

# Urban & Community Forestry Toolkit

*A guide for communication and outreach to advance  
green space initiatives in your community*



DRAFT





# Introduction

## Our Purpose

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide resources, information, and guidance to help you best leverage the national Spreading Roots initiative with your local efforts. We want to empower readers with a shared language and standardized approaches to actively engage communities. This guidebook has been carefully designed to provide the foundation for communicating, educating, and conducting outreach to support community efforts in enhancing trees, green spaces, and nature.

To that end, you'll discover a wide variety of branding elements, documents, scripts, and more that will help you in your goals. Collectively, our voices can start a chorus, and that chorus can ignite a movement.

## Our Foundation

This toolkit's components and language are based on input gathered from collaborative workshops composed of 50 participants who have a history of involvement with under-resourced communities. Attendees—whose homes span the U.S. and its surrounding territories—were either from or collaborated with organizations that focus on equity-related work for seven key demographic groups: Black/African American, Indigenous, Youth, Latine/Latino, Low Income, Vulnerable Populations, and Rural. Participants brought their unique insights and diverse perspectives on communities that are disproportionately impacted by less access to quality trees and green spaces, and are therefore prevented from receiving the significant benefits that nature can bring.

## Our Discoveries

During these workshops, we explored what would be most effective in a communications, outreach, and resource toolkit to educate others about the benefits and types of trees, green spaces, and nature, as well as to build support for green initiatives in their communities. Workshop participants emphasized the importance of community-led projects that considered and honored each community's history, culture, and lived experiences. This toolkit is centered on understanding their core needs and even hesitations. This is why it is so important. The resources and tools here can help galvanize grassroots efforts to create healthy and resilient communities through urban and community forestry.



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[Click here](#) to view and download the toolkit and its elements. Please note multiple elements of this toolkit will continue to be built out based on feedback and further exploration over the coming months





# Branding & Identity

## *Program Name Examples*

A common program name ensures consistency across materials associated with your initiative, raises visibility, and fosters a clear understanding of your initiative's goals and purpose.

Here are options related to trees, green spaces, and nature that speak to this initiative's purpose and goals.

Spreading Roots

Leaf It

CitiBloom

Grow On

Neighborwood Nurtures



# Branding & Identity

## Logo Lockup Examples

A logo lockup combines and presents different elements of a logo in a specific arrangement for various applications. It typically includes the primary logo along with other essential elements like taglines, icons, or secondary graphics. The main purpose is to make a unified and powerful visual statement while promoting a cohesive identity and enhancing brand recall.

Several workshop participants provided their logos for these renderings, demonstrating how they can successfully pair with the Spreading Roots logo. When creating logo lockups, consider developing vertical and horizontal options to accommodate different design needs.





# Branding & Identity

## Taglines

A well-crafted tagline can serve as a powerful communication tool, fostering community engagement, conveying purpose, and creating a memorable identity that resonates with stakeholders and the broader community.

Here are options for an urban and community forestry initiative that speak to the multiple benefits of preserving, protecting, and growing trees, green spaces, and nature.

### Mental Health

Cultivating balance.  
Sowing seeds of serenity.

### Physical Health

Growing green, growing strong.  
Actively improving our community.

### Community Well-Being

Branching out together.  
Growing natural connections.

### Economic & Ecological Resilience

Sustained by nature.  
Cultivating a more resilient future.

### Youth & Education

Nurturing the future today.  
Empowering youth, enriching communities.

### Universal

Every tree tells our story.  
Planting the seeds of change together.  
Our forests, our future.  
Digging in for brighter tomorrows.

### Rural

Where trees thrive, towns flourish.

### Urban

City canopy, community roots.





# Branding & Identity

## Mission Statements

A mission statement serves as a foundational element for your initiative, providing direction, inspiration, and a shared sense of purpose that is essential for sustained success and positive impact in the community.

When crafting, it may be helpful to segment according to benefits, determine which one resonates most with your community, and develop ideas from there.

**Physical Health:** the overall well-being of an individual's body and its proper functioning.

**Mental Health:** a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

**Community Well-Being:** the overall health, happiness, and prosperity of a community or a group of people living in a particular geographic area.

**Economic & Ecological Resilience:** a system's ability to withstand and recover from economic shocks, disruptions, or stressors and an ecosystem's capacity to absorb disturbances, adapt to change, reorganize, and restore itself

**Youth & Education:** shaping the future, fostering personal growth, and contributing to the well-being of families, communities, and society

For guidance, here are several options that again speak to the primary benefits of promoting and protecting trees, green spaces, and nature.



### Mental Health

To plant the seeds of healing and hope, so our communities can grow into more vibrant, inclusive, and mentally resilient places.

### Physical Health

To champion the value of urban trees and green spaces as invaluable parts to active and thriving urban communities.

### Community Well-Being

To create a sense of belonging, joy, and hope by growing green spaces that are cherished by a more connected and engaged community.

### Economic & Ecological Resilience

To grow communities that thrive in balance with nature and prosper through sustainable practices, so that we can build a better future for ourselves and our planet.

### Youth & Education

To inspire, educate, and empower young people through the wonders of urban forestry so that they will be more connected to our community today and become the environmental stewards of tomorrow.

### National

To foster sustainable and vibrant urban ecosystems and create resilient and inclusive green spaces where the benefits of trees and nature are accessible to all.

### National

To foster the growth and preservation of our natural spaces while actively engaging and empowering every member of our community.



