

# COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

## Q&A

### RFP PLN2025-003 Unincorporated Area Urban Forest Plan and Tree Inventory

Link to RFP: <https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/current-bid/?bidid=3132>

**Dated: November 13, 2025**

Responses to Questions regarding the RFP as submitted by vendors who contacted the County Planning Department:

#### **TREE INVENTORY, CANOPY ANALYSIS, AND URBAN FOREST PLAN**

- 1) Does the County have an estimate for the number of trees that would need to be inventoried? If not, is the County open to the Consultant providing a scope and cost estimate based on a maximum number of trees, with the assumption that the County would provide a list or map of priority areas to be inventoried if there are more trees than what is covered in the cost estimate.

The proposed inventory will be the first complete inventory of trees in the county's urban unincorporated areas. More than a decade ago, students at Arroyo School conducted a small, community-led tree inventory, but this effort was limited in scope and the data are no longer available. While the County does not have a total tree count, the RFP includes related information — such as the number of miles of public streets and the total acres of school and park properties.

Community Name	Road miles	Canopy Cover	Canopy Coverage Tier	Estimated Trees/mile	Estimated # of street trees
Ashland	45	0.11	Low	40	1800
Castro Valley	154	0.2	Medium	60	9240
Cherryland	23	0.13	Low	40	920
Fairview	32	0.32	High	80	2560
Hayward Acres	5	0.09	Low	40	188
San Lorenzo	60	0.12	Medium	60	3600
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18308</b>

The chart above estimates the number of street trees that may be in each of the urban unincorporated areas by multiplying road miles, a known factor, by estimated trees per mile, which was derived by applying Low (40 trees/mile), Medium (60 trees/mile), and High (80 trees per mile) canopy coverage tiers to each community based on recent canopy coverage data (see question 5 below). According to this rough estimate, there may be as many as 18,000 street trees in the proposed inventory area. Road Miles were provided by the County's Public Works Agency – these Road Miles do not differentiate between the urban areas of Castro Valley, which will be part of the inventory, and the rural areas, which will not. This estimate does not address trees on Hayward Area Recreation and Park District land or school district land.

The County is open to the Consultant providing a scope and cost estimate based on a maximum number of trees, with the assumption that the County would provide a list or map of priority areas to be inventoried if there are more trees than what is covered in the cost estimate.

**2) Why are schools of interest to the County as part of the tree inventory?**

Schools are an important part of the County's proposed inventory, even though they are managed by the school districts and not directly by the County. When the County ran a small tree planting program several years ago, schools were among the most enthusiastic partners, showing strong interest in planting and caring for trees. Similarly, the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (HARD), a special district serving as the parks provider for the unincorporated areas, is another key partner. Including schools and park properties in the tree inventory was identified as important in collaboration with these partners. The inventory is expected to cover approximately 400 acres of public schools and 410 acres of public parks.

**3) Is the tree inventory expected to follow CAL FIRE attributes?**

Yes.

**4) Will the County be managing all of the trees counted in the inventory?**

The inventory includes street trees, HARD park trees, and public school trees. The proposed Urban Forest Plan is expected to deliver recommendations for future management of street trees in the County right-of-way.

The County does not manage trees in schools or parks -- those will continue to be maintained by the relevant districts (i.e., HARD and school districts). Schools and parks are important public spaces with potential capacity to increase overall tree canopy

in the project area, but currently lack baseline data about their tree canopy, its condition, age, species mix, or resilience to climate change. By including the school districts and HARD in the inventory, the County can provide these entities with data that will help them understand their tree canopy resources, care for their trees, and act as informed participants in future tree planting activities.

**5) Will the County provide tree canopy aerial imagery or LIDAR to the consultant?**

The LIDAR-derived dataset that the County is currently using to estimate tree canopy in the urban unincorporated areas is available here:

<https://pacificvegmap.org/data-downloads/> (“Canopy Cover 1-Meter” – Alameda County.) Funding for the original development of this portal was provided by CAL FIRE in partnership with multiple public agencies, including the East Bay Regional Parks District.

