

Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant



U.S. EPA, Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights
(Download funding announcement [here](#))

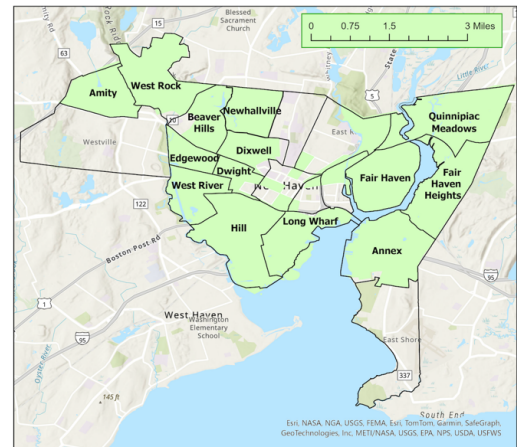
Overview

The City of New Haven Office of Climate and Sustainability has partnered with the Greater Dwight Development Corporation and six other community-based organizations to launch the **Elm City Climate Collaborative (EC3)**. The Collaborative is creating a community-driven plan to address climate change and pollution. We will submit this proposal to the USEPA under the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant program which will provide up to \$20 million to fight climate change and pollution.

In submitting this grant, the people of New Haven will put forward a wide-ranging plan that is inclusive and equitable, funds this critical work, and mobilizes additional public and private resources.

The Office of Climate and Sustainability will serve as the Lead Partner and will administer the grant. Greater Dwight Development Corporation will serve as the required Statutory Partner.

These partners lead the **EC3 Proposal Strategy Team**, joined by St. Luke's Development Corporation, the Newhallville Community Services Development Corporation, Community Action Agency of New Haven, Neighborhood Housing Services, Beulah Land Development Corporation, and Junta for Progressive Action.



Environmental Justice Block Groups

Nearly 80 interested experts, residents, and community-based organizations joined the Strategy Team in work groups to identify strategies that build on current efforts to address climate change. The work groups reviewed over 55 proposals developed by participants and recommended a set for inclusion in the project. The Strategy Team convened the work groups on June 6 to refine the proposals and on June 24 to present them to the entire group.

Proposals span the topics of community green infrastructure, energy upgrades in housing, community food recovery and composting, and comprehensive bicycle infrastructure. Overlaying all strategies is a plan to engage residents in the work and to focus benefits on Environmental Justice neighborhoods. Determined using EPA's Environmental and Climate Justice Program's Disadvantaged Communities mapping tool, the map above depicts the project area which covers at least part of 14 neighborhoods.

The diverse group of people and NGOs that have committed their time, energy, expertise, and local knowledge to work with the City on this project demonstrates the City-wide commitment to meet the challenges imposed by climate change. Many of the participants live and work in the 14 targeted neighborhoods, communities that have suffered historical

prejudices perpetuated through redlining and other regulations and social constructs. These areas face heightened risks from excessive heat and other climate challenges related to lack of opportunities and wealth including poorly insulated and inefficiently heated and cooled housing; streets perceived as dangerous, limiting social gatherings and perpetuating car dependence; and limited access to communal gardening spaces and materials. Residents of under-resourced neighborhoods also face information barriers which impact how they confront the threats of climate change and the possibilities for mitigation and adaptation.

Efforts to correct environmental injustices typically have been imposed on marginalized peoples and low resource neighborhoods. The Collaborative proposes to rewrite the playbook. Towards a near future where all of New Haven – residents, neighborhoods, natural areas – thrives, we have developed fundable, shovel ready projects devised in concert by community members, NGOs, and Office of Climate and Sustainability.

EC3 will lay the foundation for a novel approach to civic responsibility and community action in the age of a rapidly changing climate. These replicable strategies will help our City mitigate and adapt to our changing climate conditions, create jobs and train residents to fill them, and continually involve the most impacted people in generating solutions.

The Elm City Climate Collaborative Community Climate Justice Plan

Community Engagement & Capacity Building

GDDC will lead the six partnering CBOs in managing the community engagement and capacity building work across all strategies, a central focus of the EPA for this Community Change grant program. These efforts will ensure that all residents of the targeted areas understand their opportunities to participate in relevant initiatives as homeowners, volunteers, or employees.