# Branding & Identity

## Photography & Illustration

Graphic design plays a crucial role in advancing your initiative by visually communicating key messages, enhancing brand recognition, and attracting diverse audiences. Here we provide inclusive illustrative and photographic representations of people engaging with nature in ways that resonate with a wide range of needs and values.

Illustration and photography are available for licensing from various online vendors. Below are a few websites that offer free and/or paid imagery.

### Paid

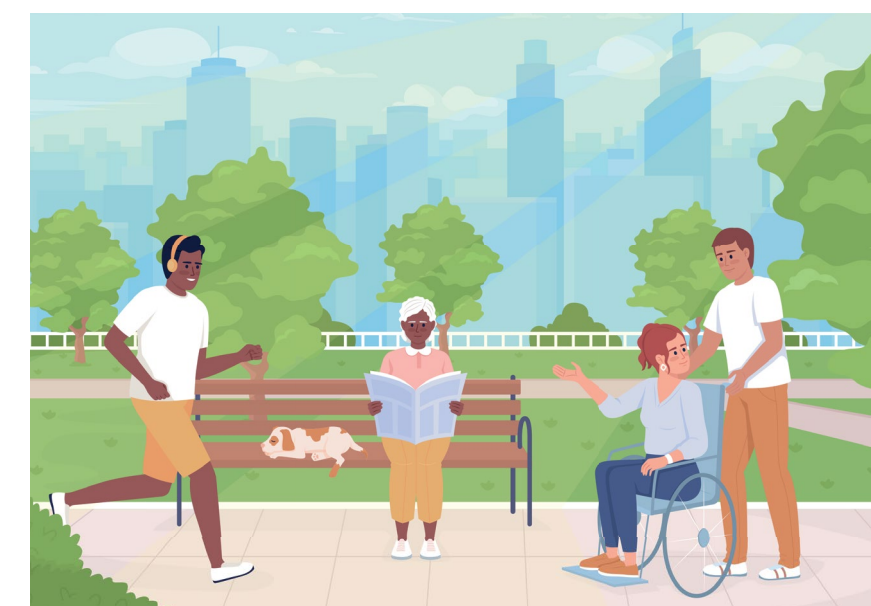
- iStock
- Getty Images
- Adobe Stock
- Dreamstime
- Shutterstock
- Alamy

### Free

- Pexels
- Unsplash
- Pixabay
- Nappy
- Freepik
- Noun Project

Some free stock illustrations and photographs require attributing the source. Each vendor's terms and conditions should be understood before usage.

As a best practice, do not combine illustrations and photography in one marketing piece. Choose one or the other. While photography speaks best to audiences on a personal, more relatable level, illustration is great for conveying concepts and ideas from a more general perspective.





