



**Texas Trees Foundation  
for  
Texas A&M Forest Service  
Schoolyard Forests Grant**

**Request for Proposals for  
Tree Sourcing & Delivery Services**

**Release Date:**  
**Friday, September 19, 2025**

**Due Date:**  
**Monday, October 27, 2025, at 3:00PM CT**

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

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## **Section 1: Request for Proposal Overview**

The Texas Trees Foundation (Texas Trees) invites proposals from qualified nurseries, tree farms, and individuals (Contractor) to provide tree sourcing and delivery services for the Cool Schools Rio Grande Valley initiative, funded through the Texas A&M Forest Service's Schoolyard Forests Grant. This project will transform campuses in Donna and Mercedes Independent School Districts (Hidalgo County, Texas), increasing canopy cover and connecting children to nature through hands-on ecological education.

The project includes 14 planting projects with the goal of achieving 30% canopy coverage across participating campuses. The Contractor will be responsible for sourcing and delivering approximately 900 large shade trees and 500 native shrubs or small-to-medium understory plants. Deliveries will be staged throughout October 2026 and April 2027 to align with planting schedules.

All plant material must meet grant specifications:

- Large shade trees: 15-gallon container, 1-inch caliper.
- Native shrubs/understory plants: 15-gallon container, 1-inch caliper. Species must conform to Exhibit A.

Proposals must respond to the Scope of Work (Section 4) and include all materials required under Submission Requirements & Instructions (Section 5). Submissions are due by Monday, October 27, 2025, at 3:00PM CT, in PDF format.

## **Section 2: Organizational & Program Background**

Texas Trees is a leading urban forestry nonprofit organization based in Dallas and working throughout the State of Texas. Its mission is to improve the health of cities and people through the transformative power of trees. Over its 43-year history, Texas Trees has supported the growth and stewardship of urban forests, planting over 1.5 million trees and contributing to healthier, greener communities. Through research, education, and partnerships, Texas Trees has also become a leading voice and resource to communities and decision makers.

The Cool Schools Program™ supports the health and well-being of PK-12th grade students through a focus on environmental stewardship and personal connection to nature. This program aims to nurture a life-long love of exploration and appreciation for the natural environment through expansive tree planting, outdoor experiential learning opportunities, and unstructured play.

## **Section 3: Project Purpose & Goals**

In 2024, the Texas Trees Foundation, in partnership with Donna ISD and Mercedes ISD, launched the *Cool Schools Rio Grande Valley* project with funding from the Texas A&M Forest Service through their Community Forestry Grants (Schoolyard Forests Program). This initiative aims to:

- Expand native tree canopy across school campuses
- Enhance environmental education through forest literacy and outdoor learning

- Strengthen climate resilience and community engagement by fostering dialogue and addressing air quality, urban heat, and green spaces.

These efforts are designed to benefit students, educators, administrators, parents, and the broader community in the Rio Grande Valley, a region where access to green space and related resources remains limited.

#### **Section 4: Scope of Work**

This section outlines the required services and deliverables. Contractors must complete all tasks described below. Proposals will be evaluated, in part, on the proposer's ability to fulfill each component related to procurement and delivery (see Section 9: Selection Process for details).

The selected Contractor will be responsible for the following deliverables

1. Source and purchase trees as listed in Exhibit A
2. Hold trees and deliver trees to the campuses listed in Exhibit B

Note: Planting and installation are not included in this RFP.

