

Urban Green and Community Garden (UGCG) Grant Program

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

1. ELIGIBILITY –

How do I know if my municipality is a “Distressed Municipality” or “Targeted Investment Community”?

2021 Distressed Municipalities - Ansonia, Bridgeport, Chaplin, Derby, East Hartford, East Haven, Griswold, Groton, Hartford, Meriden, Montville, New Britain, New London, Norwich, Plainfield, Putnam, Sprague, Sterling, Stratford, Torrington, Voluntown, Waterbury, West Haven, Winchester and Windham.

2021 Targeted Investment Communities - Bridgeport, Bristol, East Hartford, Groton, Hamden, Hartford, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Southington, Stamford, Thomaston, Waterbury, West Haven and Windham.

2. NON-PROFIT CO-SPONSORS –

I’m a non-profit and want to apply for funding. What does that mean?

Non-profit groups may co-sponsor restoration and community garden projects on municipally-owned land. If awarded a State grant, the municipality **and** the non-profit group will together enter into a personal services agreement with the State. The State will reimburse the municipality, who will then reimburse the non-profit group. It is important that you have a good working relationship with the municipality or group (depending on your status as the applicant) in order to expedite the grant award process efficiently. DEEP can only reimburse for expenses incurred after all parties sign the personal services agreement and after the agreement is approved by the State Attorney General’s office.

3. FUNDING GUIDLINES –

What types of expenses are covered by this grant program?

Materials

Grant funds can be used for materials such as lumber, soil, mulch, fencing, crushed stone dust, signage, hand tools, reference books, etc. Funds can be used to purchase perennial plants such as shrubs, trees, and native flowering plants. Grant funds cannot be used to purchase plants that are on the State of Connecticut invasive plants list.

Professional Services

Funding may be used to hire professional architects and engineers. Please note that chosen contractor(s) must be listed as an approved contractor under the Department of Administrative

Services, Contractor Prequalification Program. Program requirements and other information can be found by visiting: <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/Procurement/PreQual/DAS-Construction-Contractor-Prequalification-Program>

Structures

Grant funding may be used to purchase minimal outdoor structures. Acceptable structures include garden sheds, picnic tables, benches, and open air pavilions. Funds cannot be used to purchase enclosed structures such as offices, indoor classrooms, wash/pack facilities, or indoor recreation facilities. This grant program aims to promote passive recreation and community gardens. Funds cannot be used to purchase park amenities such as playscapes, splash pads, barbeques, or sports equipment.

Tools

Grant funding may be used to purchase hand tools such as shovels, hoes, rakes, irrigation materials, etc. Funding cannot be used to purchase any power tools or motorized equipment such as rototillers.

Equipment Rental

Grant funds may be used to rent equipment for the construction of your garden or restoration project.

What percentage of costs do grant funds cover?

This is a matching grant program. Grant funds cover 50% of the total project cost. For example, if the total cost of a project is \$50,000, then the state will pay \$25,000 and the sponsor will pay \$25,000.

What costs can be used as a project match?

The expenses listed above can be used as a project match. Match funds can also be used for:

- Staff time;
- Donated materials;
- Donated professional services;
- Volunteer time (according to Independent Sector, the federal hourly rate is \$25.43).

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Example Budget Table

Expenses	Cost	Match Funds	Grant Funds
Garden shed	\$4,600		\$4,600
Hand tools	\$500	\$500	
Compost	\$1,200		\$1,200
Mulch	\$500	\$500	
Lumber and hardware for raised beds	\$2,000	\$2,000	
Fencing	\$5,000		\$5,000
Crushed stone for ADA accessible path	\$1,000	\$1,000	
Water hook up	\$1,000	\$1,000	
Irrigation equipment	\$700	\$300	
3 picnic tables	\$1,300		\$1,300
4 benches	\$800	\$800	
Signage	\$500	\$450	\$50
¼ mile stone path construction (Public Works)	\$2,000	\$2,000	
2 volunteers (6 hours @ \$24.69/hour)	\$300	\$300	
Grounds Manager (100 hours at \$30.00/hour)	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Perennial plants for pollinator garden	\$300	\$300	
Total Costs	\$24,300	\$12,150	\$12,150

4. EXISTING PROPERTY OWNERSHIP –

Where can I get a copy of the property’s current deed?

Visit your Municipal Assessor’s Office and ask for the property street card(s). Find on the street card(s) the book volume(s) and page number(s) for the current deed(s). Then, go to the Clerk’s Office to locate and make a copy the deed(s).

5. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY NEED –

Where can I find the supporting documents and materials?

- **Connecticut’s State Plan of Conservation and Development** is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/IGPP-MAIN/Responsible-Growth/Conservation-and-Development-Policies-Plan/Conservation-and-Development-Policies-Plan>, at any public library, or by contacting your Regional Planning Organization (RPO) or Council of Government (COG).
- **Municipal Plans of Conservation and Development/Conservation and Recreation** are typically available online or at your Town or City Hall. Please note that these plans now

need to be less than ten years old to be “current” – if a municipality submits a proposal and their C&D plan is not current, that project will not be evaluated.

- **Regional Conservation Plans** can be found by visiting your region’s Council of Governments (COG) website, or by contacting your Regional Planning Organization (RPO). RPO’s are available online at: <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/IGPP-MAIN/Responsible-Growth/Regional-Planning-Organizations-RPO>
- **Connecticut’s 2016-2020 Comprehensive Open Space Acquisition Plan (The Green Plan)** is available online in its entirety and in sections at www.ct.gov/deep/greenplan.
- **Connecticut’s Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy (The Wildlife Action Plan)** is available online at:
https://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=325886&deepNav_GID=1719
- **Connecticut Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)** is available online at:
https://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323864&deepNav_GID=1642

6. LOCAL SUPPORT –

Where can I request Municipal and Regional letters of support?

- For municipal letters of support, contact your local boards and/or commissions (e.g., Inland Wetlands, Conservation, Open Space, and/or Planning Commissions).
- For regional (RPO/COG) letters of support, contact your Regional Planning Organization. The agencies and contact names are available online at:
<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/IGPP-MAIN/Responsible-Growth/Regional-Planning-Organizations-RPO>

HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

Additional or more detailed questions can be directed to Allyson Clarke at (860) 424-3774 at DEEP’s Office of Constituent Affairs and Land Management.