# Photography & Illustration





# Photography & Illustration



Mental Health



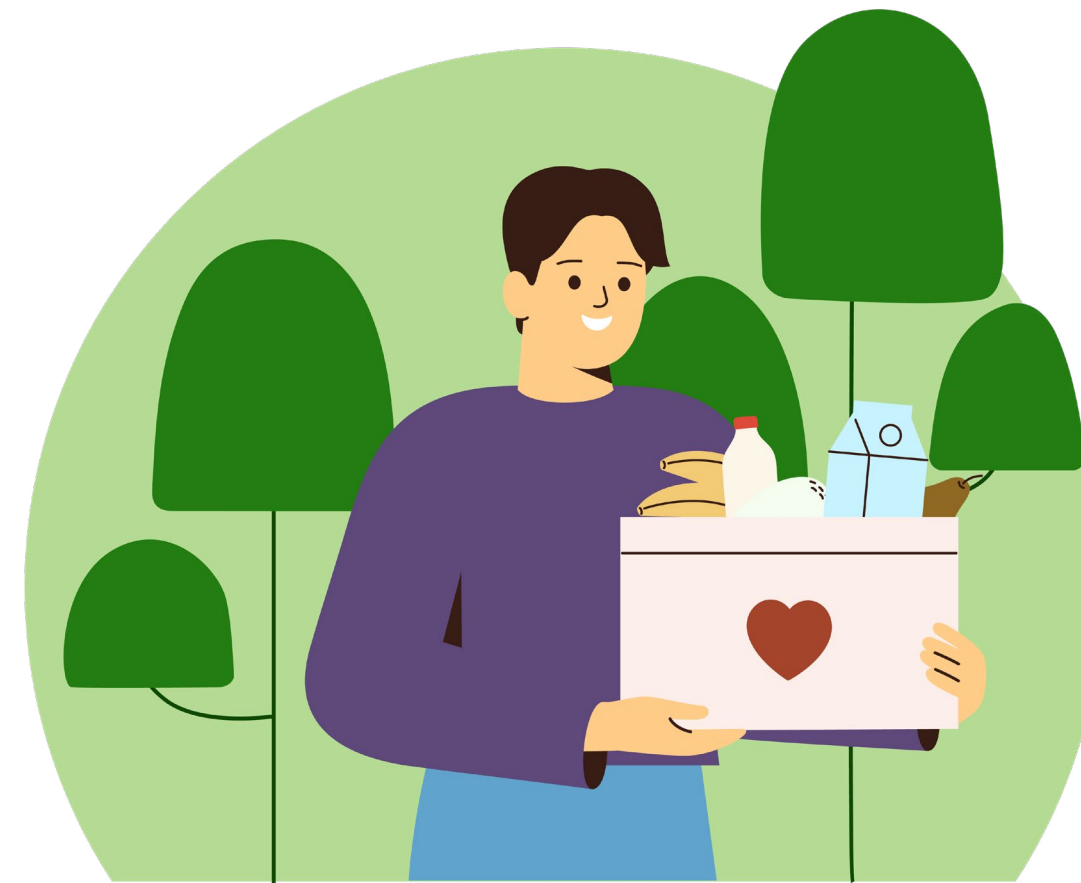
Physical Health



Youth and Education



Economic and Ecological Resilience



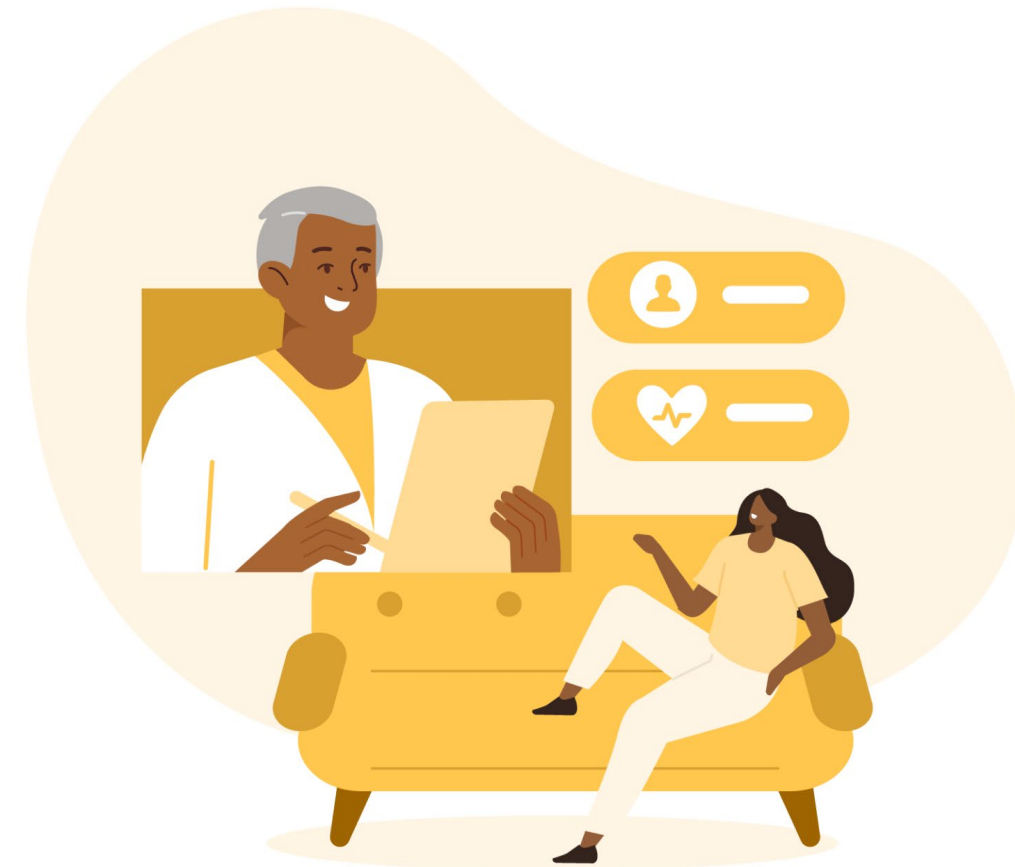
Community Well-Being



Intergenerational Sharing



# Photography & Illustration



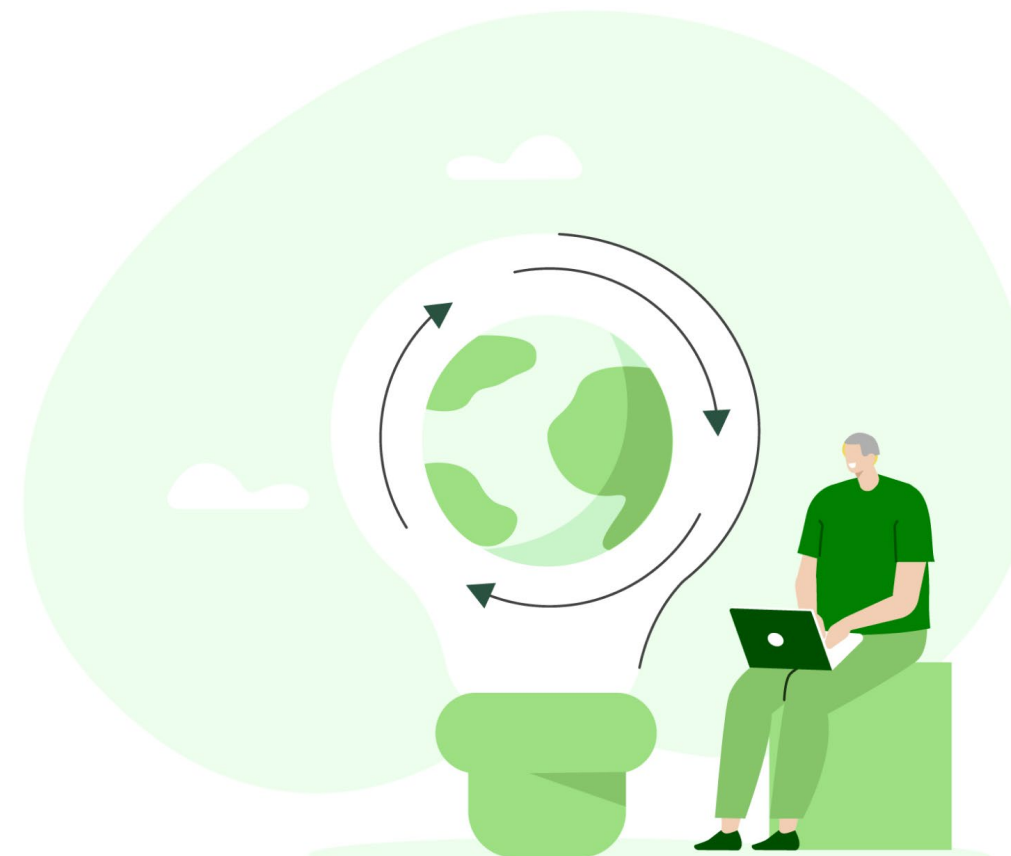
**Mental Health**



**Physical Health**



**Youth and Education**



**Economic and Ecological Resilience**



**Community Well-Being**



# Public Outreach

## Flyers & Printed Media

Flyers and posters are vital components that support urban and community forestry initiatives. They effectively communicate key messages, promote events, and engage the community. The templates shown here each use a different graphic element to determine which resonates most with the largest population.



## Name of Event

01/01/2024 at 5 p.m.  
Location, US



**Discover how our neighborhoods can:**

- 

Economically and environmentally benefit from an organized urban forestry and native plant movement
- 

Cultivate a more vibrant community for this generation and inspire the next



Easily integrate conservation efforts into our daily lives

- 

Start a few small projects that sow big rewards
- 

Encourage local officials to say "yes" to creating more equitable and accessible green spaces

Together, let's figure out the right spaces to grow the right trees, gardens, and native plants and then make it happen. A cleaner, greener tomorrow begins today. We look forward to seeing you at Name of Event!

## Name of Event

01/01/2024  
5 p.m.  
Location, US



**Discover how our neighborhoods can:**

- Economically and environmentally benefit from an organized urban forestry and native plant movement
- Encourage local officials to say "yes" to creating more equitable and accessible green spaces
- Cultivate a more vibrant community for this generation and inspire the next
- Easily integrate conservation efforts into our daily lives
- Start a few small projects that sow big rewards

Together, let's figure out the right spaces to grow the right trees, gardens, and native plants and then make it happen. A more joyful, united tomorrow begins today. We look forward to seeing you at Name of Event!

## Name of Event

01/01/2024 | 5 p.m. | Location, US

**Discover how our neighborhoods can:**

Economically and environmentally benefit from an organized urban forestry and native plant movement

Encourage local officials to say "yes" to creating more equitable and accessible green spaces

Cultivate a more vibrant community for this generation and inspire the next

Start a few small projects that sow big rewards

Easily integrate conservation efforts into our daily lives



Together, let's figure out the right spaces to grow the right trees, gardens, and native plants and then make it happen. A cleaner, greener tomorrow begins today. We look forward to seeing you at Name of Event!



