**PRESS RELEASE**
For Immediate Release

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Funding Awarded to Increase Urban Tree Canopy Across Vermont:

*Over $710,000 Allocated for VT Urban & Community Forestry Projects*

*Montpelier*, VT - The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation's Urban & Community Forestry Program (VT UCF) is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2024 grant program, supporting three key categories: Communities Caring for Canopy, Growing Urban Forests in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer, and Urban & Community Forestry Grants. This year, VT UCF is awarding over $710,000, marking the largest amount the program has ever distributed, made possible with funding from the USDA Forest Service.

**Communities Caring for Canopy** will receive $75,000 to support nine impactful projects aimed at advancing local tree planting programs across the state.

**Growing Urban Forests in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer** will provide $126,000 to seven recipients focusing on mitigating the impacts of emerald ash borer, an invasive insect of ash trees, through targeted ash removal and replanting other tree species.

**Urban & Community Forestry Grants**, funded through an unprecedented one-time allocation from the USDA Inflation Reduction Act, will allocate $510,000 to twelve projects aimed at increasing and maintaining projects healthy urban tree canopy in under-resourced communities.

“We are thrilled to support these diverse and impactful projects that will enhance the health and resilience of urban and community forests across Vermont,” said Danielle Fitzko, Commissioner of Vermont Forests, Parks, and Recreation. “This year’s grant program represents a significant investment in our communities’ well-being, and we are excited to see these projects come to life.”

The awards represent 10 Vermont counties: Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Chittenden, Lamoille, Orange, Rutland, Washington, Windham, and Windsor.

Notable initiatives include:

* North Branch Nature Center: Creating a seed collection and plant propagation nursery for shade trees and edible shrubs along the North Branch of the Winooski River in Montpelier.
* Edible Brattleboro: Establishing a food forest and a network of tree guilds across Brattleboro and engaging in robust community outreach and trainings.
* Burlington Wildways and Winooski Valley Parks District: Expanding the school-based tree nursery pilot to additional schools in the Burlington School District.
* Vermont Youth Conservation Corps: Establishing a pilot Conservation Forestry work crew for a two-year urban forest management project on 18 acres of Oakledge Park in Burlington.

[To learn about all of the funded projects visit](https://vtcommunityforestry.org/community-stories/congratulations-2024-grant-recipients)  [https://vtcommunityforestry.org](https://vtcommunityforestry.org/).

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