This canopy cover raster provides a depiction of tree and shrub canopy greater than or equal to 15 feet in height. All pixels with lidar returns exceeding this height threshold (except buildings or areas over water) have a pixel value of 1; all others have a 0. The canopy cover raster provides a depiction of the highest vegetation returns for each 1x1 meter raster cell across Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

The LIDAR from which these data derive was flown in or after 2019 - see datasheet for more information: <https://tukmangeospatial.egnyte.com/dl/3MlgEbDQ30>.

**6) Will the County provide any other aerial imagery or canopy data?**

The County will not collect additional LIDAR data as part of this project. Upon request, County staff will make every effort to provide the selected Consultant with access to the most recent County aerial imagery (estimated date 2023.)

**7) If the County wanted to do a land classification analysis, would something beyond the identified LIDAR dataset be needed (e.g. aerial imagery) to assist with identifying potential planting sites?**

Bidders should state in their responses whether they recommend a land classification analysis to determine planting locations, and should include in their bid responses recommendations for any tools needed beyond what the County has already anticipated. The open-source CAL FIRE-funded LIDAR dataset (<https://pacificvegmap.org/data-downloads/>) is robust and contains data beyond tree canopy, such as land classification, impervious surfaces, and fine-scale vegetation classification. This dataset was developed for fire analysis but may be useful to the selected consultant for urban forestry planning purposes. The County encourages bidders to explore and utilize this dataset.

**8) Is the County interested in a canopy cover change analysis?**

The County did not scope a canopy coverage analysis as part of this project, and the County is unaware of historical datasets that would allow for such an analysis. However, the County would be interested in understanding canopy change over time and welcomes bidders' recommendations.

**9) If a newer dataset were available, would the county prefer the consultant to acquire and use it, or rely on the existing LIDAR-derived data?**

The County would be comfortable with the consultant using the LIDAR-derived dataset for the purposes of tree canopy analysis, but welcomes bidders' recommendations about other datasets that may be more appropriate.

**10) Do the collected tree inventory data need to be compatible with an existing asset management system used by the County? Does the County currently use any ESRI products for asset management? If the County does not currently have an asset management system, does the County want the Consultant to recommend or develop a tree asset management system for the inventoried trees?**

The consultant is expected to use a GPS-based data collection system and must provide the Tree Inventory Data Output in an ESRI compatible format. Within that expectation, the County welcomes bidder recommendations.

**11) What is the expected format for the final UFMP deliverable?**

Historically, plans are posted as PDFs on the County's website. Final documents should be delivered in both PDF and in its original, editable format (e.g. Microsoft Word, etc.) While evolving ADA accessibility rules may push agencies toward more web-based (HTML) formats in the future, the likely final format for this project will be an ADA accessible PDF. A story map is not expected.

**12) Should the urban forest plan consider a regional perspective or reference nearby urban forest plans?**

The land use authority of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors is limited to the unincorporated areas, and the County's urban forest plan will only apply to the urban unincorporated areas. However, collecting data that are comparable to that collected by nearby cities (like Oakland, Hayward, and San Leandro) would add value to the project and is encouraged.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PROJECT PARTNERS, AND TRANSLATION/INTERPRETATION**

**13) The RFP mentions Project Partners that have agreed to participate in the Tree Advisory Group (TAG). Will the consultant be expected to approach these partners to determine who would serve on the TAG?**

The County identified and reached out to the listed Project Partners as part of the process of developing the grant application to CAL FIRE. The Project Partners list in the RFP includes community-based organizations and other community leaders that have previously expressed interest in urban forestry, urban greening, climate adaptation, and/or equity initiatives. The County team is comfortable with but not wed to the existing Project Partner list. The County does not expect that the consultant will approach potential partners, but the County welcomes consultant recommendations regarding the structure and makeup of the group, onboarding or application processes, appropriate stipend amounts, etc.

