Branching out

A community grant program to plant trees and improve energy efficiency in Iowa

ALLIANT ENERGY

TREES FOREVER
Planting a better tomorrow™

Trees make a community beautiful

Apply for a *Branching Out* grant today!

Branching Out is a nationally recognized grant program where Alliant Energy, Trees Forever and your community work together to fund and implement community tree planting projects. The program is designed to encourage energy efficiency, environmental awareness and community stewardship in Iowa.

Branching Out is offered exclusively to Iowa communities where Alliant Energy provides electric and/or natural gas service. The utility provides grants of $1,000 to $10,000 for community-based tree planting projects including streets, schools, public buildings, trails, parks, entranceways, cemeteries, and more. Trees Forever administers and facilitates the program, providing educational and planning support.

To apply for a *Branching Out* grant, you must complete the attached application form and submit a site plan and proposal letter that addresses nine key areas (see proposal letter guidelines). The application process is competitive and preference is given to applicants that meet all guidelines.

Grants are awarded two times per year, to coincide with the spring and fall planting seasons. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, but are considered only in the next grant-making cycle (spring or fall). Your community may apply and receive funding for multiple projects in a single grant cycle.

Grant Cycle	Application Deadline	Grants Announced	Funding Awarded
Spring	November 1	January 15	March 1-31
Fall	June 1	August 15	September 1-30

Email completed applications and supporting documents to *droman@treesforever.org* or mail to Trees Forever, c/o *Branching Out*, 770 7th Avenue, Marion, Iowa, 52302. The Trees Forever staff is available to help you complete applications, develop a planting project, and plan a planting event. If you have questions, please call 1-800-369-1269, ext. 110.

Apply today! We look forward to working with you. Together, we can make Iowa communities more energy efficient and beautiful.

Application requirements

We encourage you to email your completed application and supporting documents to *droman@treesforever.org*. Or, you can mail your documents to:

Trees Forever, c/o *Branching Out*
770 7th Ave., Marion, IA 52302

To be considered for funding, all applications must be submitted containing:

- Completed application form
- Proposal letter addressing all nine program guidelines
- Site plan sketch, not to exceed 8.5" x 11" in size
- Other support materials (letters of support from community leaders, verification of other funding, photos, etc.)
- Detailed budget including number of trees, species, size, cost per tree and total amount of project cost. (*Branching Out* funds are exclusively for trees.)

Application submissions must be complete to receive funding consideration.

For additional information, visit *alliantenergy.com/branchingout*, *treesforever.org* or call 1-800-369-1269, ext. 110

Branching Out Grant Application Form

Materials must be postmarked by June 1 to be considered for the fall grant-making cycle, and by November 1 to be considered for the spring grant-making cycle. Grant recipients will be announced two to three months after the application deadline.

Date | Grant amount requested

Community / County | Population

Organization/Committee Name (if applicable) | Federal Tax ID#

Contact | Occupation

Address ☐ Home ☐ Business | City | State | Zip

Telephone (Home) | (Work) | (Mobile)

Email

Community's Electric Provider | Community's Natural Gas Provider | Does Alliant Energy serve electricity or natural gas to the project site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Other committee members, or volunteers, who will assist with planning, planting and caring for your trees

Name | Address ☐ Home ☐ Business | Phone | Email

Name | Address ☐ Home ☐ Business | Phone | Email

Name | Address ☐ Home ☐ Business | Phone | Email

Name | Address ☐ Home ☐ Business | Phone | Email

I give permission to Alliant Energy and Trees Forever to reproduce and use any photographs taken at my community tree-planting event and/or that are submitted as part of our program summary report.

Signature_____ Date _____

We encourage you to email your completed application and supporting documents to *droman@treesforever.org*. Or, you can mail your documents to:

Trees Forever, c/o *Branching Out*
770 7th Ave., Marion, IA 52302

What organization should grant checks be made payable to?_____

Anticipated tree planting event date?_____

Local Media Contact _____
Name, Business (Name of publication, radio station call letters, etc.)