##### **1. Sourcing and Purchasing**

- Identify nurseries both within the Rio Grande Valley and outside that can fulfill the requested amount and specifics of trees specified in Exhibit A.
- Source healthy stock, container grown trees, from established nurseries. Trees must be reasonably free of die- back, disease, insects, eggs, borers, and larvae.
- At a minimum, all tree material shall meet:
  - ANSI Z60.1 American Standard for Nursery Stock, most current edition.
  - ANSI A 300 – Standard Practices for Tree, Shrub and other Woody Plant Maintenance, most current edition and parts.
  - Exhibit C: Texas A&M Forest Service - 2024 Community Forestry Grants Guidance Document - Appendix A: Standards and Specifications for Purchasing, Planting, and Maintaining Trees
- At the time of delivery all trees shall have a root system, stem, and branch form that will not restrict normal growth, stability and health for the expected life of the tree.
- Submit to Texas Trees, for approval, the names and locations of nurseries proposed as sources of acceptable trees, and a list of the tree species they will provide. The tree list shall include the botanical and common name, the size and root type at the time of selection.
- Submit to Texas Trees photographs of trees or representative samples of trees. Photographs shall be legible and clearly depict the plant specimen. Each submitted image shall contain a height reference, such as a measuring stick. The approval of plants by the Texas Trees via photograph does not preclude the Texas Trees's right to reject material on delivery.
- Replace any defective trees. An ISA certified arborist from Texas Trees shall make the final determination if trees meet these specifications or if trees are defective.

## 2. Storage & Delivery

- Maintain trees in proper storage conditions, including irrigation, shade, wind protection and pest management as needed. Maintain irrigation and treatment records of stored trees and make them available for review upon request.
- Protect trees from deterioration during storage and delivery, ensuring root balls remain moist and shielded from sun, wind, and extreme temperatures. If delivery is delayed, set plants in a location protected from sun and wind.
- Provide adequate water for the root ball package during storage and shipping period.
- Deliver trees to 14 campuses listed in Exhibit B, according to a schedule established within 180 days from signing the contract.
- Complete up to 14 deliveries (approximately 100 trees per delivery) between October 2026 and April 2027.
- Include all costs associated with transportation, labor, equipment, and related services in the proposal

Contractors are encouraged to submit a proposal if they can source at minimum 75% of the total trees provided. Additionally, Contractors are encouraged to suggest enhancements or clarifications to the scope in their submission, including additional services, efficiencies, or alternative approaches that may improve outcomes.

## Section 5: Submission Requirements and Instructions

All proposals must be submitted in PDF format and must not exceed seven (7) pages, excluding Detailed Cost Sheet (Exhibit D). To be considered, each submission must clearly address the Contractor's capacity to meet the expectations described in the Scope of Work (Section 4).

- **Relevant Experience** - Summary of prior projects involving tree sourcing, delivery or large-scale growing projects, highlighting work of similar scope and scale.
- **Project Management Approach** – Description of how all the elements of the Scope of Work will be carried out, including timelines, staffing, and any additional recommendations for Texas Trees to consider.
- **Nursery Network** – Identification of nurseries in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond that will supply the necessary trees, along with details of sourcing relationships and capacity.
- **Tree Holding Facilities** – Description and visual documentation (e.g., photos, site plan) of holding space infrastructure, including irrigation systems and capacity to maintain the required tree stock.
- **Delivery Plan** – Explanation of how trees will be staged, transported and delivered.
- **Client References** – Contact Information of two (2) references from previous clients.
- **Cost Proposal** – Detailed per-tree cost that is inclusive of all expenses (sourcing, holding, delivery, equipment and transportation). See Exhibit D.

Refer to the following exhibits when preparing your quote:

- **Exhibit A:** Tree Species & Required Quantity List
- **Exhibit B:** Campus/Delivery Locations
- **Exhibit C:** Texas A&M Forest Service - 2024 Community Forestry Grants Guidance Document – Appendix A: Standards and Specifications for Purchasing, Planting, and Maintaining Trees  
**Note:** Blanket substitutions of tree species are not permitted. Any substitutions must be pre-approved by Texas Trees no later than 30 days prior to delivery date and must align with accepted urban forestry equivalencies and recommendations.
- **Exhibit D** – Detailed Cost Sheet

Submit one complete PDF electronically (via email or file-sharing service such as Dropbox to [anabel@texastrees.org](mailto:anabel@texastrees.org) **Monday, October 27, 2025, at 3:00PM CT**. All submissions will be confirmed by email.

Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered. If only one proposal is received in response to the RFP, the Texas Trees may either make an award or, if time permits, re-solicit it for the purpose of obtaining additional proposals.

