

Saint Paul Audubon Society Grant Application

Please complete all fields. Use N/A if not applicable.

Organization: Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ)

Tax ID#: 47-3199574

Fiscal Agent: N/A

Person making request: Angela Casselton, Executive Director

Email: director@creativeenterprisezone.org

Phone: 651.243.0360

Project name: *100 Trees Initiative*

Amount requested: \$2,000

Date of request: September 10, 2024

Date funds needed: 2025

Brief overview of the organization, including mission statement:

The Creative Enterprise Zone is a city-recognized district *and* a nonprofit organization with a dedicated mission to “attract and support creative people and businesses to #MakeItHere” (in South Saint Anthony Park and part of the Midway neighborhood in Saint Paul.)

Home to hundreds of creative businesses — from artists to architects, entrepreneurs to manufacturers — the Zone is a historic industrial transportation hub and a fast-growing mixed-use residential neighborhood.

We envision a thriving district of creativity and innovation centered in an equitable and just community of economic and environmental well-being. We work to improve public health, beauty, safety, and the environment through [community investment](#) and control of commercial

real estate, our annual [Chroma Zone Mural & Art Festival](#), and the [100 Trees Initiative](#).

We have planted our roots as connectors and instigators; community-builders committed to fostering community, economic, and environmental well-being.

A description of the project, including location, activities, goals, timeline, and expected completion date (or is it for operational expenses?):

Since 2021, the CEZ has led the *100 Trees Initiative* a grassroots effort to grow and plant 100 new street trees in the Zone each year. Our goal is to expand the urban tree canopy, improve air and water quality, increase habitat for wildlife, and reduce the high heat index in our growing mixed-use (residential and industrial) district in Saint Paul.

To date, we have installed 300+ new trees on public boulevards, grown bare root trees in gravel beds, hosted 4 community planting days, enacted a weekly watering program that utilizes a 600-gallon mobile watering trailer, and leveraged key environmental partners to help us with our ongoing efforts to green our neighborhood.

Key partners include Bailey's Nursery, Davey Tree Expert Company, AmeriCorps Climate Impact program, City of Saint Paul Forestry, Landbridge Ecological, Transition Town – ASAP, the Saint Anthony Park Community Council's Environment Committee, volunteers, neighbors, and friends.

100 Trees Project timeline:

Tree species research and site planning (Jan-May)

Tree Pruning and maintenance (Jan-May)

Tree procurement and gravel bed prep (April/May)

Spring site and gravel bed planting (May)

Weekly Tree Watering (May - November)

Education, donor, fundraising & volunteer recruitment (Ongoing)

Tree planting plan approval, tree order, and utility checks (August & Sept)

Fall Community Planting Day – (October)

Ongoing tree care, watering & maintenance (2+ years for each new tree) (year-round)

100 Trees Initiative funds are used to offset the cost of tree bags, weekly truck rentals, tree staking materials, tools and specialty equipment, and hospitality at community events.

If approved, will these dollars be the sole funding mechanism for this project? If not, please list other partners and funders.

These dollars will not be the sole source of project funding. The program relies on individual gifts and occasional grants to cover hard costs not donated in-kind by partners and volunteers. More specifically, Bailey Nursery generously donates 100 trees each year; Davey Trees provides expertise, labor, tools, and mulch needed for each planting event; Landbridge Ecological donates water by allowing the use of their city fire hydrant water meter; the community donates tools and labor; and a partnership with Ampact AmeriCorps has provided us with much needed members working on-site to lead care, watering, and maintenance of the trees.

Which of SPAS's priority focus areas does this project address?

Environmental education - *tree focused meet-ups, online resources, event presence, community engagement, and volunteerism*

Providing nesting support or native plants - *expanded tree canopy, addition of more fruit-bearing tree species, new native plantings, and watering support for community pollinator gardens*

Is this a one-time request or are future requests anticipated? (include frequency):

We would love to consider annual support through an ongoing partnership but are also willing to make periodic requests to SPA to ensure other organizations and projects get the support they need. We keep our expenses minimal and work to create alliances with other like-minded nonprofits to build long-term sustainability for the initiative.

How will you determine whether the project is successful?

Anytime we can help a new or existing street tree survive our harsh soil conditions, high heat index, and drought-prone summers in a largely industrial area of Saint Paul, we are achieving our goal of generating impactful, community-led response to climate change.

We work toward short-term goals by intentionally and strategically planting 100 new street trees each year (approved by city forestry) ensuring the best chance of survival by providing a minimum of two years of care, watering, and maintenance. We also work toward long-term climate impact by imagining our neighborhood in 10-30 years with hundreds of strong healthy trees with full canopies, that host and nourish birds and small creatures, while shading our

streets and buildings, improving air quality, and providing generations of people (and wildlife) with improved health, beauty and well-being in the Zone.

Who will benefit from this project, and how will you measure these benefits?

Like the Saint Paul Audubon Society, we know all living things need safety, abundance, and space to survive and thrive. With climate change threatening the livelihood of wildlife and humans alike, the *100 Trees Initiative* is our grassroots response as an urban community to improve public health, beauty, safety and the environment of the Zone. Trees clean the air, provide oxygen, cool our streets, conserve energy, prevent water pollution, prevent soil erosion, provide food, reduce violence and noise, provide canopy and habitat for wildlife, beautify space, capture rainwater, and help people get outside and engage with their city and community.

Everyone benefits from more trees. They are a vital piece of infrastructure that gains value over time. We will know we are successful when we have softened the Zone’s edges with greenery to improve air quality, water quality, and habitat, and better shape our built environment spaces with our community’s values.

How can Saint Paul Audubon assist in the success of your project/organization?

In addition to funding, the *100 Trees Initiative* benefits from shared community engagement, awareness, partnerships, and promotion. We would love to work with Saint Paul Audubon to provide opportunities for our constituents to learn about your work to protect birds and habitats, and how our work with trees is working toward our common goal to support thriving communities. We are grateful for the work of SPA and your organizations ability to attract and leverage the passion and resources of your members to protect and preserve our natural world.

Approved by __ Board __ Committee Name _____ Amount: