NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

YOUTH CORPS’ “URBAN GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM”

Background/Application

Program Background / Purpose

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) established its Youth Corps’ “Urban Gateway Enhancement Program” in 1998. The youth corps initiative is a community service project designed to partner NJDOT with local government agencies, not-for-profits, community-based organizations or other entities with established youth programs to carry out transportation-related community projects. In addition, because the program was established to coincide with the State of New Jersey’s ongoing urban initiatives, cities and municipalities identified by the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority and designated as Empowerment Neighborhoods are encouraged to apply.

The intent of NJDOT’s program is to benefit youth and young adults between the ages of 16 and 25 who are economically or socially disadvantaged and who have experienced barriers to employment (e.g., the lack of a high school diploma, homelessness, teen parenting, being physically or mentally challenged, or an ex-offender). Program participants will receive on-the-job training while working on transportation-related community projects. They will also have an opportunity to learn the basics of urban forestry, landscaping, fabrication and installation of amenities on recreational trails, horticulture, restoration of historic structures, construction inspection and materials testing. Youth participants also receive training in life skills, safety and technical skills. To date, at least 35 states, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have initiated urban youth corps projects using their Federal-aid highway funds.

# Program Benefit

One of the fundamental benefits of this program is funding for youth employment. Participants gain valuable work experience through employment. They receive job training, educational instruction and supportive services preparing them to succeed in the workforce and in life. They also gain a sense of community pride by engaging in paid, productive community service projects. Moreover, the program will partner the NJDOT with community and youth organizations to accomplish enhancement projects that will improve the appearance of State roadways in urban areas.

Program Description

The NJDOT solicits community based or other local organizations with youth programs to participate in its program. During the application process, the youth organization/applicant (hereinafter referred to as “Urban Youth Corp or UYC”) with the aid of its city officials and the NJDOT will select a minimum of three gateways to improve (not all will need to be improved). It is important that the specific locations of these gateways be within the city’s boundaries, owned by the State of New Jersey or the local government, and located on or near a State roadway. Ideal locations are those that are a frequent cause of aesthetic complaints due to excessive litter, graffiti, high grass, trees or shrubs. The list of proposed locations will be submitted (in the application) to the NJDOT for review and approval.

All work must be approved by the NJDOT before commencing project activities. Once approved and program activities commence, the Urban Youth Corps will be responsible for delegating its team of youth participants to provide enhancements (described in itsapplication) to the selected and approved location(s). Examples of work include landscaping design, landscaping beautification, streetscape and pedestrian enhancements and gateway murals. Other activities considered incidental work include clean up, ongoing maintenance, anti-graffiti initiatives, etc. Emphasis should be placed on beautification and improvement.

The UYC will also be responsible for developing a plan for maintaining the final project. This plan may include participation in future NJDOT enhancement activities and should include how the proposed areas will be serviced on a rotating schedule. An important component of the plan may be the Urban Youth Corps’ maintenance and subsequent use of equipment in the approved locations.

The NJDOT program will run for approximately six to eight weeks. The UYC will provide the program’s primary structure and supervision and will also provide the youth participants with training in life skills and ensure that appropriate safety measures are taken during the project activity phase. Each team will feature six to eight youth and a supervisor provided by the Urban Youth Corps. The UYC or city administration will assume liability for the participants and program. As a final project, each Urban Youth Corps will be required to designate a location and design a small landscaping or streetscape enhancement project for future youth corps activities based on their experiences during the current project.

NJDOT will partner with the UYC by providing guidance and oversight, training and funding (@ $32,000 per project). NJDOT may be able to provide certain equipment[[1]](#footnote-1) (e.g., lawn mowers, weed whackers, brooms, shovels, pruning tools, trash bags, fuel) and supplies. NJDOT will assign one supervisor who will be responsible for providing project guidance statewide.

The funding provided by the NJDOT can be used for the following: employing at -risk youth and/or young adults, a local supervisor, incidental equipment and supplies and training/support services. The participants must be between the ages of 16 and 25 and should be able to work four to six hours per day for up to eight weeks. A cap of $32,000 will be placed on each project. Following is a typical budget/cost breakdown for the program funding:

Typical Cost Breakdown

(Not to exceed $32,000)

Supervisor 40 hours per week x $15.00/hr. = $600 per week for

8 weeks…………………………………………………….…..………$ 4,800

Youth Workers 10 each x 6 hrs. work per day = 60 hours per day

60 hrs. x 5 days x $7.25 = $2,175 per week

$2,175 x 8 weeks ………………………….……………….…..…..$17,400

Equipment 1 20” push lawn mower

(purchase or rental) 2 Weed Whackers

3 Shovels

3 Brooms

2 Pruning Shears

1 Case of Trash Bags

2 Fuel Cans

Supplies (i.e., anti-graffiti paint, graffiti removal tools, shrubs, paints, etc.)...$5,540