# Public Outreach

## Social Media


Social media posts can be instrumental in advancing an urban and community forestry initiative by leveraging the reach and engagement potential of online platforms. They foster two-way communication by encouraging questions and discussions and can also get your community more involved. Perhaps best of all, social media analytics can help track post reach, engagement, and audience demographics, providing you with valuable insights for refining your initiative's strategy.

The options shown here promote an organization, participation in an event, and the results of an event. Each uses a different graphic element to see what best connects with audiences.

For best practices, HubSpot provides a handy [Social Media Marketing Guide](#).

**Program Name**

Ready to reconnect with nature? Together, we can build a community that cares for the world around us in the ways we need it most. Let's get started.



Chelsea Sterling and 26 others 3 Shares

Like Comment Share

**Program Name**

<Program Name> is doing a great job of preserving our natural spaces, so let's keep our green movement growing! We're hosting a <Name of Event> on <Date>. Here's how you can dig in and help.




Chelsea Sterling and 26 others 3 Shares

Like Comment Share

**Program Name**

Look at what wonderful things can happen when a community unites! On <Date>, <Program Name> got together to <Purpose>. We had a great time connecting with nature and each other. This is how we continue to grow a great community. Want to join us? Reach out to <Link> today!



Chelsea Sterling and 26 others 3 Shares

Like Comment Share



# Public Outreach

## Info Sheets

Quantifiable data provides a compelling narrative that can effectively persuade group members, policymakers, and the community at large about the tangible benefits of urban and community forestry.

Here we provide solid facts and figures – backed by scientific evidence and supported by references – about how green spaces can improve community wellbeing and benefit the environment. Further, we offer information about the numerous advantages of food forests. With these info sheets, nature advocates can make a persuasive case for the critical role of green spaces in creating a more sustainable, healthy, and thriving world.



## Community Well-Being

Spring 2024

### Overview

Urban green space provides vital places for facilitating impromptu and organized social gatherings—spaces for playing, sharing, bumping into, and networking with others. This in turn is associated with reduced loneliness, improved social cohesion, a greater sense of trust in a neighborhood, a greater sense of place belonging to society, and prosocial behavior (caring for others). Strong social connections have been linked to improved health and well-being, including lower rates of depression and anxiety and higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction.

