

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **RESOLUTION OF THE NEW HAVEN BOARD OF ALDERS** authorizing the Mayor of The City of New Haven to submit an application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, United States Forest Service, in an amount not to exceed \$6,000,000 over a period of five years, for the Food System Policy Division to support its capacity to continue to partner with community members and organizations to implement a series of plans and activities that will create an enabling environment for urban agriculture, reduce barriers to entry and sustainability, and in which all residents will equitably benefit from the positive environmental, health, and socioeconomic outcomes of more green and growing spaces.

Submitted by: New Haven Food System Policy Division

REPORT: 1632-12

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

The Food System Policy Division is applying for funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act grants program to increase the support for and capacity of the Food System Policy Division. More specifically, FSPD will continue to partner with community members and organizations to implement a series of plans and activities that will create an enabling environment for urban agriculture, reduce barriers to entry and sustainability, and in which all residents will equitably benefit from the positive environmental, health, and socioeconomic outcomes of green and growing spaces. Funds will be used to:

- Support the comprehensive, evidence-based, and community-led implementation of New Haven's first Urban Agricultural Master Plan and related recommendations and activities, leveraging partnerships among residents, local government agencies, community-based organizations, institutions, researchers, and other relevant and committed stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Improving preparation for and resilience to climate change and the recovery of damaged or deteriorated landscapes to more healthy and resilient conditions.
 - Improving and increasing access to and stewardship of green and growing spaces in communities.
- Further integrate cross-cutting food systems, public health, environmental justice, economic development work into citywide efforts by engaging stakeholders and multidisciplinary partners from the public and private sectors to strengthen community resilience and build community health, wealth, and social cohesion. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Protecting, enhancing, and expanding equitable urban forestry and food systems planning to maximize community access to human health, social, ecological, and economic benefits particularly in disinvested neighborhoods with fewer green and growing spaces and at risk of impacts from extreme heat and flooding.
 - Create, support, and expand workforce development pathways for green careers in urban and community forestry and farming.

- Work across jurisdictional boundaries, leveraging ideas and resources to increase capacity to provide equitable access to benefits across the larger landscape and at a greater geographic scale.

Furthermore, funding from the grant would be used to create grant-funded staff positions to help with project development, coordination, implementation, and monitoring, considering that the Food Systems Policy Division currently has no staff aside from the Director and one grant-funded position set to conclude in September 2023.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS


This grant proposal is aligned with the City Comprehensive Plan because it will further Comprehensive Plan goals to:

- Encourage the creation of safe open space opportunities, community gardens, and urban farms.
- Grow green jobs within other industries besides the construction industry to ensure a sustainable economy.
- Integrate health and food system policies and planning into City land use activities.

ADVICE

Approval. Authorization of this grant application aligns with the City’s Comprehensive Plan goals.

ADOPTED: June 21, 2023
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST:  June 23, 2023 | 12:23 PM EDT
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Laura E Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department