### Section 6: Additional Requirements

The selected Contractor must meet the following requirements:

- Contractor(s) should possess all applicable licenses and certifications required by the State of Texas and shall also maintain all other business and professional licenses that may be required by Federal, State and Local Codes.
- Provide a W-9.
- Selected Contractor, their employees and subcontractors must pass a background check and maintain acceptable status whenever requested by Texas Trees.
- Must satisfy all requirements pertinent to insurance, including a Certificate of Insurance.

### Section 7: Procurement Timeline

The following represents the schedule of procurement activities leading to contract award:

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ● Issue Request for Proposals | September 19, 2025            |
| ● Deadline for Questions      | October 3, 2025 at 3:00PM CT  |
| ● Questions & Answers Posted  | October 10, 2025              |
| ● Proposals Due               | October 27, 2025 at 3:00PM CT |
| ● Award Notification          | November 2025                 |
| ● Contract Execution          | November 2025                 |

### Section 8: Questions

All questions regarding the RFP shall be directed in writing by e-mail to [anabel@texastrees.org](mailto:anabel@texastrees.org) (Anabel Castillo-Soto, Director of Urban Forestry Training) by 3:00PM CT on Friday October 3, 2025. All questions and answers will be posted on our website by Friday October 10, 2025.

## Section 9: Selection Process

Texas Trees will select a Contractor based on the proposal submitted on how meets the requirements of the best and the evaluation criteria listed below and best value, not necessarily lowest cost. Texas Trees may also make the selection of the Contractor based on negotiation with one or more of the respondents. In conducting such negotiations, Texas Trees will avoid disclosing the content of competing proposals. Texas Trees reserves the right to award multiple contracts for various portions of the requirements to different Contractors including.

After submission of a proposal but before final selection of the Contractor is made, Texas Trees may permit a respondent to revise its proposal to obtain the respondent's best and final offer or to provide clarification as requested by Texas Trees.

#	Evaluation Criteria	Weight
1	Demonstrated success with projects of similar scope and scale, including sourcing, holding and delivering large quantities of trees.	20
2	Clarity and feasibility of the proposed plan to carry out the requirements of the Scope of Work, including timelines, staffing and value-added recommendations.	20
3	Demonstrated relationships with nurseries (with preference for nurseries in the Rio Grande Valley) that have availability, reliability and capacity to support sourcing and delivery requirements	15
4	Quality and capacity of holding space including irrigation infrastructure and ability to maintain tree health until delivery.	15
5	Thoroughness and practical delivery logistics, scheduling and contingency measures for ensuring timely and safe delivery to campuses	15
6	Competitive per-tree cost, including the completeness of the Detailed Cost Sheet.	25
7	Reference checks	5
8	Local owner and/or experience serving communities in the Rio Grande Valley	5
	<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>120</b>

## Section 10: Acceptance or Rejection and Negotiation

Texas Trees reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in whole or part, and may select more than one Contractor to complete the work. The contents of the selected proposal will become binding contractual obligations. Refusal to incorporate the proposal into the contract will result in cancellation of the award.

Texas Trees may negotiate modifications or accept portions of a proposal and is under no obligation to accept elements that do not meet its approval. Final terms and conditions are subject to review and approval of Texas Trees' legal counsel.

All proposals must remain valid for at least one hundred and twenty (120) calendar days after the submission deadline. A proposal may be withdrawn prior to the submission deadline through a written requests to [anabel@texastrees.org](mailto:anabel@texastrees.org). Contractors are responsible for ensuring accuracy and completeness of their submission; negligence in preparation confers no right of withdrawal after the deadline.

It is the intent of Texas Trees to send an award notice to the selected Contractor no later than sixty (60) days after the last date established for proposal submission.

