



**Connecticut Urban Forest Council
2021 Recipients – Urban Forestry Climate Change Grants**

Groundwork Bridgeport - \$33,642

The grant proposal, “Growing Our Forest Together,” was selected to receive \$33,642 of funding. The proposal provided site plans for planting 60 trees from eight genera in three public parks in Bridgeport, engaging community volunteers to plant the trees and to maintain them through their Adopt-A-Tree Program. The locations for tree planting include Beardsley Park, Old Mill Green, and Seaside Park. Planting in these parks will recover some canopy lost due to emerald ash borer, may mitigate some risk related to stormwater runoff and urban flooding, and will be planted near urban neighborhoods affected by industrial pollution and with low tree equity scores. The parks are essential recreation areas for these neighborhoods.

Greenwich Tree Conservancy - \$37,000

The grant proposal, “Adapting to Climate: Increasing the Urban Canopy in Greenwich’s EJ Census Tracts,” was selected to receive \$37,000 of funding. The proposal is to plant 51 trees from at least seven genera in Environmental Justice communities (Byram, Chickahominy, and Pemberwick neighborhoods), as identified as those census blocks with the highest minority population, highest proportion of the community living in poverty, and with low-ranking tree equity scores. An unusual aspect of this proposal was an effort to strategically remove concrete in locations to plant trees where they could provide the greatest benefit. Tree planting will be in spaces close to the living areas of communities, which has the greatest potential to alleviate urban heat island effects and to provide the most direct health and quality of life benefits to the neighborhoods. The proposal was strongly supported by letters from elected representatives of the affected communities recognized the benefits that will accrue to their constituents from the planted trees.

Urban Resources Initiative, Inc. (New Haven) - \$37,000

The grant proposal, “Solving Inequities in New Haven’s Tree Canopy Distribution,” or “Planting Trees for Cool Communities,” was selected to receive \$37,000 of funding. This multifaceted proposal involves planting 75 trees from approximately nine genera in areas of the city identified in 2016 through LIDAR assessment as having less than 20% tree canopy, and are identified as Environmental Justice communities, having high proportion minority populations living in poverty. The planting will involve training of high school students and formerly incarcerated persons, through the GreenSkills and EMERGE programs, respectively. A bilingual campaign for tree planting will take place in the targeted neighborhoods, to elicit requests from residents for trees to be planted on residents’ properties.

The Town of Stratford - \$37,000

The grant proposal, "Street Tree Replanting," was selected to receive \$37,000 of funding. The proposal aims to plant 100 trees in the two areas first identified as Environmental Justice Community census blocks, prior to the entire town being so designated. They have tree canopies of only 14 – 15%, and are adjacent to industrial areas. Locations within these census blocks suitable for tree planting having been identified by the Tree Warden, the trees of suitable species will be purchased through contracts, planted by the Public Works Department, and then maintained by the Town Gardener. Two community meetings will inform residents of the areas to be planted about tree biology and benefits, tree law, and to garner support for residents to help maintain the planted trees.

The Town of Windsor - \$34,720

The grant proposal, "Taking Root in Windsor," was selected to receive \$34,720 of funding. The proposal provided site plans for planting 91 trees and shrubs from fourteen genera in three public parks in the Deerfield and Wilson neighborhoods, ultimately improving shade, lowering urban heat island effects, and providing more livable space for recreation. These neighborhoods were selected based upon their high minority population (66 – 89%), proximity to interstate highways, high level of impervious surfaces, and overall poor health indicators as evident from the CDC Places Dataset. Town efforts in the STEP program supports training of local high school youth in tree care.