



## Community Forestry Friend Program Application

The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) is rewarding communities and campuses implementing exemplary urban forestry programs with a Community Forestry Friend social media badge. GFC's Community Forestry Friends have demonstrated reverence for the benefits and value of their urban forest, and take the necessary steps to maintain trees for health and safety in various ways. Earning the badge means your community manages its trees with the best urban and community forestry practices, partners and professionalism.

Since Georgia communities and campuses vary in population and budget size, minimum requirements for these benchmarks are not required to earn the GFC Community Forestry Friend Badge. Simply demonstrate how your city meets the requirements outlined below, within its capacity.

The goal of this program is to encourage communities to go above and beyond current common standards, to highlight uniquely qualified cities for their innovative ideas and garnered political support, and to provide program direction and a framework to help build capacity for the urban forest statewide.

Earning the Community Forestry Friend badge has benefits for your community, too. These include qualifying to host future urban forestry workshops and on-site training programs, financial incentives such as potential grant dollars, program registration discounts and additional resources, and mentions on GFC's website at [gatrees.org](http://gatrees.org) and in ongoing media outreach.

Through the program, the Community Forestry Friend social media badge (black on white, or white lettering) will be provided electronically for the community to place on a photograph or website of its choosing, and in its social media. The GFC will also highlight these communities at [GaTrees.org](http://GaTrees.org).

To earn the Community Forestry Friend badge, the community must have the following practices in place.

1. A tree ordinance.
2. A tree risk management program.
  - a. A systematic, scheduled inspection of all trees in high occupancy areas.
  - b. A protocol for prioritizing mitigation.
  - c. Recordkeeping, reporting and communications.
  - d. Standard of care adopted.
  - e. Tree risk assessment specifications meeting ANSI A300 Part 9 standards.
  - f. Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) training.
3. Authority (dedicated staff over the tree program and the budget).



4. Consults or employs an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist.
5. Attends or hosts community forestry training for tree board members on an ongoing basis. (e.g. Georgia Arborist Association, Coastal Arborist Association, Georgia Urban Forest Council, Basic Tree Care with GFC, Extension, online training).
6. An annual budget for trees or a contingency budget (during times of limited funding) for risk management and ongoing tree care.
7. Tree care practices that follow ANSI standards and tree risk specifications.
8. Communications (public recognition, tree celebration, news media).
9. Recruitment and retention of volunteers.

To apply for the **Community Forestry Friend** program, complete the following questions and meet with your local GFC Sustainable Community Forestry Program forester. Community Forestry Friend practices will be reviewed on an annual basis as scheduled and may be randomly checked by GFC staff.

1. Provide a copy or a link to your community **tree ordinance**.
2. Describe your community **tree risk management program**; include the following:
  - a. Systematic schedule of inspection of all trees in high occupancy areas.
  - b. Protocol for prioritizing mitigation.
  - c. Recordkeeping, reporting and communications guidelines.
  - d. State the “standard of care” adopted by your community.
  - e. State where the tree risk assessment specifications, meeting ANSI A300 Part 9 standards, are documented, and state how they are being implemented in the city.
  - f. TRAQ training. The city’s certified arborist has completed Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) training.
3. Name the **authority** (dedicated staff) over the tree program and the budget.

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4. Name the consultant or employer that is an **ISA Certified Arborist (TRAQ trained)** working with your community. If they are not TRAQ trained, when is the anticipated exam date and location?
5. Do you commit to attending or hosting community forestry **training** for tree board members on an ongoing basis (GAA, CAA, GUFC, Basic Tree Care with GFC, Extension, online training)? Please list tree board members and record of attendance, or upcoming training events.
6. Please describe your **annual budget** for trees or a **contingency budget** (during times of limited funding) for risk management and ongoing tree care.
7. Do you employ **tree care** practices that follow [ANSI standards](#) and/or Best Management Practices? Please list the ANSI standards you follow and provide corresponding written specifications for that standard. During field visits, GFC staff will be looking for best management practices including proper pruning, watering, mulching, planting, critical root zone protection and tree selection.
8. Communications (public recognition, tree celebration, news media). Do you celebrate Arbor Day, submit articles and new releases or share your success stories with the local newspaper or blog, provide or receive awards and continually update elected leaders about your community forest?
9. Recruitment and retention of volunteers. Are you engaging millennials in your tree board and do you have a succession plan? Are volunteers thanked?

The GFC Community Forestry Friend program is based on:

<http://www.urbanforestrysouth.org/resources/library/ttresources/urban-forest-sustainability-and-management-review-checklist> Please visit this site for more information and details on Urban & Community Forests.