Bloomington Commission on Sustainability and Resilience Working Group Grant Application

Applicant Information

Date: 10/24/2026

Project Name: Neighborhood Planting Project
Website: https://neighborhoodplantingproject.org/

BCOSR Commissioner(s)
Christopher Miles - February 1, 2026 through January 31, 2028

Community Partner
Organization Name: Center for Sustainable Living
Address: 611 W. 12th
Contact Name: Micol Seigel
Email: president@simplycsl.org
Phone Number: 213 595 5192

Project Location
Location Name: Overlook
Address: 611 W. 12th
Contact Name: Melissa Shelton
Email: melissasheltonlac@gmail.com
Phone Number: 812 345 0752

Grant Application Justification

a. Description of Project

We request $4000 to support the 2026-2027 Neighborhood Planting Project. This funding would allow us to distribute 6000 native fruit and nut trees in Bloomington, contributing to reduced heat island effects through increase tree canopy, neighborhood-level planning and resilience, education about native foods, and enhanced biodiversity and habitat growth in Bloomington. This will be our 10th year of planting, and we have a strong, proven track record in planting, education, and events. For more information about the NPP, our website is here, and here is a WFHB feature on our 2022 planting.

The funding we request from BCOSR would put us on firmer footing for 2027, allowing us to hold two large distributions of native fruit and nut trees on Bloomington's west side in early April. This support is especially critical this year, as we experienced an unprecedented drop in donations during our usual funding season last Spring, despite giving away a similar number of trees to previous years. As a result, we have a gap to bridge between paying for our tree and supplies orders and collecting donations during our usual donation season in Spring 2027. We plan to approach the design of our events in a fresh way with clearer guides for donating in order to address the funding dropoff, but support from BCOSR would provide a critical lifeline for continuing our efforts toward strengthening native biodiversity, ecological health, local food systems robustness, and community resilience without experiencing a severe reduction in our services in 2027. Given additional inflationary pressures, this year's funding shortfall represents an existential challenge for us – but on the other hand, rising cost of living has greatly increased interest in native fruit trees and we are excited to rise to the challenge, with your support.

On average, our trees cost roughly $.45 when processing fees added by the vendor are taken into account. From a planting perspective, these small trees (usually "large whips" in nursery parlance) establish themselves better and grow faster over time than the $100-300 trees that people buy from box stores, since these whips experience less transplant shock. These small trees are also much easier to transport, so while the majority of our distributions are planted in Bloomington, people come from across Indiana to collect trees from our events, which have been planted throughout the state. Accordingly, through our approach we are able to distribute more trees, more widely, more economically than through a box store model, which in addition to the community-led and community-growing nature of our events we view as a significant advantage.

Our tree distributions are usually around March 31st each year, but we always ask Vallonia in January to confirm pickup dates, because winter weather affects schedule. We usually pick up trees three days before distribution and planting weekend and rent a large U-Haul to pick them up. We are experienced in storing

the trees so that they are intact for planting and they are usually stored at Overlook where they are sorted and organized. Distribution days typically last four hours, with teams of volunteers available to help neighbors who want trees but are unable to plant themselves. These days generally feel like a big neighborhood festival, since hundreds of people participate, often with music and planting demonstrations.

The trees are ordered but not yet paid for. Without funding, we will have to use personal credit card(s) to attempt to cover the gap as we wait for donations in the Spring, placing significant financial burden and personal risk on individuals we seek to avoid if at all possible. In addition to avoiding shortfall and potential loss of services, funding from BCOSR would also position us to explore new collaborations to add neighborhood plantings in several key places. One example is that neighbors on the Near West Side and Maple Heights have asked if we could collaborate with the new Stepping Stones housing on Fairview, as well as Friendly Beasts, Cicada Cinema, and the City, to address some of the invasives filled in-between spaces on that block. Supplies and refreshments for hosting meetings and collaborations of this kind are essential to creating the foundation for these future partnerships and expanded services.