### Interesting Information

#### Connection and Civic Engagement

- A number of studies have shown that in the presence of nature we are more likely to be generous, cooperative, and to exhibit positive attitudes and behavior. Communities where residents are immersed in trees and nature may be kinder and more compassionate (Piff et al., 2015).
- Participants in tree planting campaigns often engage in broader civic activities, reinforcing democratic values and community bonds (Fisher et al., 2015).
- Tree planting in Portland, Oregon was found to be associated with increased voter turnout in primary and general elections (Donovan, 2022).
- Cleaning up vacant lots, restoring parks, and creating community gardens are often markers of community resilience.

#### Family

- Green spaces can promote multi-generational social interaction. They can provide a place for older adults to engage in physical activity and socialize with others, which can help to combat feelings of loneliness and depression (Urban Forestry Toolkit, n.d.).
- Green space is associated with greater longevity in older people, and this is likely connected to the increased social interaction that is often associated with outdoor time for elderly individuals. They also provide places for parents and children to engage in outdoor activities and spend time together (Urban Forestry Toolkit, n.d.).



### Community Well-Being

#### Place-making and Time

- Trees, green spaces, and nature enhance the quality of living space and the distinctness of the places we live in. Many cities use this in their official mottos – Raleigh, North Carolina is the City of Oaks and Atlanta is the city in a Forest of Trees (Beatley, 2023).
- Older trees connect generations and history. You can be next to larger older trees and know that generations of others have also been there (Beatley, 2023).
- Turning vacant spaces (lots etc.) into vibrant places that reflect a community's aesthetic and cultural values and strengths advance community centered revitalization. These efforts create a sense of community, pride, and ownership among residents. ("How Creative Placemaking Transforms Vacant Properties into Vibrant Community Spaces," 2023).

#### Safety and Peace

- Neighborhoods with homes fronted with street trees experience lower crime rates, according to a study conducted in Portland, Oregon. The same statistic holds true for homes with large yard trees. These results hold for total-crime rates and specific property crimes such as vandalism and burglary (Donovan, 2010).
- A recent study in Philadelphia (Dengler, 2018) showed that transforming vacant lots in neighborhoods below the poverty line into parklike spaces or sprucing up them up with trash removal and mowing reduced overall crime by more than 13% and gun violence by 30%. Burglary and nuisance reports also plummeted in these neighborhoods by nearly 22% and 30%. Residents also used the spaces to relax and socialize 76% more than inhabitants near unmodified lots.

#### Safety and Peace

- Community gardens allow for the creation of social ties and build a greater feeling of community. These connections help reduce crime, empower residents, and allow residents to feel safe in their neighborhoods (Munro, 2013).
- A community gardening program can reduce food insecurity, improve dietary intake, and strengthen family relationships. (Carney et al., 2011).



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## Environmental Benefits

Spring 2024

### Overview

Trees, green spaces, and nature provide crucial environmental benefits to urban areas such as reducing air pollution, addressing heat island effect, providing critical habitat, and mitigating numerous climate change impacts.

### Interesting Information

#### Air Pollution

- Trees and vegetation can help reduce air pollution by removing pollutants and reducing air temperature, both of which contribute to smog. They also reduce energy needs for cooling impacting the associated pollutant emissions from power plants.
- Trees absorb pollutants like nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulfur dioxide, and ozone, effectively purifying the air. Leaves also capture dust and smoke particulates (Green Canopy, Better World: Exploring the Benefits of Trees, n.d.).
- Air quality benefits significantly impact respiratory illnesses. Nowak (2014) found that trees removed 17.4 million tons of air pollution across the United States, which prevented 850 human deaths and 670,000 cases of acute respiratory symptoms. The human health effects associated with this pollution removal were valued at 6.8 billion dollars (about \$21 per person in the US).

**17.4M**  
Tons of  
air pollution  
removed

**850**  
Prevented  
human deaths

#### Reduce Green House Gases

- Up to 60 billion new trees could be planted by 2040 if suitable land is used without reducing food production. These trees could remove up to 540 million tons of carbon dioxide annually from the atmosphere, equivalent to nearly 10% of the country's net greenhouse gas emissions (Rudee, 2020).
- Approximately 1.83 billion trees are planted globally each year. That's an impressive effort to restore and expand green spaces. This translates to around 58 trees planted every second (McInerney, 2024).
- Trees don't just mitigate carbon, removing it from the atmosphere, they also sequester it – absorbing carbon dioxide during photosynthesis and then locking it up for centuries. Research has shown that urban trees in the United States sequester some 22.8 million tons of carbon each year (The Morton Arboretum, 2024).



## Environmental Benefits

### Cooling

- Cities are generally warmer than surrounding agricultural and forested areas due to the dominance of impervious surfaces and the fact that urban materials absorb and hold heat. This is called the urban heat island effect. Urban forests and green roofs can aid in reducing urban heat island effects (Wolf et al., 2015).
- Parks can be up to 2°F cooler than the surrounding urban area in the day. Large numbers of trees and expansive green spaces across a city can reduce local air temperatures by up to 9°F (Wolf et al., 2015).
- Low-income neighborhoods have on average 26% less tree cover and are 7°F hotter. Neighborhoods with the highest concentration of people of color—regardless of income—have on average 38% less tree cover and are 10°F hotter (Daley, 2023).
- Heat is the leading cause of death from extreme weather in the United States, with research led by Duke University projecting that climate change could increase this to nearly 100,000 heat-related deaths per year by 2100 (Daley, 2023).
- A tree can cool the area underneath it by as much as 45°F and studies have found trees can reduce cooling load in a home by more than 50% when placed in the right locations (Daley, 2023).