**14) What is the County's vision for the role of the Project Partners? Is their key role to facilitate community engagement?**

The Project Partners identified in the RFP bring a range of expertise and interests to the project. For example: Padres Unidos de Cherryland has strong and trusted connections with the Spanish-speaking community; Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center's Promotora program is a trained group community-based health educators that have partnered with the County on a variety of projects, including the recent adoption of the Environmental Justice Element; Forrester, 100K Trees for Humanity, Eden Garden Club, and Plantify have different missions, but share interest an expertise in the areas of tree planting, urban greening, and place-based education; neighborhood associations, including Ashland Community Association, Cherryland Community Association, and Groveway Neighborhood Association, bring hyperlocal perspectives and neighborhood-level connections. Participants in the Workforce Development programs—five paid interns who are studying arboriculture and/or horticulture—will also be members of the TAG. Their role in the group could include delivering presentations to the TAG about arboriculture topics or other topics that will help the TAG develop their knowledge about trees and urban forestry. The County is also open to consultant recommendations about the roles of the Project Partners.

**15) The RFP mentions a minimum of \$50,000 for participant stipends. Is that correct, and where is this money coming from?**

The consultant will be expected to pay for TAG participant stipends out of their budget. The County estimates that bidders should set aside up to \$50,000 of their

total budget to pay for stipends for TAG participants, but the County encourages bidders to recommend a more detailed budget/estimate for stipends based on their previous experience. The consultant will not be expected to pay for the TAG participation of the five Workforce Development participants - the Workforce Development program has separate funding and is not part of the budget identified for this RFP.

**16) Which Chinese dialect should be used for translated materials?**

Written materials should be translated into Traditional Chinese. Interpretation should be provided in Mandarin. Note that Spanish translation will be provided at every TAG meeting to encourage greater participation. Spanish and Chinese translation/interpretation will be offered occur at each of the four community workshops.

**17) What time slots does the County recommend to encourage community participation in workshops and meetings?**

In general, the County recommends weekday evening meetings and occasional weekend meetings. Planning for a variety of meeting times/offerings can also help to encourage broader participation (e.g., a Thursday evening and a Sunday afternoon). Choosing accessible locations like libraries, where participants can bring children, and providing food at meetings can further facilitate engagement.

**18) Does the grant cover food?**

Food is not an eligible expense on CAL FIRE grants unless reflected as Per Diem.

**19) The County recommended providing an optional task to set up an agreement with a local, community-based Spanish-language interpreter to provide additional language access flexibility. The RFP states that the County will “Assist Consultant with identifying a local, community-based interpreter(s) to assist Consultants with fulfilling Project’s language access requirements.” Can you clarify if the County will provide a Spanish language interpreter for any of the community engagement meetings and workshops, or if the Consultant will need to budget for that separately?**

The County will not provide interpreters as part of this project. The Consultant will be expected to engage all translators and interpreters, and to pay for all translation/interpretation-related expenses. The County can assist the consultant with identifying appropriate providers.

**20) Does the County require specific qualifications or training for community engagement?**

The County is seeking a team with expertise in equity-focused community engagement, aligned with CAL FIRE expectations and community-identified priorities. The RFP provides the example of the TOP facilitator training, but bidders are not required to be certified in that particular engagement method. Bidders can demonstrate experience and qualifications in equity-focused engagement by including information about certificates, education, or training in CVs submitted with the proposal.

**21) Should proposal teams communicate with community partners during proposal development?**

No, this is not required. The County has already engaged all of the Project Partners identified in the RFP, and re-engagement with these partners will occur once a consultant is on board. However, proposals may include suggestions for additional organizations or CBOs that the bidder recommends engaging. In particular, the County welcomes bidder recommendations for engaging local Indigenous communities.

