

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
The County of Lake
Delta Institute
FOR**

**BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A FUTURE INNOVATIVE REGIONAL TREE
PLANTING CONSORTIUM (TPC) WITHIN LAKE COUNTY, IL**

THIS Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) entered this ___ day of ___, 2026 by and among the following Parties.

The County of Lake
Delta Institute (“Delta”)

WHEREAS, the Parties believe that sustained regional and local collaboration is the best way to advance the goal to build the foundations for a future innovative regional tree planting consortium throughout Lake County,

NOW, THEREFORE, it is agreed between the Parties hereto that

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will span an 18-month period (October 1, 2025 - March 31, 2027). The primary goal is to build the foundations for a future innovative regional Tree Planting Consortium (TPC) in Lake County, IL. The project will result in accelerating implementation of nature-based climate solutions, forestry planning activities, stewardship and maintenance, capacity building and training, and network creation aligned with the county’s Urban and Community Forestry Strategic Plan. Some activities may be limited in geography based on funding restrictions on a case by case basis. This project will build essential capacities among partners not only through networking and collaboration but also through community engagement in tree planting events. A BMP toolkit, training materials, and key lessons will be widely shared municipalities to complement and strengthen other forestry initiatives in the region; all materials will be free and open source. Further, it is our full intent that partners work collaboratively and cohesively so that efficiencies and cost-reductions are found via shared planning efforts that reduce fragmented project work and align timelines/resources accordingly.

At a minimum, the project activities under this MOU will include:

1. Existing county and municipal tree plan reviews.
2. Two virtual presentations on trees and related topics with collaboration among Delta, Lake County and other partner(s) as mutually agreed.
3. One in-person training at a site in Lake County.
4. One tree planting event at a site in Lake County to serve as a demonstration site.

ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES

This MOU seeks to establish a foundational relationship between the two entities to outline responsibilities and expectations as the work moves into the next phase. Under this MOU, Delta will serve as the coordinating partner, leading the work to design and implement strategies that achieve project goals throughout Lake County. Lake County will serve as an implementation and thought partner—actively collaborating with Delta to codesign, execute, and advance strategies and to help align local partners around shared priorities.

The responsibilities of the Parties are as follows:

1. Delta will serve as the coordinating partner, managing project activities in alignment with priorities

jointly established by the Parties to advance the work of capacity building, training, network creation, and implementation of nature-based solutions via tree planting and maintenance.

2. Key Responsibilities:

- Provide an umbrella project manager for oversight and coordination of all implementation exercises,
- Provide a lead role in contracting and managing third-party consultants,
- Evaluate existing local planning efforts,
- Collaborate with Lake County to co-design and execute presentations, trainings, and tree planting demonstrations for municipalities within the county,
- Create and maintain a project page on Delta's website for the duration of this agreement with the understanding that the county government's site may link to the page.
<https://www.lakecountyil.gov/>
- Fund tree plantings
- Keep records of participating communities in events
- Provide certified professional expertise for demonstration events
- Provide a project report of results

3.

The County of Lake will serve as implementation and thought partner, actively collaborating with Delta to co-design and execute presentations, trainings, and applications to host demonstration site(s), and advance capacity-building in Lake County communities via municipal, agency, and other stakeholder outreach.

4. Joint Responsibilities of Delta and the County of Lake:

- Partner to identify future funding sources and partners to support the project,
- Provide staff support for the project,
- Engage in joint decision making on priorities, deliverables, and implementation pathways.
- Coordinate meetings, meeting notes, and follow-ups on action items.
- Collaborate on public-facing communications.
- Coordinate on municipal application process for demonstration site(s).
- Coordinate on municipal engagement and outreach activities.

EXCLUSIONS

This project will NOT include the following:

1. Direct financing or project underwriting of tree installations (capital subsidies, gap financing, land acquisition, or serving as a funding source for projects).
2. Legal, regulatory, or lobbying services (providing legal advice, making binding code interpretations, or conducting lobbying/legislative advocacy on behalf of partners).
3. Replacing municipal authority or staff capacity (Delta/County do not assume municipal decision-making or day-to-day operations for planning, zoning, permitting, or inspections).
4. Guaranteeing outcomes or approvals (no promise of zoning changes, permits, funding awards, or project approvals—those remain with the appropriate authorities).
5. Exclusive control of coalition participation (the partnership does not limit other partners from collaborating, pursuing parallel efforts, or joining/engaging through other channels).

TERM

This MOU will terminate on March 31, 2027 or remain effective if supplanted by a new MOU, or may be

terminated earlier as provided below.

ASSIGNMENT

This MOU may not be assigned without prior written approval of the Parties hereto.

WITHDRAWAL

Any Party may withdraw from this MOU with 30 days' advance written notice via certified mail to the other Parties.

SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this MOU is held invalid, the remainder of the MOU shall not be affected thereby, and all other parts of this MOU shall nevertheless be in full force and effect.

SECTION HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS

The section headings and subheadings contained in this MOU are included for convenience only and shall not limit or otherwise affect the terms of this MOU.

ENTIRE MOU

This MOU between the Parties supersedes all prior or contemporaneous communications and proposals, whether electronic, oral, or written between the Parties with respect to this. By way of signing this MOU, the Parties are bound to perform the duties and obligations within this MOU. No amendment or modification of this MOU shall be valid unless the same is in writing and executed by all the Parties hereto, and then only to the extent set forth in said writing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this MOU as of the date first written above.

For County of Lake

_____	_____	_____
Signature	Type or Print Name of Authorized Representative	Date
Attest		
_____	_____	_____
Signature	Type or Print Name of Authorized Representative	Date

For Delta

_____	_____	_____
William Schleizer, CEO	Date	
Attest		
_____	_____	_____
Signature	Type or Print Name of Authorized Representative	Date