### **Section 11: Reservations**

Additional information regarding RFP submittal, content, processes, and procedures are listed below:

1. All proposals will become the property of Texas Trees and will not be returned to Contractors.
2. Texas Trees reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, whether minimum qualifications are met, and to modify, postpone, or cancel this Request for Proposal, in whole or in part, or decide to award a contract to perform only some of the services outlined in this Request For Proposal, without liability, obligation, or commitment to any party, contractor, or organization.
3. In addition, Texas Trees reserves the right to request and obtain additional information from any candidate submitting a proposal, and to negotiate the final scope of services with the selected Contractor. Texas Trees is not liable for any costs incurred by Contractors prior to the issuance of an agreement, contract, or purchase order. The costs of developing proposals, oral presentations, or any other such expenses incurred by the Contractor in responding to the RFP are entirely the responsibility of the contractor and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by Texas Trees. No materials or labor will be furnished by Texas Trees.
4. Texas Trees reserves the right to waive or permit cure of minor informalities and/or insignificant mistakes such as matters of form rather than substance and to conduct discussions and negotiations with any qualified respondent in any manner deemed necessary by Texas Trees to serve its best interests. Texas Trees also reserves the right, based on its sole judgment and discretion, to award a contract based upon the written proposals it receives without conducting discussions, interviews, or negotiations.
5. If, in the opinion of Texas Trees, a proposal contains false or misleading statements or references, it may be rejected.
6. Texas Trees reserves the right to obtain written clarification of any point in a Contractor's proposal or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal. Failure of a Contractor to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification may result in rejection of the Contractor's proposal.
7. Failure to comply with these instructions, and the other specific provisions of the RFP, may result in the Contractor's proposal not being reviewed.
8. Texas Trees reserves the right, without qualification, to select a Contractor's for further discussions based solely on the content of the RFPs and relevant information obtained from others concerning the respondent's respective records of past performance.



9. The Contractor's proposal shall not be made contingent upon uncertain events, which shall not have occurred until after the RFP is completed.
10. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP due to inquiries raised, an email notifying an addendum, supplement or amendment to this RFP will be provided to Contractors who received an original invitation to bid via email OR responded to us with their contact information as described on the cover letter of this RFP. Changes to the RFP shall be accomplished by an amended page or pages.
11. The Contractor must comply with all items Exhibit C: Texas A&M Forest Service - 2024 Community Forestry Grants Guidance Document - Appendix A: Standards and Specifications for Purchasing, Planting, and Maintaining Trees.
12. Texas Trees reserves the right to refuse (and not pay for) substandard trees per Texas A&M Forest Service - 2024 Community Forestry Grants Guidance Document - Appendix A: Standards and Specifications for Purchasing, Planting, and Maintaining Trees (See Exhibit C).
13. If the Contractor hires a subcontractor for any purpose, the subcontractor must be approved by Texas Trees.

### **Section 12 Equal Opportunity Statement**

Texas Trees is an equal opportunity employer. Employment at Texas Trees is based solely on a person's merit and qualifications directly related to professional competence. Texas Trees does not discriminate against any employee or applicant because of race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identify/expression, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy or related conditions (including breastfeeding), or any other basis protected by law.

**END of Request for Proposals**

## Exhibit A: Tree Species & Required Quantity List

Larger Shade Tree Species (15 gallon size)		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Required Quantity
Bur oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	150
Chinquapin Oak	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>	200
Cedar elm	<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>	150
Live oak	<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	100
Mexican white oak	<i>Quercus polymorpha</i>	200
Montezuma cypress	<i>Taxodium mucronatum</i>	50
Mexican sycamore	<i>Platanus mexicana</i>	75
Pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	75
Shrubby/Small-Medium Tree Species (15-gallon size)		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Required Quantity
Anacua	<i>Ehretia anacua</i>	30
Mexican olive (Anacahuita/Mexican Wild Olive)	<i>Cordia boissieri</i>	30
Huisache	<i>Vachellia farnesiana</i>	30
Desert willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	30
Mexican redbud/Texas redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	25
Texas persimmon	<i>Diospyros texana</i>	25
Texas mountain laurel	<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	30
Mexican lead tree (Tepehuaje/Lead Tree or White Lead Tree /Great Lead Tree)	<i>Leucaena pulverulenta</i>	25
Mexican plum	<i>Prunus mexicana</i>	25
Yaupon Holly	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	25
Wax myrtle	<i>Morella cerifera</i>	25
Texas Ebony	<i>Ebenopsis ebano</i>	25
Retama/Paloverde	<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>	25
Brasil	<i>Condalia hookeri</i>	25
Berlandier's Fiddlewood	<i>Citharexylum berlandieri</i>	25
Total		1,400