Specific details regarding planting partnerships (planting layouts and plans, partnership agreements etc.) are typically hammered out over the winter prior to the planting process, and this year as indicated our ability to proceed with each of the three planned partnerships is largely contingent on securing funding. The community partnerships currently lined up for 2027 are as follows: we will collaborate with Bloomington Cooperative Living to plant a community orchard at their new affordable housing project at 823 N. Maple, and with Avalon Community Land Trust and other Waterman neighbors. We are pursuing details on the plantings on Fairview at a retreat with Stepping Stones on November 6th. The design and scale of plantings will be dependent on a collaborative design process that could grow to include additional partners, especially if we can engage BCOSR on this.

b. Purpose

We began the NPP to close a gap between street tree design, neighborhood-level planning for green space, and individual families seeking access to affordable native trees for private or boundary space plantings. We also work to connect this work in Bloomington with other NPPs we've supported across the state, creating a broad conversation on grassroots resilience.

c. Goals and measurable outcomes

Distribution of 6000 native trees and education of the roughly 400 individuals who participate every year in planting, care, and basic ecological design. Addition of three new fruit tree green space projects and/or pocket orchards in Waterman, the Near West Side, and Maple Heights. As noted we also have growing collaborations with neighborhoods on the east side and are exploring possibilities for public plantings there, expanding our networks and increasing our services at a critical moment for mitigating and redressing acute social and environmental crises.

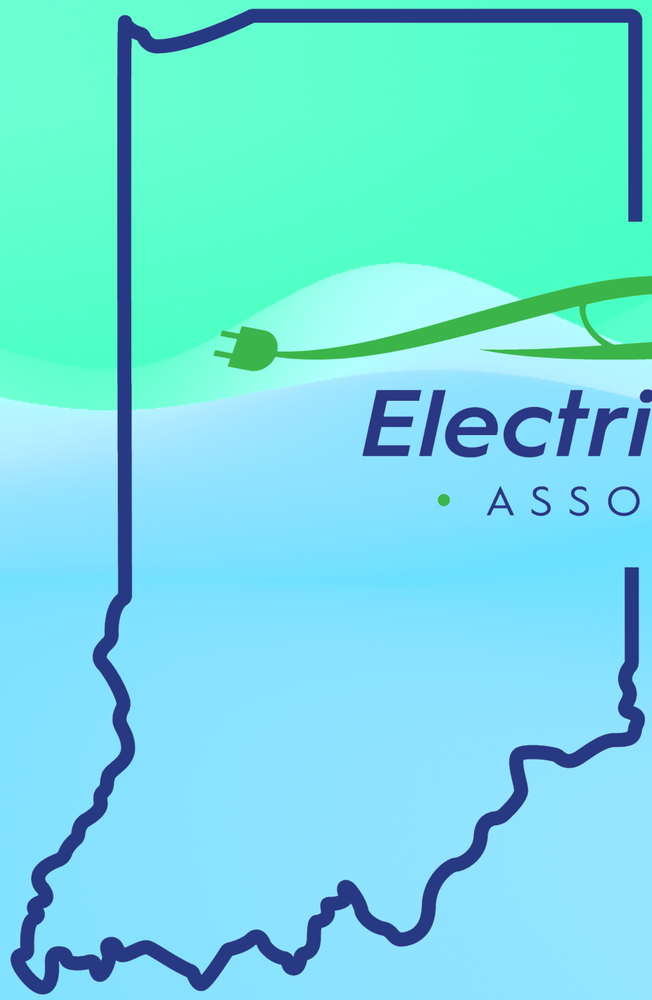
d. Budget:

Vendor Name	Item Description	Purpose/Event	Cost/ item	Quantity	Total Cost (no taxes)
Vallonia	Native trees	To plant at events and for free distribution	$00.45/ tree	6000	$2700
Neighborhood Planting Project	Refreshments and meal supplies	Event costs 1 (volunteers) - Supplies necessary to host planting and outreach events	~$20/person	Variable, 5-15 volunteers per event	$100-300
Rural King	Gloves	Event costs 1 (volunteers)	$6/pair	~40	$240
White Rabbit Printing	Planting Guides	Event costs 1 (volunteers)	$1	50	$50
Good Earth Composting	Mulch	Event costs 2 (planting supplies)	$18/yard	6 yards	$108
“	Compost	Event costs 2 (planting supplies)	$34/yard	6 yards	$204
Rural King	Deer cages	Event costs 2 (planting supplies)	$235-$250	1 roll, 6’ x 2” woven wire fencing	$235-$250
Online vendor (best price)	Tree watering bags/skirts	Event costs 2 (planting supplies)	$15 - 20	20	$300-400
Grand Total					$**3937 - 4252**

The Neighborhood Planting Project thanks you for your consideration. We look forward to working with BCOSR toward increasing ecological and economic resilience in the city through increased native plantings and green space, building robust local food infrastructure, increasing biodiversity, soil health, runoff water management capacity, and reducing albedo, as well as developing skills and networks in neighborhood coordination and cooperation, agroforestry/urban forestry, and city-community collaboration.