Up to  
**45°F**  
Cooler under  
tree coverage

Up to  
**50%**  
Reduced  
A/C load

### Water Conservation, Quality and Flooding

- Climate change is impacting the frequency and severity of flooding in our communities. Trees, green spaces, and nature play a vital role in reducing flooding by slowing down the flow of rainwater, absorbing rainwater and reducing erosion before hitting the ground (Why We Need Trees: Trees Help Fight Climate Change, Save Wildlife, and Improve Our Health., n.d.).
- Rain hits the ground at higher speeds where there is a lack of tree cover. A canopy of leaves, branches and trunks slows down the rain before it hit the ground and can spread the effect of a rainstorm and in turn allow some of the water to evaporate back into the atmosphere (Why We Need Trees: Trees Help Fight Climate Change, Save Wildlife, and Improve Our Health., n.d.).
- Root systems help water penetrate deeper into the soil at a faster rate under and around trees which mean less surface run-off, also preventing erosion (Why We Need Trees: Trees Help Fight Climate Change, Save Wildlife, and Improve Our Health., n.d.).
- Impermeable surfaces in urban areas increase run off. Trees reduce surface water run off by 80% compared to asphalt. Trees and soils improve water quality in that they can remove harmful substances washed off roads, parking lots, and roofs during rain or snow events (Wolf et al., 2015).
- The US Forest Service estimates that 100 mature trees intercept about 250,000 gallons of rainfall per year in their leafy crowns (The Morton Arboretum, 2024).



## Environmental Benefits

### Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridors

- Trees are foundational to many ecosystems, supporting biodiversity. They provide habitat and food for countless species from canopy to forest floor (Green Canopy, Better World: Exploring the Benefits of Trees, n.d.).
- Green spaces create wildlife corridors in cities essential for the survival of urban wildlife. They enable birds and insects to navigate through cities promoting ecological diversity in urban settings. They support biodiversity. Moths, birds, bats, dormice, butterflies, fungi depend on woods, trees and hedges to feed, breed and thrive (Green Canopy, Better World: Exploring the Benefits of Trees, n.d.).
- Even small patches of genuinely biodiverse nature can re-invite and sustain multitudes of plant and animal species, as urban ecologists have shown (Why We Need Trees: Trees Help Fight Climate Change, Save Wildlife, and Improve Our Health., n.d.).



### Resources

(EPA) National Stormwater Calculator (<http://www2.epa.gov/water-research/national-stormwater-calculator>) can be used to estimate annual stormwater runoff, based on site-specific information. Other tools are available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest

Service tool to calculate ecosystem services provided by an urban forest canopy (if-Tree Eco; <http://www.itreetools.org/>) or by street trees (i-Tree Streets; <http://www.itreetools.org/streets/index.php>).

Tree Planting Statistics - <https://www.gotreequotes.com/tree-planting-statistics/>

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## Food Forests

Spring 2024

### Overview

Food forests are areas planted with many different edible plants of different heights and sizes. They are often arranged in patterns like natural forests with layers ranging from groundcover to tall trees. In addition to many annual plants typically grown in fruit and vegetable gardens that must be planted each year, food forests include perennial plants which do not have to be replanted year after year but will continue to grow for many years.

### Interesting Information

#### Multiple Benefits and Leaders

- According to one database, there are currently over 85 food forests throughout the United States. Food forests often have less barriers to entry than community gardens, and are considered a way to address climate change, environmental degradation and social and racial inequity (Spiller & Kashwan, 2023).
- Food forests can provide healthy food to eat as well as places to gather and stay healthy in the shade (Spiller & Kashwan, 2023).
- Food forests can be run by community members or city governments, such as one in Tucson, Arizona (Graham, 2024). Grants from the U.S. Forest Service can help to fund food forests, such as a 7.1 acre site in Atlanta, Georgia that provided fresh food in an area that previously had very limited access (About the Urban Food Forest at Browns Mill, n.d.).

#### Particular Plants

- Location will affect which types of trees will grow best in your food forest. Some examples of larger trees that you might be able to grow are oaks, chestnuts, pecan, and mulberry. Smaller trees include apple, pear, peach, plum, hazelnut, and pawpaw (Bukowski & Munsell, 2018).
- Other trees that have edible components are beech, birch, linden, maple, poplar, sassafras, elm, and willow (Trail, n.d.).
- There are many types of other plants that will grow well with trees in a food forest. For example, a mulberry could pair well with some smaller flowering plants such as yarrow, purple coneflower, and chamomile (What to Plant – Project Food Forest, n.d.).



## Food Forests

### Housing and Food Forests

New construction and development approaches to affordable housing projects can include fruit and vegetable plantings within the immediate vicinity of where people are living (Via Verde | Jonathan Rose, n.d.).

### Starting and Upkeep

- Each food forest will be unique, but there are some general factors to consider. When choosing a site, consider whether it will be sunny or shady, and whether it will have water access. It can also be good to test the soil. Plants have different preferences for sun, water, and soil conditions. Local nurseries or places that sell plants can often provide additional information about plant selection. Other preparation will likely include clearing some ground, buying new plants, and planting. (Plant Your Own Food Forest – Wisconsin Food Forests, n.d.).
- Upkeep of the food forest will vary by site, but some common tasks may include weeding, mulching, pruning, clearing debris, plant propagation, and harvesting (Resource Library – Boston Food Forest Coalition, n.d.).

