



Contact:

Delaney Wehn / dwehn@momentum-cg.com

Christina Pettit / CPettit@cityparksfoundation.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund Grants \$503,000 to 7 Organizations Promoting Equity in NYC's Parks and Open Spaces

February 15, 2022 - New York, NY - City Parks Foundation is pleased to announce that the [NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund](#) (NYC Green Fund) has granted \$503,000 to seven projects working to advance equity and community involvement in parks and open spaces. By funding these projects through its 2022 Systems Change grants program, the NYC Green Fund aims to address ongoing systemic challenges and spur policymakers to provide adequate funding to sustain these solutions.

Grant recipients, selected based on their innovation, feasibility, and commitment to equity, include the following:

- [Brooklyn Greenway Initiative](#) to formalize the NYC Greenways Coalition, a collective effort of more than 40 nonprofit, community, advocacy and stewardship organizations, focused on implementation and planning for the 400-mile citywide greenway network
- [Friends of the High Line](#) to advance the pilot of a Technical Assistance Program for members of the High Line's Public Space Alliance, a community of infrastructure reuse projects across NYC that aim to develop new, green and open spaces for their communities
- [Gowanus Canal Conservancy](#) to continue the work of the Rain Garden Action In Neighborhoods (RAIN) Coalition, a pilot collaborative approach for rain garden stewardship of City-owned green infrastructure by four community based organizations — Bronx River Alliance, Gowanus Canal Conservancy, the HOPE Program and Newtown Creek Alliance
- [Natural Areas Conservancy](#) to complete the feasibility plan and start pilot testing phase of a novel sustainable, long-term funding mechanism in an on-the-ground implementation project
- [New Yorkers for Parks](#) to engage NYC's new elected leadership in the creation of a plan to build and sustain an equitable parks system that recognizes the critical importance of parks as infrastructure for climate change resilience, equitable economic development, and public health
- [North Brooklyn Parks Alliance](#) to support the new North Brooklyn Open Space Equity Coalition (OSEC), which is focused on working with political leaders to change the way the community approaches open space policy and management to improve equity
- [South Bronx Unite](#) to create tools for environmental justice communities to use community land trusts to reclaim green space, quantify community value, train citizen scientists to monitor air quality and push for policy and budget reforms, along with creating virtual reality opportunities for the public to envision thriving green space

Funded projects will advance critical work to promote equity in NYC's parks and green spaces, and additional rounds of funding through the NYC Green Fund will open in Summer 2022. "Through the NYC Green Fund, we're honored to support these projects that are at the forefront of envisioning and shaping a more equitable public realm - and advancing environmental justice priorities - for all New Yorkers," said Heather Lubov, Executive Director of City Parks Foundation.



"All of these groups are advancing promising new approaches to stewarding the City's increasingly important green spaces," added Arturo Garcia-Costas, Environment Program Officer at the New York Community Trust. "Our parks, community gardens, street trees, and natural areas are an essential part of what makes this great metropolis work, and these projects will help make sure that they get the attention and resources they need."

"We are humbled and beyond thrilled to have been awarded a Systems Change Grant by the funders of the NYC Green Fund. This grant will help formalize the NYC Greenways Coalition, boosting its collective efforts toward comprehensive planning and interagency collaboration to connect disparate, isolated greenways as vital public infrastructure for an equitable and sustainable future for all New Yorkers. Connecting a five borough greenway network will address inequities in access to parks and safe facilities for active transportation and recreation." – Terri Carta, Executive Director, Brooklyn Greenway Initiative

"The generous support of the NYC Green Fund will enable the High Line's Public Space Alliance to advance targeted technical assistance needs for 15 infrastructure reuse projects, all in various stages of design and development. These efforts will help to advance the growth of equitable, green and open spaces for communities across the five boroughs of New York City." – Friends of the High Line

"NYC is at a critical juncture, with a new administration, incoming infrastructure funding, and momentous focus on both urban resilience and social justice. The generous support from the NYC Green Fund will allow the RAIN Coalition to fully implement our pilot partnership with NYC to ensure that the City successfully implements and stewards rain gardens that promote climate change mitigation, divert stormwater, support a host of additional environmental benefits, and drives sustainable and reliable local, green-collar jobs." – Andrea Parker, Gowanus Canal Conservancy

"The Natural Areas Conservancy is thrilled to receive support in 2022 from the NYC Green Fund to continue to build equity and innovation in our parks and open space system. Lack of funding and disproportionate allocations are one of the fundamental ways inequity exists across parks systems. We look forward to furthering our research on funding allocations into an actionable approach for increased support for natural area forest care throughout NYC. This funded project promotes the Natural Areas Conservancy's mission to restore and maintain green and blue spaces for all New Yorkers to enjoy and benefit from by addressing the systemic challenge of short-term unreliable funding." – Natural Areas Conservancy Team

"Rebuilding from the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be a restoration of inequality. With support from the NYC Green Fund, New Yorkers for Parks is delivering multiple campaigns based on our Five Point Plan for Park Equity, including a push for 1% of the city budget for parks. Our work with the 400+ organizations in the Play Fair coalition is focused on changing the way our city and its leaders value our parks system – to see and fund parks as essential infrastructure." – Adam Ganser, New Yorkers for Parks

"Shortly after the pandemic began and gearing up for one of the most significant election periods in New York City's history, we formed the Open Space Equity Coalition to reimagine the policy and culture of how parks and open spaces are defined and managed in North Brooklyn. The NYC Green Fund provided critical seed funding to get us started last year, and this latest grant will help us dig deeper in the open space planning efforts that are essential to our district-wide analysis." – Katie Denny Horowitz, North Brooklyn Parks Alliance



"There is one park in the Mott Haven and Port Morris sections of the South Bronx, one park to serve 91,000 people. Layered onto this is the fact that we are NYC's epicenter for environmental racism and air pollution. This dangerous combination has resulted in asthma hospitalization rates 21 times greater than any other NYC neighborhood. With the generous support of the NYC Green Fund grant, we will be able to expand our efforts to address these injustices and inequities, we will be able to work towards creating more green space so our community can breathe cleaner air and live healthier lives." - Arif Ullah, South Bronx Unite

Generous private support for the NYC Green Fund is provided by:

- The Albert Giving Fund
- Altman Foundation
- Booth Ferris Foundation
- Con Edison
- Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
- The J.M. Kaplan Fund
- The JPB Foundation
- Klein Family Foundation
- Leon Levy Foundation
- The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust
- Libra Fund
- Lily Auchincloss Foundation
- The New York Community Trust
- Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF)
- The Thompson Family Foundation
- And many philanthropic individuals

City Parks Foundation serves as administrator of the fund.

About City Parks Foundation

At City Parks Foundation, we are dedicated to invigorating and transforming parks into dynamic, vibrant centers of urban life through sports, arts, community building and education programs for all New Yorkers. Our programs – located in hundreds of parks, recreation centers and public schools across New York City – reach thousands of people each year. Our ethos is simple: thriving parks mean thriving communities.

About the NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund

In May 2020, a coalition of national, family, and community foundations launched the NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund to support stewardship organizations that care for New York City's parks and open spaces. The Fund is intended to respond to the most urgent needs facing the City's parks and open spaces, while spurring policy-makers to address ongoing systemic challenges, and provide adequate funding to maintain and improve them. The Fund was launched in response to the efforts of the Parks and Open Space Partners – NYC coalition to raise awareness of the financial impacts of the pandemic on open spaces. The Fund is intended to grow, and we encourage those interested in supporting the NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund to donate now or contact NYCGreenFund@cityparksfoundation.org for more information.