



Western Reserve Land Conservancy

land • people • community

March 26, 2024

Grace Gallucci
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
1299 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114

Director Gallucci:

I am writing to express the Western Reserve Land Conservancy's (Land Conservancy) strong support for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) application from the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) and the City of Cleveland. This proposal would fund an innovative project -- Reclaiming the Forest City: Northeast Ohio Complete and Green Streets Program. The project, if funded, will help implement several measures included in the Priority Climate Action Plan for the Cleveland-Elyria Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Western Reserve Land Conservancy is committed to working closely with the coalition applicants to implement green infrastructure and tree canopy components of this proposal. Our Reforest Our City program aims to increase Cleveland's tree canopy by planting trees, advocating for mature trees, and engaging residents and volunteers in reforestation efforts. The program was launched in 2015 as a response to Cleveland's depleted tree canopy. Regionally, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, as a leader in this effort, collaborates with public, private, and community stakeholders through the Cleveland Tree Coalition. Our joint mission involves advocating for funding, policy changes, and raising public awareness about the benefits of trees. We also have worked with many partners throughout the region, including park districts and soil and water conservation districts in Medina, Lake, Geauga, Lorain and Cuyahoga County to begin the work of restoring the tree canopy in a region once known as the Forest City.

While we are proud of the progress we've made, lack of funding has hindered the region's ability to realize a greater restoration of its former tree canopy. If funding is provided for this project, the Land Conservancy will partner with the coalition applicants to implement this proposal, and we look forward to expanding the region's tree canopy, reducing GHG emissions, reducing energy usage and costs for residents in low-income areas, and create a more inviting environment for sustainable multimodal transportation and reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Sincerely,

Rich Cochran
President and CEO

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