

## STAFF REPORT

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**Date:** July 26, 2023

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**Thru:** Doug Thornley, City Manager

**Subject:** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Acceptance of a sub-grant from Nevada Plants Community Forestry to the City of Reno to plant fruit trees in or near USDA designated Food Deserts in the amount of \$4,000.

**From:** Suzanne Groneman

**Department:** City Manager's Office

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**Summary:**

Nevada Plants is a sub-grantee to a University of Nevada Las Vegas grant, Food Desert to Food Oasis, from the United States Forest Service. These funds will provide fruit trees to be planted in or near a USDA food desert in Reno.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

Infrastructure, Climate Change, and Environmental Sustainability  
Arts, Parks, and Historical Resources

**Previous Council Action:**

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

**Background:**

Accessibility to healthy foods that allow families to grow strong is considered a priority under the adopted Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Action 7.3 specifically calls for community gardens and community-supported agriculture. Community accessible fruit orchards are extremely limited in Reno.

In 1982, Reno became the first city in Nevada to earn Tree City USA designation. While still recognized as a Tree City USA, Reno's canopy coverage is low. American Forests recommends 15 percent canopy cover as a baseline for desert cities.

**Discussion:**

Statewide, 1 in 8 people and 1 in 5 children struggle with hunger. In 2018, only 17 percent of

residents lived within a walkable quarter-mile of a healthful retail food outlet such as a grocery store or farmers market. That number has not increased much since. Additional tree canopy in Reno is also necessary to meet the heat reduction and climate change mitigation goals of the City. Urban forests and food access are vital to the health and wellbeing of our community.

This project will enable access to fresh, locally grown fruit in underserved communities. The trees will not be given out to individuals, but will instead be planted on City-owned property to ensure their health and overall success, as well as control the output. Approximately 15-25 trees will be planted. This is a first of its kind project for the City of Reno.

**Financial Implications:**

There is no match required for this grant. City staff will plant and maintain the trees.

**Legal Implications:**

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Council accept the sub-grant from Nevada Plants Community Forestry.

**Proposed Motion:**

I move to approve staff recommendation.

**Attachments:**

City of Reno Nevada Plants Letter