

BEYOND THE LIBERTY TREE

COMMEMORATING LIBERTY. RESTORING THE ENVIRONMENT. EDUCATING THE FUTURE.

ROOTED IN HISTORY

The Liberty Tree was an iconic rallying point of the American Revolution and a hallmark of community and commemorative anniversaries from 1776 to the present. Through this Semiquincentennial program titled "Beyond the Liberty Tree" we seek to commemorate our nation's history and its "promise of liberty" through education and by placing a commemorative tree on North Carolina's civic spaces and increase ecological and environmental awareness through reforestation programs across areas devastated by Hurricane Helene in Western North Carolina.



100 Landmark
Commemorative
Trees (At least one
in every NC
County)

1:250

25,000
Reforestation
Plantings in WNC
(250 for every
Landmark tree)



Announcement:

The project will be managed by the America250 NC Buncombe County Committee and will soft launch in August of 2025 in commemoration of the felling of the original liberty tree in Boston Massachusetts, by loyalist Nathaniel Coffin in August of 1775. A more public launch will take place on the Anniversary of Hurricane Helene in late September 2025.

Commemorative Impact - Nominations for Landmark Tree Plantings:

America250 NC Buncombe County Committee will be accepting nominations for parks, civic and community spaces to receive a commemorative tree planting in 2026. Nominating communities will be responsible for raising funds to support the sponsorship of reforestation planting of 250 trees across WNC. Landmark Tree Plantings will be ceremonially planted in the spring/fall of 2026. Additional funds may be eligible to underfunded sites.



Environmental Impact - Nominations for WNC Reforestation Plantings:

America250 NC Buncombe County Committee, in partnership with regional, state, and national conservation organizations will be taking nominations and coordinating the planting of 250 trees for every nominated site. Reforestation Tree Plantings will begin in the spring/fall of 2026.

Educational Impact and Outreach:

Working with history organizations from across the state, America250 NC's ready-made curriculum will be promoted in schools, and will include educational programs on the history of the Liberty Tree.



SUPPORT

You can support this effort by nominating either Landmark or Reforestation tree planting locations, donating resources to support either initiative, or volunteering your time to help with planning, planting, or educational activations.

America250 NC Buncombe County is the non-partisan governmentally sanctioned body of volunteers supporting Buncombe County's contributions to America250NC programs and to programs and observances across Buncombe County during 2026, the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding.

America250 NC is a statewide initiative in North Carolina to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. It involves various events, programs, and resources focusing on North Carolina's role in the nation's founding and its history over the past 250 years.

America250 is a multi-year, nonpartisan initiative commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026. It's spearheaded by the U.S. Semiquicentennial.

BEYOND THE LIBERTY TREE

NOMINATION FORM

AN OFFICIAL PROGRAM OF AMERICA 250 NC

The Beyond the Liberty Tree program is an official program of North Carolina's American Semiquincentennial (America250 NC) and is administered by the Buncombe County A250 Committee (the Committee). The program welcomes applicants from across the state of North Carolina to plant commemorative "Landmark" trees in their localities and donate toward reforestation efforts across Western North Carolina (WNC). Through this initiative the program aspires to recognize 100 "Landmark" tree plantings statewide and support over 25,000 trees to be planted in reforestation across WNC.

Winning entries will be selected from across the state and will receive an official America250 NC commemorative plaque to be installed with their "Landmark" tree planting in the spring/fall of 2026.

Donations by winning applicants will support reforestation throughout 2026.

Application Process

Please complete all sections of this form to nominate your site for participation in the Beyond the Liberty Tree program. No funds are required at the time of application; winning entries will be notified by the Committee. By submitting an application, the applicant acknowledges the following program milestones:

1. Rolling Applications will be received January 15–September 30, 2026 (Digital or Mail-In Received-by-Date).
2. "Notice of Award" will be made within 30 days of approved Application.
3. Application Fee Payment Due within 30 days of notice of award.
4. "Landmark" Tree Plantings Spring/Fall 2026.
5. Report donation amounts to be made within 90 days of award.
6. July 4, 2026 – Program Announcement highlighting Landmark Trees and Reforestation progress to date.

Criteria for Consideration

Criteria for consideration encompasses each applicant's thoughtful nomination of "Landmark" commemorative tree planting, and their commitment to donating resources supporting tree reforestation across WNC. The following criteria apply:

Criterion 2A – Landmark Tree Planting: The applicant must demonstrate confirmation of program costs, donation-intent, and thoughtfulness in site selection and the ongoing care of their "Landmark" tree, including but not limited to the following considerations:

- **Publicly Accessible Land** – The proposed planting location must be on publicly accessible land.
- **Management Plan** – Applicant shall demonstrate a clear plan for tree-care identifying who will maintain and care for the tree during its establishment period (typically 12-18 months).
- **Tree Material/Labor** – Applicant commits to procuring their own tree and labor for installation.
- **Tree Selection** – Applicant to propose species aligning with recommended commemorative tree list (see attached); trees shall be no less than 1-1/2" Caliper (deciduous) or 6' (evergreen) street-tree quality specimens.
- **Commemoration Plaque/ Event** – Applicant commits to host a public event promoting the program/planting and shall install the 250th commemorative plaque awarded by the committee.
- **Application Fee** – Applicant agrees to pay the \$250.00 application fee within 30 days of notice of award by the Committee. (Fees will go toward program administration, and design, fabrication and shipping of commemorative plaques to winning applicants).

