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To Be Discussed at Sept 7, 2010 General Membership Meeting

APPENDIX A

URBAN FOREST GRANT PROGRAM
PROJECT PROPOSAL APPLICATION FORM

PROJECT TITLE: **North Shoal Creek Urban Heat Island Mitigation Project**
Project Proposed by: Beautification Committee, North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association

BUDGET CATEGORY: **Tree Planting and Transplanting**

Does the project meet the required basic criteria:
Within the Austin city limits…….. YES
On public property or Civic areas as defined in 25-2-6(A) within the Land Development Code, or within 15' of these areas……YES
For public benefit…….. YES
Adhere to the Land Development Code criteria…… YES

Will the project occur without UFGP award …… NO

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INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES:

SUMMARY: We are requesting $7,000 to purchase and plant an estimated 25 medium to large trees (15 to 30 gallon) in the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood to mitigate our area's urban heat island effect. We are also requesting $2,400 to hire an arborist to select the best locations to plant the trees to effectively cool our neighborhood's sidewalks and streets. (The number of trees may vary slightly, depending on the arborist's report.)

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES: Our neighborhood, North Shoal Creek, is located in north central Austin and is bounded on the north by Highway 183, on the south by Anderson Lane, on the east by Burnet Road and on the west by Mo-Pac. Strip malls plus a few larger malls line our periphery. A mix of businesses, office buildings, apartment complexes and some residences line both sides of the two busiest streets within our neighborhood (Steck and Shoal Creek). The commercial properties generally have large concrete or asphalt parking lots and minimal landscaping which, combined with heavily traveled, multi-lane freeways and streets, create a large heat island effect on all sides of our residential area. Because of this, we feel it important that residential streets in the neighborhood be well-shaded and cooled by a variety of healthy, long-lived native trees. (For a map of our neighborhood and statistics about it, please go to www.city-data.com/neighborhood/North-Shoal-Creek-Austin-TX.html.)

Our neighborhood is fortunate to have already a number of well-shaded residential streets and many long-lived, well-established trees. However, we have two problems: first, some streets lack good street shade while others need additional trees to have consistent shade; and second, most of the houses in our neighborhood were built in the 60s and 70s, and the trees planted then (often Arizona ash) are near the end of their lifespan. The primary objective of our grant proposal is to address the first problem by planting some 15 medium sized trees on streets in need of additional shading and to address the second problem by encouraging residents with dead or dying trees to have them removed (at their own cost) by offering an estimated 10 larger trees as replacement trees. (These numbers may vary slightly, depending on the arborist's report.)

The secondary objective of our grant proposal is to hire a consulting arborist to survey our neighborhood and to provide us a report that will list the addresses where trees are most needed and to recommend species for each address. We believe this report will help us effectively place the trees we are requesting. Because 25 new trees won't fill in all the gaps in shading our streets, additional efforts will be needed in the future, and we see this report as an important aid to those organizing future tree planting efforts.

While our primary purpose is to combat our neighborhood's heat island effect, we expect our proposal, if funded, to have secondary benefits as well. For example, shaded, cooler streets should mean more walking and biking rather than driving to shopping along Anderson and Burnet. Since trees improve air quality, help save energy, raise property

values, create homes for wildlife, and help protect water quality, we expect satisfaction with the overall quality of life in our neighborhood to increase as a result of these new trees. We thank you for considering our request.

APPROACH AND METHODS:

We see our project as having three steps, the first two overlapping:

1. publicity: includes describing the project to our community, encouraging participation, and soliciting volunteers to help implement it;
2. implementation: includes hiring an arborist, reviewing his/her report, getting agreements from homeowners for planting trees, buying the trees, organizing and directing their planting;
3. follow-up: this entails checking periodically for the two years following planting to see that the required 2-year maintenance plan is followed and, at the end of the second year, completing and filing the Post Project Verification Form.

PUBLICITY: We've already included a brief article in our Aug./Sept. neighborhood newsletter, telling residents that our committee is preparing this grant request. If it is approved, we'll publicize it via articles in our bi-monthly print newsletter and online at our neighborhood website. We'll also host committee meetings to explain it in detail, to encourage participation, and to solicit volunteer help in implementing it. While many people may be familiar with the heat island effect, we may need to provide educational handouts for those who aren't. And we'll need to emphasize that the grant's objective is not to provide residents with free trees but rather to plant trees where they can lessen the heat island effect and that tree placement will be based on this criterion.

