees and Plants
- Before you dig call 811

Final Reporting: A final summary report highlighting project status, trees planted, photos and expenditures is due before closing payment is issued no later than **Monday, November 30, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.**

Marketing and Communications: The grant recipient agrees that IID may identify the city, county, special district or non-profit organization as a recipient of the Tree for All – Public Green Space Grant funding and may use the organizations name and / or logo in marketing materials and press release, social media and to develop a brief customer profile for use by IID on its website for promotional purposes.

Inquiries: treeforallgrants@iid.com

Applications: www.iid.com/treeforallgrants

Grant Program Detail: Eligibility

Eligible Projects:

Projects that contain a significant shade-tree planting component that also augment, expand, or better manage healthy urban forests are eligible for funding. **Proposed projects must satisfy each of the requirements below in order to be qualified for a grant:**

- Project must significantly reduce GHGs (Greenhouse gases). Imperial Irrigation District will provide link to access GHG calculator. <https://planting.itreetools.org/app/report/>
- All plantings and their location must be accurately recorded.
- The planted trees must be publicly accessible.
- Proposed project must describe the type of irrigation system involved.
- Planting sites must be at least 24 square feet in area, and no less than 3 feet wide on any side.
- The types of all tree species, their exact location, and their proximity to existing built structures must be provided.
- Tree species selected are classified as very low, low, or moderate water use species.
- Tree-planting must be completed by Monday, November 30, 2026
- Project must demonstrate a nexus between important community needs and the project benefits. Emphasis should be placed on how the project promotes community improvement.
- Applicant must comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations which may include right of way, easements, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Applicant must have entered into an agreement with the landowners to allow for access to the land for a minimum of three (3) years after project completion for the designated entity(ies) providing maintenance on all plantings. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to watering, structural pruning, mulching, fertilizing, or controlling plant pests and diseases.
- Applicant must comply in all respects with all applicable local and county ordinances. This includes all state, local, regional and **Underground Service Alert (DigAlert®)**.

Eligible Applicants:

Cities, counties, special districts, nonprofit organizations, incorporated and qualified under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3), and unincorporated groups (e.g., neighborhood associations, tree advisory boards) are eligible to apply for funding. Applicants that are not incorporated as nonprofit organizations must have an incorporated nonprofit organization or a public agency to act as the fiscal sponsor for the project.

Eligible Costs:

- Personnel and contract labor
 - Salary for staff working explicitly on the project.
 - Contractors and consultants working explicitly on the projects.
 - Stipends for interns.
 - Fringe-benefits (staff only) including medical insurance and Social Security contributions. Costs must be computed according to staff’s current wages.
 - Expansion of existing planting sites is allowed and encouraged.
 - Other construction costs are eligible with justification.
 - Asphalt removal, concrete paving, or other hardscape for projects where plantings involve establishment of a new permanent planting site.
 - Hardscape cuts (at least 24 square feet for trees). Larger is preferred.
 - Up to 50% of soils testing costs to determine the needs for the site.
 - Tree care, structural pruning, and stake removal on project trees.

- Trees and planting supplies
 - Trees in the #15 (gallon) container size at minimum. Other sizes may be considered.
 - Stakes, ties, and root collar protectors proportional to the number of trees planted.
 - Wood chip surface mulch, soil amendments in areas of hard clay soil or sandy soil.
 - Soil where needed to complete backfill.
 - Water-wise or hydro-zone irrigation and supplies.
 - Replacement costs for trees planted in the first two years of the project.

- Equipment
 - Purchased or rented materials and tools required for project purposes.
 - Pruning and gardening supplies (i.e., pull saws, hand clippers, and loppers).
 - Hand tools, augers, and watering supplies.
 - Personal protective equipment and other related expenses (i.e., work gloves, garbage bags).

- Administrative costs directly related to the implementation of the project
 - Mileage to and from project site.
 - Liability insurance for project implementation.
 - Materials for personnel hired solely for this project

- Indirect costs (including Fiscal Sponsor fees if applicable)

Grant Program Detail: Ineligibility

Ineligible Projects:

- Projects where applicant cannot demonstrate satisfactory permission to develop and maintain site at the time of application.
- Any project designed to take the place of a regular or ongoing fiscal commitment to a program or project by a local government.
- Planting trees or other vegetation that require excessive maintenance such as excessive long-term watering, fertilizing, or controlling pests and diseases in order to survive.
- Projects in which no public, nonprofit or private entity has agreed in writing to provide maintenance for at least three (3) years after project completion. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to watering, fertilizing, exterminating, or controlling plant pests and diseases in order to survive.
- Projects that cannot provide sufficient quantitative data to calculate GHG reductions.
- Planting projects that conflict with overhead utilities or ground located infrastructure. Please visit the link below to help ensure safety and reliability of IID’s electric power system:
<https://www.iid.com/power/vegetation-management>
- Planting on federal land.

Ineligible Costs:

- Root barriers - chemical or solid.
- Tree grates and decorative tree guards.
- Disposal costs of woody debris.
- Inefficient irrigation valves, pumps, sprinkler control timers or elaborate irrigation systems.
- Food and beverages.
- Promotional items (t-shirts, stickers, etc.).
- Purchase and storage of replacement trees and plants for those that don’t survive.
- Tree removals.