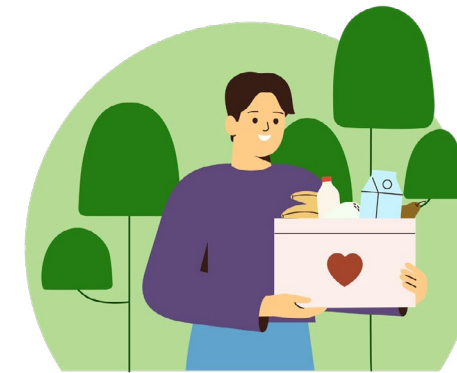
### Case Studies

#### Bliss Meadows: Baltimore, MD

This site is a grassroots led transformation of land in a predominantly African American neighborhood of Baltimore into community gardens, food, and forest spaces (Basecamp, n.d.).

#### Boston Food Forest: Boston, MA

This Food Forest is a locally run neighborhood coalition with an equity focus. In a video posted on their websites, residents reflect on the importance of having a beautiful place to gather together and take care of for many years (Boston Food Forest Coalition, 2021)



#### Philadelphia Orchard Project: Philadelphia, PA

A citywide effort to increase small places for planting fruit trees in order to address food insecurity (Philadelphia Orchard Project, n.d.).



## Food Forests

### Resources

#### Websites

- Boston Food Forest Coalition: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/how-to-start-a-food-forest/download>
- Resource Library: <https://www.bostonfoodforest.org/resource-library>
- AgLanta Resources: <https://www.aglanta.org/aglanta-resources-index>
  1. Urban Farming Kit: <https://www.aglanta.org/aglanta-urban-farming-kit>
  2. Sample Budget: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5810d4f2d482e9e1f121dfa/t/59ef41f2f43b55e82204f124/1508852213801/AgLanta\\_GrowsALot\\_UrbanGarden\\_SampleBudget.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5810d4f2d482e9e1f121dfa/t/59ef41f2f43b55e82204f124/1508852213801/AgLanta_GrowsALot_UrbanGarden_SampleBudget.pdf)
  3. Sample Timeline for Community Engagement: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5810d4f2d482e9e1f121dfa/t/5a6a25708165f52cf60bf018/1516905840905/Community+Engagement+Activites+to+Date+Jan+2018.pdf>
- Grow Family YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@GrowFamilyNetwork/videos>

#### How-To

- The Community Food Forest Handbook: <https://www.serenbe.com/press-awards/the-community-food-forest-handbook-how-to-plan-organize-and-nurture-edible-gathering-places>
- USFS People's Garden: <https://www.usda.gov/peoples-garden/gardening-advice/trees-food-forests>
- Urban Farm Business Plan: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-10/documents/1\\_urban\\_farm\\_business\\_plan\\_handbook\\_091511\\_508.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-10/documents/1_urban_farm_business_plan_handbook_091511_508.pdf)

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- What to plant – Project Food Forest. (n.d.). Retrieved March 29, 2024, from <https://projectfoodforest.org/pledge/>





# Public Outreach

## Infographics

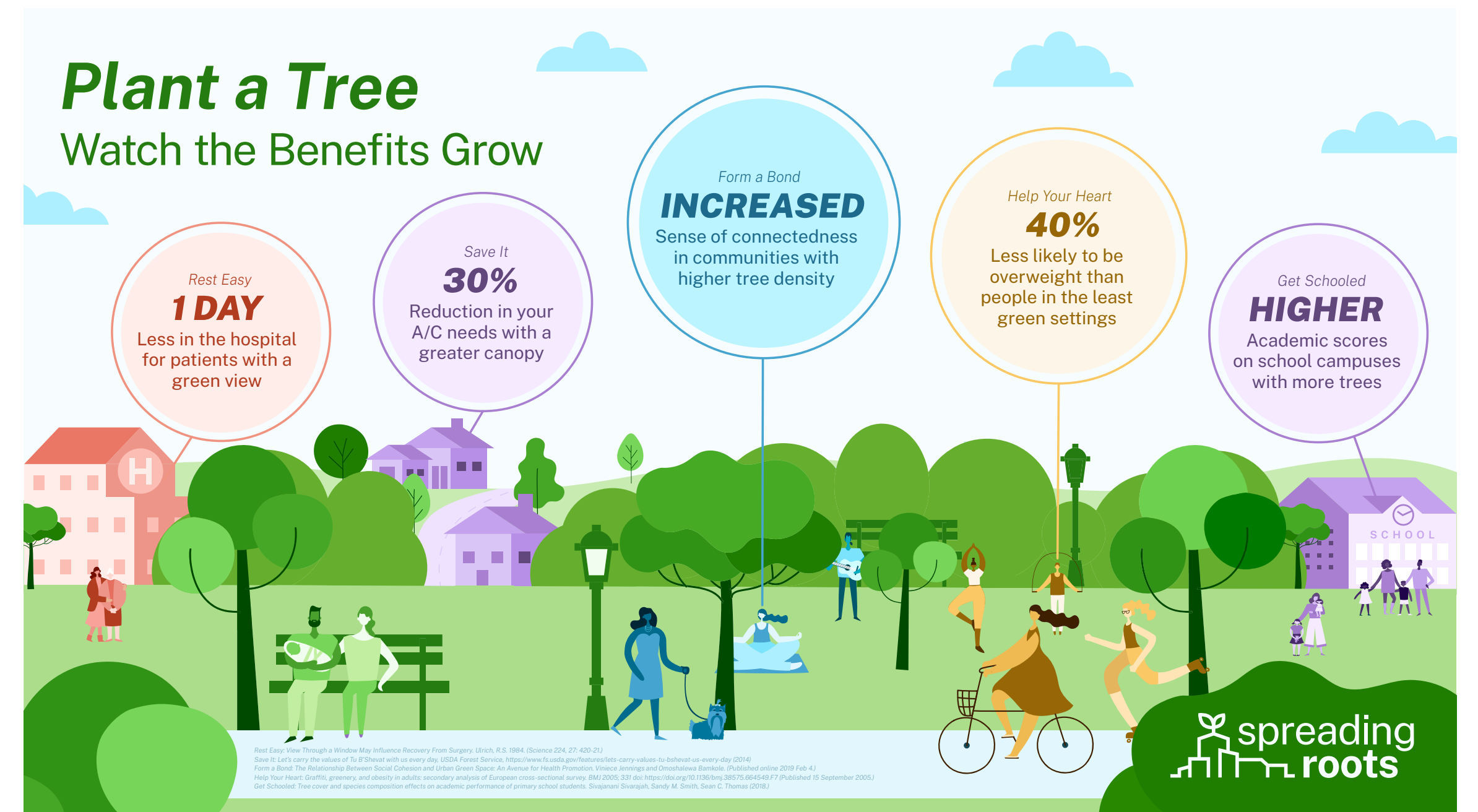
Infographics are visual representations of data and information that make complex concepts more accessible and engaging to a broad audience.