IMPLEMENTATION: Concurrently with our publicity efforts, we'll hire a consulting arborist to survey the residential streets in our neighborhood. We plan to contact at least three and will provide each with the same list of specifications: to provide our neighborhood association with a report containing the following information:

1. A list of each address that needs additional street shade;
2. A recommended tree species for each address, taking into consideration factors such as utility lines, street lights, access to irrigation, and line of sight for drivers;
3. A list of the 15 addresses most in need of street shade;
4. A list of 10 addresses with trees that need to be removed; and
5. Any physical features at any location that could cause planting difficulties.

Once the report is in hand, committee members and teams of volunteers will contact residents at each of the locations recommended as most in need of trees. If a resident chooses not participate, then residents at other locations listed in the report as needing trees will be contacted until all the trees have planting sites. Forms will be used to collect necessary information: 1) the address where a tree is to be planted; 2) the type of tree to

be planted[1]; and 3) a signed agreement to properly maintain and water the tree for two years after planting[2]. A volunteer or committee member will confirm that the tree planting site is within 15' of public property (i.e., the street) and will flag the planting site. It will be the responsibility of the homeowner to have utility and irrigation lines near the planting site clearly marked before planting day arrives.

A similar process will be followed for larger replacement trees, with the addition that the homeowner will need to have tree removal completed by planting day.

We will also contact at least three nurseries for bids to supply and plant the trees. Each nursery will be given a copy of the City's tree selection specifications. When the winning bidder has the trees ready for planting, we hope to have a volunteer with experience as a landscape architect check the trees to make sure they meet City of Austin requirements.

A day or two before the trees are to be planted, teams of volunteers will visit each planting site to see that all are prepared for planting (utility/irrigation lines marked, planting flag visible, no obstructions, dead trees removed, etc.). On planting day, we plan to have committee members and other volunteers available to help solve problems that arise.

FOLLOW-UP: Volunteer teams will check the newly planted trees frequently at first to verify that they are being properly watered. If any appear not to be, homeowners will be reminded of their obligation to do so. In the unlikely event a homeowner fails to meet his/her obligations, volunteers will be recruited to "adopt" a tree for the remainder of the two-year period. These checks will decrease as the trees become better established and we feel comfortable they are being well cared for. The second year, committee members will check the trees quarterly. At the end of the second year, a committee member will complete the Urban Forest Grant Program Post Project Verification Form and file it with the City.

TIMELINE: If approval is given in time for the fall/winter 2010/2011 planting season, we would aim to have the planting completed by Spring 2011. Otherwise, we would plant in fall/winter 2011/2012.

[1] Selected from Appendix C: Eligible Tree Planting List
[2] The recommended watering schedule will be to water once a week, ten gallons for each diameter inch of tree trunk – i.e., a 2" caliper tree would require 20 gallons/week

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BUDGET:

15	15-20 gal. trees	average price of $200/tree	Subtotal: $3,000
10	25-30 gal. trees	average price of $400/tree	Subtotal: $4,000[3]
16 hours of certified arborist's time to survey neighborhood, produce report, and provide 2-3 hours of follow-up consulting @ $150/hour			Subtotal: $2,400
			TOTAL: $9,400

MATCHING FUNDS/VOLUNTEER TIME: While we will not be matching the funds we are requesting, we are estimating we'll use about 150 hours of volunteer time in fully implementing this project. Beautification Committee members (who are themselves volunteers), helped by other neighborhood volunteers, will be performing the following tasks:

. writing articles for our newsletter, website, and listserve to publicize the grant and encourage participation (1-2 volunteers) 8 hours
. hosting committee meetings and attending membership meetings to answer questions about the grant (2-3 volunteers) 12 hours
. writing and distributing flyers about the project plus educational handouts on the urban heat island effect & how street trees can decrease it (2-3 volunteers) 10 hours
. preparing planting checklists and tree maintenance agreements (1-2 vols.) 8 hours
. contacting homeowners who are eligible for trees to discuss the project & to encourage them to participate (4-5 volunteers) 40 hours
. handling both bid processes (1-2 volunteers) 6 hours
. visiting each planting site prior to planting day to make sure it's ready for planting and confirming that the planting site complies with the grant's 15' guideline 6 hours
. coordinating the tree planting process (3-4 volunteers) 24 hours
. conducting follow-up visits over a 2 year span (3-4 volunteers) 40 hours
TOTAL 154 hours

At a rate of $11/hour, our volunteer commitment would equal about $1,694.00

[3] Total price includes price of tree plus planting, mulching, fertilizing, and providing a one time watering at planting.