**22) How should engagement with partners be included in the proposal?**

If a lead bidder is proposing to engage a Project Partner as a subcontractor, the proposed subcontractor must be engaged and included in the proposal. Otherwise, prior communication with identified Project Partners is not expected.

**23) Can engagement activities be virtual, or must they be in-person?**

The County is flexible and welcomes the bidder's proposed approach. It will be preferable for some activities to be in-person, but virtual or hybrid engagement is also acceptable where appropriate.

**24) Can engagement include participation in pop-up events?**

Linking to and participating in existing community events is a highly effective engagement method in the project area. Pop up engagement at libraries, community centers, grocery stores, or public spaces where people already gather, have been successfully used for past projects.

**25) Are there additional reference materials to understand the community context?**

RFP Reference materials include the [community engagement appendix \(Appendix B\)](#)<sup>1</sup> of the County's Environmental Justice Element. The County encourages bidders to explore this Appendix, which outlines best practices and recommendations for

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/EJAppendixB1224.pdf>

engaging the County's equity priority communities that are the focus of the grant deliverables. Additional resources include the Eden Area General Plan and the Castro Valley General Plan, which are also linked in the Background Materials of the RFP.

## **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

### **26) What high-priority expertise or skills is the County looking for in a consulting team?**

Bidder minimum qualifications are listed in the RFP (Section 1.D), and include specialized municipal urban forestry planning knowledge and arborist certification municipal tree planning. Community engagement is also foundational to this project—engagement is considered a key project deliverable, with the goal of cultivating and informed group of residents that can help develop the urban forest plan and advocate for its implementation. A successful bidder will be skilled in equitable engagement across diverse communities.

### **27) Is there any flexibility in the Project Budget?**

The Project Budget of \$562,000 is unlikely to increase -- the project is entirely funded by the County's \$685,000 CAL FIRE grant, and the remaining \$123,000 are earmarked for the Workforce Development program and County administrative expenses (at under 5%). The County scoped the project to the best of its ability, but is open to recommendations and proposals that reflect the expertise of the consultant team. If a bidder, based on their experience, believes that adjustments are necessary to realistically complete the work within the budget, the bidder should outline any proposed adjustments in the Exceptions and Clarifications form in the Bid Response Packet. The County welcomes innovative approaches, and bidders are not strictly bound to the RFP's proposed methods.

### **28) Once selected, will firms be able to negotiate the terms of the contract with the County?**

The selected consultant will be able to negotiate contract terms with the County, pending approval by both the County and CAL FIRE.

### **29) Can out-of-state contractors serve as prime consultants while subcontracting local organizations?**

Yes, the County has experience with this approach. Out-of-state prime consultants may provide strategic guidance, training, and coordination while subcontracting local partners to lead on-the-ground engagement.

**30) The RFP states that the consultant will need to “support County staff with preparing for and delivering presentations at up to thirty (30) County public hearings during the development and adoptions phases of the Project. Can any of these meetings be combined to present to multiple councils or commissions at once and does the County expect all these presentations to be in person or will some of them also be virtual?**

Combining presentations to the various advisory bodies that will be part of this project is difficult and unlikely, but not impossible. County staff will attend all meetings in person, but it would be appropriate for the consultant to attend remotely in most cases. The County is open to presenting some materials without the consultant present – this can be discussed as part of the contracting process.

**31) Does the County expect recurring weekly check-ins?**

The County anticipates that meetings or check-ins will occur as needed. There is no expectation of a fixed weekly meeting schedule; the County and the consultant can decide on appropriate frequency and modes of communication based on project needs.

**32) What is the County’s expectation for harm reduction strategies in case of a stop work order related to the federal funding source?**

The County is looking for approaches that front-load billable work and prioritize tasks that the County would have difficulty completing without the federal funding source. The County is also interested in strategies to minimize potential harm to TAG participants, including but not limited to transparent communication about the possibility of a funding freeze.