## **Exhibit B: Campus/Delivery Locations**

### **Donna ISD**

1. J.W. Caceres Elementary School (503 S Hutto Rd, Donna, TX 78537)
2. P.S. Garza Elementary School (8801 W Alberta Rd, Donna, TX 78537)
3. A.M. Ochoa Elementary School (424 S 11th St, Donna TX 78537)
4. M. Rivas Elementary School (503 S Hutto Rd, Donna, TX 78537)
5. Captain D. Salinas II STEAM Academy (333 US-83 Business, Alamo TX 78516)
6. C. Stainke Elementary School (1309 S Avenue, Donna TX 78537)
7. Daniel Singleterry Senior Elementary School (9113 N Val Verde Rd, Donna, TX 78537)
8. A.P. Solis Middle School (700 South Ave, Donna, TX 78537)

### **Mercedes ISD**

1. Ruben Hinojosa Elementary School (500 S Rio Rd, Mercedes TX 78570)
2. W.B. Travis Elementary School (1551 S Georgia Ave, Mercedes, TX 78570)
3. Sgt. Manuel Chacon Middle School (801 South Mile 1, Mercedes TX 78570)
4. Sgt. William G. Harrell Middle School (2825 N FM 491, Mercedes, TX 78570)
5. Mercedes High School (801 Hidalgo St, Mercedes, TX, 78570)
6. Mercedes Academic Academy (319 S. Mile 1, Mercedes, TX, 78570)

## **Exhibit C: Texas A&M Forest Service - 2024 Community Forestry Grants Guidance Document**

### **APPENDIX A - STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR PURCHASING, PLANTING, AND MAINTAINING TREES**

This Appendix is a compilation of the Guideline Specification for Nursery Tree Quality: Strategies for Growing a High- Quality Root System, Trunk, and Crown in a Container Nursery, and the Tree Care Cue Cards. It has been prepared to instruct awardees on how to select, plant, and care for young trees. Illustrations by Edward F. Gilman, Professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, IFAS, University of Florida; adaptations from Arboriculture: Integrated Management of Landscape Trees, Shrubs and Vines, 4th ed., by R. W. Harris, J. R. Clark, and N. P. Matheny (Prentice Hall, 2003). Copyright © 2011 Brian Kempf and Ed Gilman.

For the complete Appendix, visit

<https://texasforestinfo.tamu.edu/CFG/2024CommunityForestryGrantsAppendixA.pdf>.

## Exhibit D: Detailed Cost Sheet

Larger Shade Tree Species (15 gallon size)				
Common Name	Botanical Name	Required Quantity	Unit Price	Total
Bur oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	150		
Chinquapin Oak	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>	200		
Cedar elm	<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>	150		
Live oak	<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	100		
Mexican white oak	<i>Quercus polymorpha</i>	200		
Montezuma cypress	<i>Taxodium mucronatum</i>	50		
Mexican sycamore	<i>Platanus mexicana</i>	75		
Pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	75		
Shrubby/Small-Medium Tree Species (15-gallon size)				
Common Name	Botanical Name	Required Quantity	Unit Price	Total
Anacua	<i>Ehretia anacua</i>	30		
Mexican olive (Anacahuita/Mexican Wild Olive)	<i>Cordia boissieri</i>	30		
Huisache	<i>Vachellia farnesiana</i>	30		
Desert willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	30		
Mexican redbud/Texas redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	25		
Texas persimmon	<i>Diospyros texana</i>	25		
Texas mountain laurel	<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	30		
Mexican lead tree (Tepehuaje/Lead Tree or White Lead Tree /Great Lead Tree)	<i>Leucaena pulverulenta</i>	25		
Mexican plum	<i>Prunus mexicana</i>	25		
Yaupon Holly	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	25		
Wax myrtle	<i>Morella cerifera</i>	25		
Texas Ebony	<i>Ebenopsis ebano</i>	25		
Retama/Paloverde	<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>	25		
Brasil	<i>Condalia hookeri</i>	25		
Berlandier's Fiddlewood	<i>Citharexylum berlandieri</i>	25		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>1,400</b>		