

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Reservoir Community Farm: Urban Agriculture in Action*

- **Year Complete:** 2015
- **Local Government:** City of Bridgeport, CT
- **Local Foundation:** Fairfield County's Community Foundation

Project Purpose

To prove that a low-cost initiative (an urban farm) achieves municipal sustainability outcomes. This type of cost-benefit analysis will help cities considering urban farms.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

Publicity of joint work is important to both parties. The funder made efforts to feature the city mayor in their annual report, and in turn, the city highlighted the foundation for its work with important city initiatives. Additionally, the foundation emphasized to other city partners the grantee's interest in engaging in work on the ground – not just when funding is needed. This allowed the grantee to play a community leadership role in the city.

Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).

Regular meetings/interface between the staff of the foundation and the city was critical, especially with the City's Director of Central Grants and the Sustainability Director. It was also important to have a clear joint understanding of the metrics by which to evaluate collaborative projects.

Additional Information and Resources

The [Green Village Initiative](#) continues to thrive as it manages a network of Community Gardens, School Gardens, the Reservoir Community Farm, and a Youth Leadership program for the benefit of the Bridgeport community. Read more about its work, including efforts to address racial inequality in Urban Farming [here](#).