Ineligible Trees:

- Species that are ill-adapted to the local climate.
- Species that are short-lived, pest-prone, a nuisance or otherwise undesirable.
- Invasive species; see California Invasive Plant Council at www.cal-ipc.org.
- Trees that rely upon excessive amounts of water to survive.
- Trees that are inappropriate for the chosen site or require excessive maintenance.
- Trees less than 15 feet in height, with equal crown spread, at maturity (fruit trees excluded).
- Trees that are not publicly accessible.
- Palms.

Program Priorities

Additional points will be given to projects that meet **two** of the following:

1. Provides park or recreational benefits to a critically underserved community or disadvantaged community;
2. Proposed by a critically underserved community or disadvantaged community;
3. Develops partnerships with local community organizations and businesses in order to strengthen outreach to disadvantaged communities, provides access to quality jobs for residents of disadvantaged communities, or provides access to workforce education and training;
4. Uses interagency cooperation and integration; or
5. Uses existing public lands and facilitates the use of public resources and investments, including schools.
6. Matching or “cost sharing” funds allocated to the project.

Disadvantaged Communities

Disadvantaged community means a community identified pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code (CalEnviroScreen 4.0) or pursuant to Section 75005 of the Public Resources Code (a community with a median household income less than 80% of the statewide average). The term “disadvantaged” refers to either the top 25% highest scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 4.0, or census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide average (refer to California State Parks’ Community FactFinder, or Department of Water Resources’ Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool).

Refer to Appendix for instructions on how to access mapping tools that identify disadvantaged communities and the criteria for determining if the project is both located within and providing benefits to these populations.

Proposal Application Submittal Procedure

All application and materials should be completed using the official IID Grant application form. The proposed project’s scope of work detailing the project’s summary, expenses, location maps and site photos are all required to be submitted with the application.

Each applicant must submit a signed proposal packet by **Thursday, May 14, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.**, via email to treeforallgrants@iid.com

If electronic submittal is not an option. Please contact IID at 760-482-3306.

No faxes will be accepted.

Proposal Application Review Procedure

Eligibility Review

IID will review each proposal upon receipt to determine if the minimum eligibility requirements have been met. If the proposal is found to be incomplete in a material way or the proposed project is not eligible for a grant, the applicant will be informed that the proposal is ineligible, and it will be disqualified from further consideration.

Full Proposal Review and Scoring

All eligible proposals will be scored on a 100-point system and will be evaluated by an IID grant review committee.

The evaluation process will focus on the following questions:

- How does the project meet Program intent (i.e., reduce GHGs, other benefits)? **(20 pts)**
- How can quality results be expected from the proposed methods and processes? **(15 pts)**
- How does the project contribute to just/economic recovery? **(10 pts)**
- Does the applicant have experience to carry out the scope of work proposed? If not, how is the applicant proposing to successfully complete the project? **(10 pts)**
- How are community members/volunteers significantly involved in the project? **(10 pts)**
- How does the project provide multiple co-benefits that address community needs? **(10 pts)**
- How does the maintenance plan maximize survivability for newly planted trees? **(10 pts)**
- How is workforce development and/or introduction to tree care jobs integrated as a component of the project? **(5 pts)**
- Are the costs for materials and services reasonable? **(5 pts)**
- How does the project contribute to building long-term support for urban forests within the community **(5 pts)**

Receiving an Award

If your organization is awarded a grant, you will execute a grant agreement with IID that details the rules and regulations of the grant, including requirements for final summary reporting and reimbursement requests.

Note: The awarded entity shall agree to care for and maintain the incentivized trees for a minimum of three (3) years or the typical lifespan of a tree. Failure to meet this obligation grants IID the right to seek a prorated refund of the original incentive paid, calculated based on the length of time the awarded entity provided the required tree care and maintenance.

Once proposal review and scoring has been completed, recommendations are submitted to the IID Power Manager. Upon the Power Manager’s approval, grant awards will be announced.

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

- All funding proposals must include the following to be eligible for consideration:
- IID Tree for All Public Green Space Grant Application

- Scope of Work detailing
 - Project Timeline
 - Permission to Plant (proof of ownership documents)
 - C-27 Licensed Landscaping Contractor or qualified facilities staff
 - Proposed Budget (detailed cost estimate reflecting all costs associated with the project)
 - Project location maps and site photos
 - IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter (non-profits only)

Conflict of Interest

All applicants and individuals who participate in the review of submitted applications are subject to state and federal conflict of interest laws. Any individual who has participated in planning or setting priorities for a specific solicitation over and above the public comment process or who will participate in any part of the grant development and negotiation process on behalf of the public is ineligible to receive funds or personally benefit from funds through that solicitation. Failure to comply with conflict of interest laws, including business and financial disclosure provisions, will result in the application being rejected and any subsequent grant agreement being declared void. Other legal actions may also be taken. Applicable statutes include, but are not limited to, California Government Code section 1090 and Public Contract Code sections 10365.5, 10410, and 10411.

Evaluation/Scoring Criteria

All information provided during the evaluation process should demonstrate how effectively the proposed project meets program requirements, funding priorities, and program objectives. Projects will be evaluated using the established criteria and any additional funding considerations. Projects will receive an initial ranking, with a score of 100 points possible.

Loss of Funding

The following are examples of actions that may result in a Grantee’s loss of funding. This is not a comprehensive list.

- Grantee fails to execute a Grant Agreement.
- Grantee changes the project scope without prior notice to and approval by the IID.
- Grantee fails to complete the project.
- Grantee fails to timely submit all documentation within the period specified in the grant agreement.
- Grantee fails to provide project updates as requested.

Appendix – Available Resources

Disadvantaged Communities

CalEnviroScreen 4.0

<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>