Criterion 2B – Reforestation Donation– At the time of application, the applicant pledges to contribute funds toward reforestation efforts in Western NC to one or more of the identified partnering organization (see below). The applicant agrees to independently fundraise to meet or exceed their pledged donation amount, donating funds directly to the partnering organizations within 90 days of award. The Applicant agrees to report to the Committee their disbursement of funds within 90 days of award or no later than December 31, 2026. Applicants are encouraged (non-binding) to raise between \$250.00 and \$2,500.00 in donations.

Partnering organizations suggested for direct support include but are not limited to:



A gift of \$250 could cover the planting and care of roughly 50 open-pollinated wild chestnut trees. Learn more at: <https://tafc.org>



A gift of \$250 could buy 100 bare-root trees, or cover roughly one-acre of reforestation. Learn more at: <https://www.ecoforesters.org>



A gift of \$250 could buy roughly eight #3 gallon potted trees circulated directly to property owners. Learn more at: <https://www.ashevillegreenworks.org>



A gift of \$250 could buy 50 live-stake trees supporting reforestation. Learn more at: <https://mountaintrue.org>



A gift of \$450 could restore roughly 150-200 linear feet of streambank including native riparian seed, live stakes, and coir matting. Learn more at: <https://riverlink.org>

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‘Landmark’ Tree Recommendations

Beyond the Liberty Tree - America250 NC Commemorative Tree Plantings



Dogwood



Carolina Silverbell



White Oak



Fringe Tree



Longleaf Pine



Live Oak



North Carolina Eco Regions:

- Mountains
- Piedmont
- Inner Coastal Plain
- Tidewater

Recommended Commemorative “Landmark” Tree Species By Eco Region:

Quercus virginiana - Southern Live Oak

Pinus palustris - Longleaf Pine

Quercus alba - White Oak

Amelanchier arborea - White Fringe Tree

Halesia carolina - Carolina Silverbell (tree form)

Cornus florida 'Appalachian Spring' - Flowering Dogwood
(or other anthracnose resistant varieties)



Nomination Form (Pg.1 of 2)

Please provide as much detail as possible to demonstrate your nominated site's fulfillment of the criterion listed above.

Name of Applicant – Primary Contact (Name, Address, Email, Phone):

(Provide Name, Street Address, Email, and Phone Contact Information for Applicant)

Proposed Site Location for “Landmark” Tree Planting:

(Provide Street Address, Description of Location, and Map)

***Property Owner/Managing Agent Authorization:**

(Provide Name, Office, and Contact Information for Publicly Accessible Land Owner/Agent approving installation of the applicant's “Landmark” Tree.)

*Note: At the Time of Award, the applicant shall submit a letter to be signed by the landowner/managing agent. The Committee recommends this information be secured in advance of the “Notice of Award” date to streamline demonstrated approvals. Applications that include a signed letter at the time of application will be looked upon favorably.

Tree Species/Management Plan:

(Provide Genus species, and Common name of selected tree; Confirm acknowledgement of applicant's agreement to secure their proposed tree at their cost, and coordinate installation)

Tree Species: _____

Size of Tree to Be Installed: _____

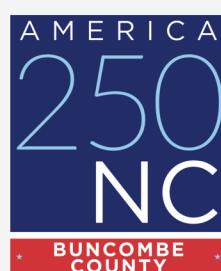
Management Plan:

(Example, tree will be watered 2-3x weekly for first two years after installation)

Applicant Acknowledgement to Provide Tree and Labor at Applicant's Cost:

(Initials): _____

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Nomination Form (Pg.2 of 2)

Planned Commemoration Date (Recommended - Spring/Fall 2026):

(Provide details concerning the planning, promotion, and invited attendance of the plantings; demonstrate commitment to install A250 Beyond the Liberty Tree Commemorative Plaque (to be provided to winning applicants by the Committee)).

Event Planning: _____

Promotional Methods: _____

Intended Invitees:

(Example: General Public, Elected Officials, etc.)

Confirmation of Commemorative A250 Plaque Installation (Initials): _____

Intended Donation Amount Supporting WNC Tree Reforestation:

(Provide pledged amount to secure donation funds to be donated to partnering organizations coordinating reforestation efforts across WNC.)

Pledged Amount to be Raised for Reforestation in WNC: _____

I the applicant due acknowledge that I have read the program information listed above. Should my application be accepted for official recognition I acknowledge that:

- a. I understand that the costs for procuring, purchase, and installation of my landmark tree will be covered by me, or my representative organization; America250 NC's role shall be limited to promotion, recognition, and supplying the commemorative plaque (listed below);
- b. I will secure the necessary approvals for installation in the proposed site;
- c. I will install the commemorative plaque provided by America250 NC;
- d. I will coordinate the commemorative installation, and will document by photo or video and provide copies to America250 NC;
- e. I will pay the \$250 application fee, upon notice of award by the stated deadline;
- f. I will fundraise for and make a donation of any amount to the partnering organizations for reforestation listed above, and I confirm willingness to report donation amounts to be made within 90 days of award;

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Submission Instructions

This is a statewide initiative limited to 100 awardees. Applicants are encouraged to submit all applications and supporting materials early in 2026 but no later than September 30, 2026, by one of two methods:

- a. Digital Submissions: Send digital submissions of the completed form and supporting documentation to info@buncombe250.org no later than 11:55pm on September 30, 2026.
- b. – Or –
Mail completed hard-copy nomination forms in time to be received no later than 5pm on September 30, 2026:

America250 NC Buncombe County Committee
1 Village Lane, Suite 1
Biltmore Village
Asheville, NC 28803

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