The Collaborative commits to transparency and inclusivity. We will regularly generate communication pieces (web, social media, press) and participate in community events and Community Management Team meetings. To expand and deepen outreach work, we will partner with additional organizations engaged in climate-related outreach and communications (Save The Sound, the New Haven Climate Movement, New Haven Public Schools, and the Yale School of Environment Program on Environmental Communications), and provide materials to education organizations that work for environmental and climate justice (Gather New Haven, Solar Youth, Community Placemaking Engagement Network, Common Ground, etc.)

The Collaborative's CBOs will use grant funds to build their capacity to perform outreach across their neighborhoods and constituencies. The four CBOs engaged in housing development will receive additional funding to support work on the proposed housing initiatives.

The EC3 **Evaluation Process**, a key requirement of EPA, will be a critical component of the community engagement and capacity building work. Working with DataHaven, the City and GDDC will ensure robust data collection and management around the outputs and outcomes of all work under the grant. The Collaborative will ensure that data is published regularly, and will use this information for continuous improvement of the strategies.

The evaluation will determine how all the outcomes relate to the EC3's overarching goals: mitigating and adapting to the climate crisis, ensuring clean air and safe water for all, mitigating the harm imposed by toxins in the environment, and safeguarding and revitalizing New Haven's environmental justice areas. The evaluation process will include baseline assessments of each intended outcome, followed by analysis to ensure outputs are properly targeted and achieving the desired outcomes.

Community Strength Plan

EPA requires that funded activities strengthen the social fabric of and economic outcomes for Environmental Justice communities. EC3's Community Strength Plan will specify how the community

will benefit from the proposed investments, noting all workforce, job, and business opportunities as well cost savings for residents of targeted neighborhoods. Critically, the Collaborative will install safeguards to protect residents from displacement related to this work.

The Collaborative and the Workforce Alliance, the region's workforce development board, will implement EC3's Workforce Strategy: creating job pathways to employment on EC3 strategies, and career pathways in the climate-related industries. The Community Action Agency for New Haven (CAANH) will work with the Collaborative to ensure that all residents are aware of training and job opportunities, and that there is a steady flow of community candidates into EC3 jobs as well as other workforce opportunities through the Workforce Alliance (e.g. health care, manufacturing, or IT).

Funds will support Career Navigation, a system involving coaching and supporting candidates through the process of targeting a career, training for the work, and securing employment; and technical training to prepare residents for careers in growth industries related to climate change. As part of the project evaluation, CAANH will track participation, including the number of residents receiving training and placement in jobs.

The Collaborative will work with the emerging New Haven Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (NHE3) and Climate Haven, a climate-focused entrepreneurial incubator to engage and support community members in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities that address climate change.

Elm City Climate Collaborative Strategies

EC3's proposed strategies, detailed below, have emerged from the work group process and community discussions. They build on extensive recent and current work around climate change and environmental justice.

Community Infrastructure and Land Use

Green Corridors

Objectives: Use street trees to reduce street level air temperature and manage stormwater. Implement new tree watering systems that improve tree survival, mitigate runoff, and reduce reliance on volunteers and transportation of water. Integrate bikeways and other climate-friendly amenities where feasible.

Elements:

- Divert rainwater for tree needs (inlet, dry well, commercial products), create diversion system for city blocks across designated street corridors (e.g. Lombard)
- Plant street trees across green corridors and in the vicinity
- Create a model Greenway on one street with bikeway and extensive tree planting in median
- Whalley Avenue enhancements (trees, parking lot heat reduction plan)

Lead: URI and City of New Haven Engineering

Partners: New Haven Parks, Transportation, Traffic and Parking, EMERGE, Common Ground, Save the Sound

Success Measures:

- # of trees planted
- % survival rate of trees
- linear feet of green corridors created
- Reduced area of impervious surfaces
- # of green jobs created for youth and formerly incarcerated

Outcomes:

- Reduced stormwater runoff
- Improved street tree survival
- Mitigated heat island effect
- Increase in green jobs

Greenspaces for Community Building

Objectives: Turn existing and new community gardens and green spaces into community building hubs. Create a garden and greenspace network to connect people across neighborhoods.

