



*Formed to preserve, promote and celebrate our world class trees*

## May 2023 Progress Update

### Current Projects:

- 1) **Environmental Center** (Salt Air Road): Mobile County is scheduled to plant three of our donated live oaks the week of May 15th at the County Environmental Center site on Salt Air Road in South Mobile County.
- 2) **Escatawpa Hollow Park**: Mobile County has planted 10 FOMT live oaks, an in-kind donation from our Advisor Phillip Dodd, near the new campground on the Mississippi line at Highway 98. When completed, Escatawpa Hollow Park will be Mobile County's Northwest welcome site.
- 3) **Airport Boulevard**: FOMT Board members and Mobile Tree Commissioners plan to visit the Phase 1 replanting site prior to the regular Tree Commission meeting May 16<sup>th</sup>. The Tree Commission is reviewing FOMT's proposal to match our funding for Phase 1 with funds from the city's Tree Bank fund to replace scrub trees slated to be removed by Urban Forestry with Eastern red cedar or a comparable-size species with available supply and reasonable cost and aesthetics. FOMT will ask for competitive bids after an agreement is finalized for this initial phase. Councilor Davies has stated that he would support the project after a favorable MTC review. Regardless, FOMT is moving ahead with funding grants outlined below.

### Grant Writing:

- 1) **Inflation Reduction Act Funding**: Due to the City delays in planning Phase 1 above, FOMT is missing 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 (IRA). 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 is substantially less than the state's previously anticipated 10 million. FOMT meets all eligibility requirements and is SAM.gov approved. Yet, due to the smaller state allocation, competition will likely be stiff.

**2) NFWF Coastal Resiliency Fund Grant:** FOMT completed on time its pre-proposal for Phase 2 that directly borders Montlimar Creek. FOMT meets every eligibility requirement for favorable review. If our pre-proposal is approved this month, we will need the area mapped and estimates accepted to formulate a full final proposal due in June.

**3) "Good Roots":** FOMT has applied for a \$1000 matching grant for Phase 2 and meets all eligibility requirements. A decision is expected in late summer.

**4) Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Section 319 Grants:** emphasizes urban tree planting as a vital way to mitigate flooding and improve air and water quality. Funding averages between \$100K and \$300K and the most recent rounds of funding have not required a local match. The RFP deadline is July 1.

**5) 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 project implementation in Fiscal Year 2024 (starts Oct. 1).

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

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

**Promotion:** *mobiletrees.org*: Our interactive website is continuing to be upgraded with many helpful features. We welcome comments and suggestions from the urban forestry community.

**FOMT Facebook page:** created to reach additional Mobilians not signed up for FOMT's Facebook Group page which has seen membership jump this month from 765 to 780.

**Instagram:** FOMT is linking our website to Instagram for additional reach.

**ArtWalk:** FOMT is now holding business sessions in Cathedral Square at 5 PM after "set up" ends and before visitors arrive at 6 PM. This gives us a full hour to conduct routine business and then promote FOMT at ArtWalk. This substantially reduces members' meeting and travel time. Our next quarterly business meeting is July 14<sup>th</sup>.

**FOMT P.O. Box 8072, Mobile, Alabama 36689**