About Hoosier EVA

- **Founded in 2010, Indianapolis**
- **Under national EVA**
  - 501(c)3 non-profit
- **Had been dormant**



Electric Vehicle
ASSOCIATION

HoosierEVA.org

Paul Bordenkircher

- **Former President, NVEVA**
  - Formed 1992
- **Moved to Blooomington in March**
  - Remote Worker program
  - Asked to lead local chapter



Current Activities

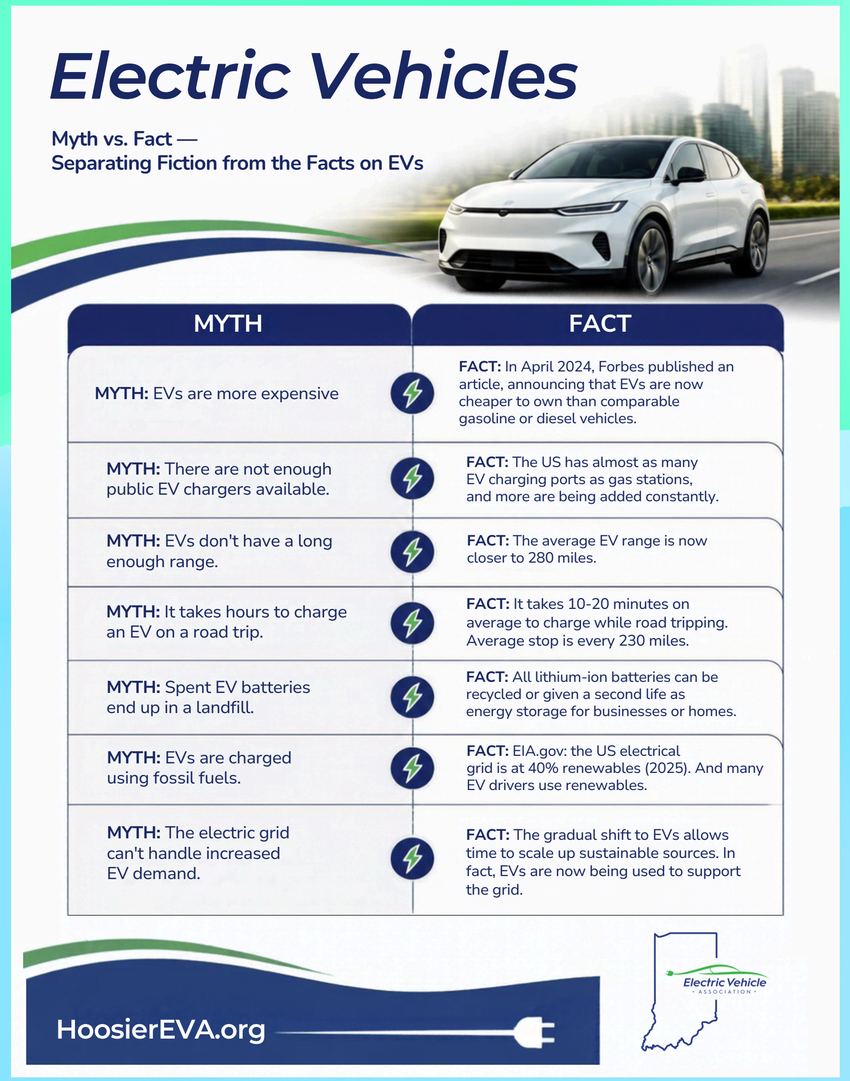
- **Community Foundation grant**
  - CFBMC Tier 2
  - Bloomington / Monroe County
- **First Public Event: October 10**
  - Farmer's Market / A Fair of the Arts
- **Next meeting: Nov 14**
  - The Mill / Zoom link

NATIONAL Drive Electric MONTH

HoosierEVA.org

Upcoming Activities

- **Board of Directors**
  - Looking for Secretary
- **Set priorities**
  - Increase our presence, EV 101 events
  - Education media campaign - Tier 2





Thank You!

HoosierEVA.org