Incidentals……………………………………………………………………………………………………$4,260

**THE ABOVE IS ONLY A SAMPLE OF WHAT A BUDGET MAY LOOK LIKE**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The NJDOT Youth Corps Program is a reimbursable expense program and, therefore approved program expenses will be reimbursed up to a maximum of $32,000, upon the submittal of proper documentation of expenses (e.g., invoices, bills, receipts, etc.). At least 50 percent of the budget must be allocated to the youth participants in earnings, training and/or supportive services.**

**COVID 19 Protocols and Safety – Organizations approved for the grant will be required to provide participants with a safe working environment and apply safe working conditions to include supplying Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other safety equipment which** **may include items such as face masks, gloves, safety glasses, earplugs or muffs, hard hats, respirators, vests, disinfectants, non-contact thermometers, etc.** **PPE should be safely designed and constructed, should be maintained in a clean and reliable fashion and fit participants comfortably, to encourage its use.**

**We are also encouraging organizations approved for the grant to employ a PPE Program as it relates to addressing and reducing the spread of COVID-19. This program should address, at minimum the risks of transmitting COVID-19; requirements for physical distancing; the selection, maintenance, and use of PPE; how to manage exposures; and monitoring the program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness. Organizations are also required to train program participants on how to properly use PPE to include how to properly wear, adjust and remove; limitations of the equipment; proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal.**

**PLEASE SEE PROGRAM APPLICATION THAT FOLLOWS**

**YOUTH CORPS**

**URBAN GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION - 2021**

**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name of Organization/Collaborative:

Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Contact Person:

Phone Number: Fax Number: Email:

Please describe your agency/organization’s existing youth programs:

Please provide information regarding liability and/or insurance coverage of your agency/ organization’s youth participants:

Please provide the following documentation as an attachment to this application:

Organizational Chart □ Annual Report or Business Plan □ Letter of Support from local official approving/supporting organization’s participation

**SECTION II: THE GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT**

***A. Program Goals***

Please discuss how at-risk youth will participate in the project. Note that grantees who recruit youth participants must make a good faith effort to ensure that all eligible persons have an equal opportunity to apply for available positions.

Describe your project goals for the urban gateway enhancement site and how the community and youth participants will benefit.

***B. Possible Project Sites\* for Enhancement***

(Include at least three sites and a map or detail of the location(s))

Site 1:

Site 2:

Site 3:

**\*Please note that “Gateways” must be located on state or local property adjacent to state roadways. A “gateway” is the entrance to a city or neighborhood. NJDOT reserves the right to recommend a location which connects with its roadways, projects and goals.**

***C. Program Description***

Supervisor(s) or Project Team Leader(s) of the project:

How will the participants be trained in the following?

Landscaping:

Streetscaping:

Safety:

Life Skills:

Employment Skills:

Other:

If landscaping equipment is not available, how will the organization obtain the equipment? Please provide any rental cost in the budget.

How will participants be transported to the project site; and project safety be addressed?

How will the program ensure the maintenance of the final/completed project?

Please provide an outline on how your agency/organization will plan and prepare for COVID-19 during program implementation:

***D. Budget***

Supervisor

Hours Per Week X Hourly Rate $ = $ per week

Total No. of Weeks . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$

Youth Participants

Hours Per Week X Hourly Rate $ = $ per week

Total No. of Weeks . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$

Equipment

a. X no. of items = $

b. X no. of items = $

c. X no. of items = $

d. X no. of items = $

e. X no. of items = $

f. X no. of items = $

g. X no. of items = $

h. X no. of items = $

Total Equipment . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $\_\_\_\_

Supplies (e.g., anti-graffiti paint, graffiti removal tools, shrubs, paints, PPE, etc.). . .$

Miscellaneous . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ... .. . . .$

TOTAL BUDGET (**not to exceed $32,000**) . . . . . . . . . .. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ..$

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO:**

[DOT-CRAA.YouthCorpsProgram@dot.nj.gov](about:blank)

**Contact Information:**

New Jersey Department of Transportation

Division of Civil Rights and Affirmative Action

Urban Gateway Enhancement Program

1035 Parkway Avenue

P.O. Box 600

Trenton, NJ 08625-0600

**Phone: 609/963-2047**

**Fax: 609/530-4030**

**Email:** [**DOT-CRAA.YouthCorpsProgram@dot.nj.gov**](about:blank)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 31, 2021**

1. Certain equipment may not be available through the NJDOT. Also note that participants are expected to maintain equipment provided or purchased through its previous participation in the program. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)