Elements: Improve climate mitigation function of gardens and greenspaces and community connections to and interactions with greenspaces.

Lead: Urban Resources Initiative and Gather New Haven

Partners: New Haven Parks, Community Placemaking Engagement Network, Save the Sound, Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, Common Ground

Success Measures:

- # of new greenspaces and gardens established
- # of existing greenspaces and gardens improved
- # of volunteers engaged
- square feet of planting and landscaping for climate mitigation

Outcomes:

- Enhanced food security
- Enhanced local food economy
- Reduced heat island effect

Climate-focused Zoning Ordinance Revision

Objective: Create zoning ordinances related to site and heat mitigation to improve climate adaptation outcomes and promote environmental justice.

Elements: Zoning changes related to site requirements, including reflective heat and tree cover

Lead: City of New Haven City Plan Department

Success Measures: Revised or new zoning ordinance(s)

Outcomes:

- Reduced area of impermeable surfaces
- Increased tree canopy
- Lowered heat island effect

Environmental Monitoring

Objective: Expand existing air quality monitoring across all EJ neighborhoods to address longstanding, neighborhood-scale environmental justice and health concerns.

Elements: Installation of air quality monitors in new locations across City's EJ neighborhoods, identify baseline air quality (particulate matter, temperature and humidity), monitor change over course of project. Engaging residents in citizen science opportunities and disseminating information to inform the public.

Lead: GDDC

Partners: City, St. Luke's Development Corporation, the Newhallville Community Services Development Corporation, Community Action Agency of New Haven, Neighborhood Housing Services, Beulah Land Development Corporation, and Junta for Progressive Action.

Success Measures:

- # of new air quality monitors installed
- # of residents engaged in environmental monitoring activities

Outcomes:

- Increased understanding of local climate related health concerns
- Deeper understanding of air quality issues across EJ census block groups
- Neighborhood level participation in monitoring pollution and excessive heat
- Neighborhood level climate data
 - Air quality level (particulate levels)
 - Excess heat

Housing & Health

Energy Upgrades to Occupied Homes

Objectives: Retrofit 1-4 unit owner-occupied homes and CBO-managed residential buildings with materials and technology that save energy and improve indoor air quality. Remove barriers to those upgrades.

Elements: Investment in improvements to make homes healthier (non-toxic materials) and more energy efficient (new windows, insulation, heat pumps and electrification- induction stoves, solar voltaic and battery systems). Green jobs training.

Lead: Greater Dwight Development Corporation and City of New Haven

Partners: St Lukes Development Corporation, Beulah Land Development Corporation, Neighborhood Housing Services, Newhallville Community Services Development Corporation,

Success Measures:

- 200 energy efficient, healthy housing units
- 20-25 full and and part-time jobs

Outcomes:

- Increase in number of energy efficient homes
- Reduced load on energy grid
- Improved indoor air quality
- Increased green jobs

Energy Upgrades to Affordable Housing Developments

Objective: Install energy saving and electrification measures in affordable housing projects (new construction or buildings under substantial renovation) managed by local Community Development Corporations.

The affordable housing pipeline includes over 400 units of new construction and 30 units of substantial renovation over the next 3 years.

Elements: *Electrification:* heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, EV chargers, solar plus battery storage systems. *Energy efficiency:* higher insulation standards, passive house construction, triple pane windows. *Sustainable site work:* native plantings, landscaping for stormwater infiltration, or tree planting.

Lead: Greater Dwight Development Corporation and City of New Haven

Partners: St. Luke's Development Corporation, Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, Newhallville Community Services Development Corporation, Beulah Land Development, New Haven Land Bank

Success Measures:

- # of new and renovated buildings and units receiving energy efficiency investments
- # of residents benefitting from energy savings
- # full time and part time construction jobs created

Outcomes:

- Benefits to affordable housing residents
 - Energy cost savings
 - Improved indoor air quality
 - Healthier outdoor air quality
- Reduced load on the electric grid leading to less likelihood of local power outages

Materials Management

Community Composting Web and School-based Composting, Recycling, Nutrition, and Litter Education

Objective: Create an integrated system to reduce food and household waste by investing in infrastructure, collaboration, and education.