_____
Phone and email

Questions?

Please call the Marion Trees Forever office at 1-800-369-1269, ext. 110 or 319-373-0650; fax 319-373-0528; or send email to info@treesforever.org.

Proposal Letter Guidelines

Illustration of ideal tree planting locations to maximize energy savings. To learn more about energy-efficient tree planting, visit *treesforever.org*.

Please address each of the following in your proposal letter. Each grant request is reviewed and scored with regard to:

1. Overall Project Description – Please describe your tree planting to someone who has never been to your community. How many and what tree species will be planted? Please see recommended species list as you develop your project. Species not included on the list will need to get a written approval from a Trees Forever field coordinator to be included in your project. How will it benefit the community? What is the anticipated date of your planting?

2. Energy-Efficiency Benefits – Please describe the energy-efficiency benefits of your planting project. Large shade trees (at maturity) planted on the west side of buildings provide the highest energy savings, followed by large trees on the east, then south, then evergreen trees on the north and west (see diagram at right). Does your planting include a windbreak or large shade trees near buildings?

3. Care and Maintenance – Newly planted trees require a significant amount of care to get established. Describe your tree care plan for the first two years, which should include watering, mulching, pruning and possibly staking. Who is responsible for maintenance?

4. Education – How will you provide education about the planting and care of trees, and/or the benefits of trees to members of your community (including energy-efficiency benefits)? (Trees Forever field coordinators are available to provide or assist with your educational efforts.)

5. Volunteer Involvement and Community Awareness – Does the committee listed on page two provide a broad representation of your community? Planting projects should include volunteers planting trees that are no larger than 1.5" caliper or 10 gal. container (shade trees) or 4' or 10 gal. container (evergreens). Volunteers of all ages and abilities will be able to be directly involved with planting these sizes of trees. Also, research has shown that smaller trees experience less transplant shock. They are able to get established and begin growing more quickly than larger stock, in many cases. See treesforever.org for more information. How will you promote your tree planting within your community? Will local media be invited to attend? Will you engage local elected officials? How will you recognize program partners (Alliant Energy and Trees Forever)? (Trees Forever field coordinators will assist and/or attend your planting; please provide planting date well in advance.)

6. Diversity – Many Iowa communities have an overabundance of maples, crab apples, and ash trees, leaving them susceptible to devastation by future insect and/or pest threats. Due to the impending threat of Emerald Ash Borer, no ash trees will be funded. What species and how many of each species will you plant? Please describe how you are addressing diversity either within your project, or how your project diversifies your community's overall tree makeup. Does your community have an inventory of trees and if so, how does it factor in to your species selection?

7. Site Plan Sketch – Please provide an aerial map of your community and highlight area(s) of town where you plan to plant. In addition, please provide a site plan sketch. This may be a simple hand drawing, and should include major roads, spacing, location of trees and overhead power lines, and a north directional arrow. Maximum size of site plan sketch is 8.5 x 11.

8. Budget – You are strongly encouraged to get estimates from one or more nurseries in your area as you plan your project. Many nurseries are willing to discuss discounts for volunteer-led community betterment projects. Matching funds are required and may be achieved through in-kind contributions. *Branching Out* funds can only be used for trees. Shrubs, mulch and planting costs will not be covered. Please complete a budget, similar to the sample budget found at *www.treesforever.org*

9. Reporting requirements – If you have previously participated in the *Branching Out* program, have you completed required reports? If you are new to the *Branching Out* program, are you aware that reports must be completed and submitted to the Trees Forever office (Attn: Deb, 770 7th Ave., Marion, IA, 52302) by November 1? Please limit supporting documentation to no more than two additional pages and five photos. Failure to submit a summary report may result in disqualification for the next funding cycle.

©2013 Alliant Energy 444619 8/13 MJ