



Formed to preserve, promote and celebrate our world class trees

July 2023 Progress Update

Airport Boulevard Replanting: The required mapping of the proposed replanting from I-65 to Azalea Road has been delayed a third time. Mobile Public Services Director Marc Vasallo now says Airport Blvd. is "next," hesitated to give a new timeline but expects a map before Oct. 1. Urban Forestry first told us the highway would be mapped in January. Then pushed it back to "after Mardi Gras" and later to "mid-June." The good news is that our volunteer fundraising to finance much of this key project is well on track with your individual contributions, the Tree Commission's match for Phase One, an Alabama Power Foundation grant and pledged discretionary funds from Council District 5. Our right of way application is still active. Yet, we won't know the number of trees, their locations, or confirm the exact species until Urban Forestry provides the map. The actual planting now obviously needs to wait until the cooler Fall weather. Yet, these three timeline delays, beyond FOMT's control or input, are hampering further fundraising since most donors naturally require these specifics before writing checks.

Grant Applications: Inflation Reduction Act Funding: Due to the City delays in mapping Airport Phase 1, FOMT has missed the deadline to apply for a direct federal grant to fund Airport Blvd replanting Phase 2 (Montlimar to Azalea) through the new Federal Urban and Community Forestry Grants Program. FOMT can still apply sometime late summer for a share in the Federal IRA pass-through grant coming directly to Alabama. The annual amount is larger than most states' allocation, 3.375 million dollars, yet, substantially less than the state's previously anticipated 10 million. As a result, the state advises us that competition will likely be stiff. FOMT does meet all eligibility requirements and is SAM.gov approved.

Gulf Coast RC&D Council: Our application was submitted on time and in good order utilizing all available data. A Council decision is expected in October for potential project implementation in Fiscal Year 2024 (starts Oct. 1).

Additional Grant Opportunities: We are in touch with Dale Dickens at Alabama Forestry about other potential grants coming later in the year.

“Founding Friends” Campaign: continues with a minimum donation of \$100 as one of the many potential local matching funding sources. Mail your tax-deductible contributions to our PO Box below.

Promotion:

FOMT Facebook Group: membership has increased to 816.

mobiletrees.org: FOMT’s web curator Dr. Ann Jurgens-Pond welcomes your comments as she continues to upgrade our interactive website with many helpful features. Check us out to see what’s new.

Next Quarterly Meeting: July 16th at 5 PM at Cathedral Square prior to *ArtWalk*. Following the brief meeting, you are encouraged to help us introduce FOMT to *ArtWalk*’s visitors.

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