Elements:

- Expand food rescue by increasing collection, processing, and distribution capacity
- Invest in community composting infrastructure by creating a composting hub in Fair Haven
- Develop school-based systems that enable education around composting, sustainable materials management, and nutrition
 - Develop education materials aimed at forwarding this work
- Improve and expand citywide recycling education campaign
- Launch repair and reuse initiative for household appliances and goods

Lead: City of New Haven

Partners: CitySeed, Common Ground, New Haven Public Schools, Center for EcoTechnology, Haven's Harvest, MakeHaven

Success Measures:

- Lbs. of useable food recovered and distributed
- Lbs. of food scraps diverted from waste stream
- Tons of compost generated
- Lbs. of recyclables collected
- # of schools participating
- # of students engaged
- # of tons of household items repaired, diverted from solid waste stream
- # of volunteers
- 12 repair and educational workshops annually
- Train 16-20 community members in electronics, textile and plastic repair skills per month
- Host a public event to showcase repaired/ upcycle product per year

- 23 jobs

Outcomes:

- Reduce household solid waste
- Build a circular organic food and waste stream
- Increase school-wide composting and recycling
- Increase jobs in repair and upcycling of materials

Transportation

Zero Emission Transportation Infrastructure And Access

Objective: Expand equitable access to affordable and zero-emission transportation by improving bicycle access, infrastructure, and education.

Elements:

- Expand access to affordable bicycles
 - Expand the Bradley Street Bicycle Coop's Bike for Jobs program
 - Expand the Park New Haven Bike Share
 - Distribute vouchers to supplement bicycle purchase
- Upgrade pedestrian and micromobility infrastructure in disadvantaged neighborhoods along high injury corridors, and around key transit corridors
- Improve safety and resilience at two-way cycletracks (Crescent and Edgewood) with physical barriers
- Expand bicycle education and empowerment programming with pop-up infrastructure targeting youth and adults
- Support and expand neighborhood bike maintenance and to support bicycle adoption

Lead: City of New Haven and New Haven Coalition for Active Transportation

Partners: City of New Haven, Transportation, Traffic, and Parking, New Haven Parking Authority, Bradley St. Bicycle Co-op, New Haven Coalition for Active Transportation, New Haven Public Schools, Bike Shops

Success Measures:

- Reduced motor vehicle miles traveled
- Miles of new bike lanes installed
- Decreased % incidents of bicycle accidents with motor vehicle
- 600 NHPS students learn bike safety and handling skills
- 600 community-based youth and adult learners completed at least one 90-minute bike safety session in a traffic garden (3 learners per site per week over 34 weeks of feasible weather)

Outcomes:

- Increased safety and user-friendliness of bikeways
- Improved health outcomes for local residents
- Increased access to bicycles and bike infrastructure
- Increased bicycle access to educational institutions, parks, and healthcare facilities
- Increased in new bike owners
- Improved overall health and well-being; reduce emissions; increase transportation resilience and increase access to important community destinations including schools, workplaces, healthcare centers, and community spaces

Environmental and Climate Justice



Community Change Grant Budget

Component	Three Year Cost
Community Infrastructure and Land Use	
Green Corridors	2,486,625
Community Greenspace Initiative	650,000
Environmental Monitoring	300,000
Heat-related Regulation	50,000
Total	3,486,625
Housing & Health	
CBO Capacity Building, GDDC Management	1,186,304
Home Energy Investments - 1-4 Unit Buildings	2,400,000
Home Energy - Affordable Housing Developments	1,200,000
Total	4,786,304
Materials Management	
Recovered Food Hub	700,988
Community Composting Initiative	1,539,666
School-based Food and Composting Initiative	877,341
Repair/Reuse Initiative	140,000
Total	3,257,994
Transportation	
Complete Streets Infrastructure	2,250,000
Bicycle Access (BikeShare, Free Bicycles,	615,000
Educational Programming and Bike Box Support	277,800
Total	3,142,800
Community Engagement and Capacity Building	
CBO Partners	1,488,712
Workforce Development	1,565,968
Total	3,054,680
Project Management	
Office of Climate and Sustainability	1,035,231
Greater Dwight Development Corporation	936,365
Evaluation	300,000
Total	2,271,596
Grant Total	20,000,000