For this initiative, we developed nine pre-populated graphics, along with versions you can use to populate stats and graphics relevant to your initiatives. They communicate the benefits of trees and community gardens, which trees are best suited to your area, how green spaces can inspire community, and where to find helpful tools to assist you in your tree planting efforts.





# Infographics





# Infographics

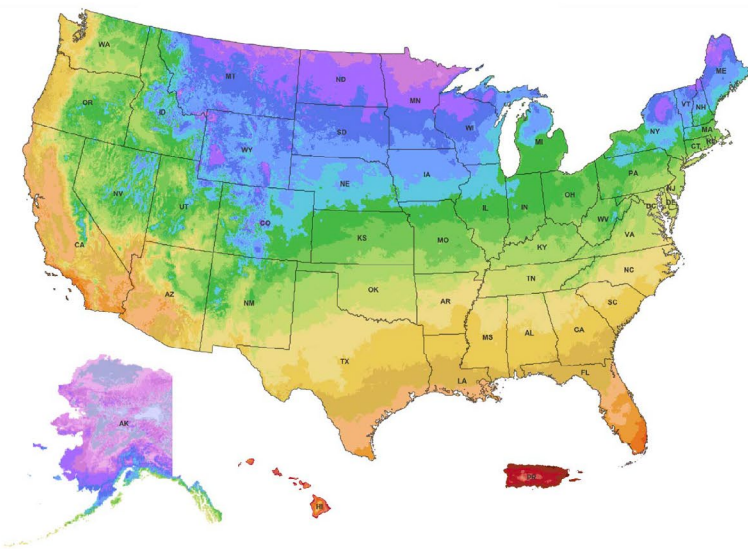
## Throwing Shade

These trees are great for urban conditions that typically involve more compact, drier soil. But, to find the tree that's just right for your specific conditions, be sure to check a trusted resource like the *Arbor Day Foundation Tree Wizard*.

Use the U.S. gardeners and growers standard based on the average yearly winter temperature to determine which plants are most likely to grow and thrive in your area.



Answer a few quick questions. Find the right tree for you.



Hardiness Zone Map Source: [planthardiness.ars.usda.gov](http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov)



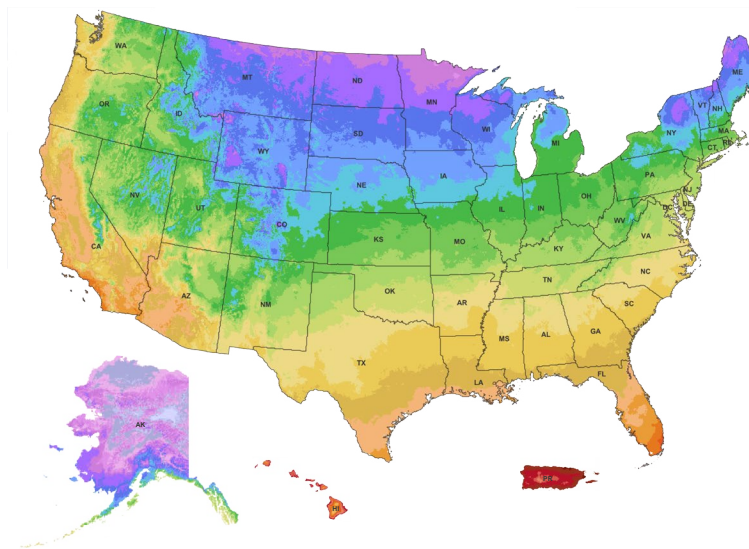
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Hardiness Zone Map Source: [planthardiness.ars.usda.gov](http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov)



**Silver Linden**  
Zones 4a-7b  
Nonnative, adaptable, drought tolerant, moderate growth rate



**London Planetree**  
Zones 6a-9b  
Leafy, robust, hardy, pollution tolerant, fast growing



**Crape Myrtle**  
Zones 6a-10b  
Summer blooms, sun lovers, tough, durable, simple to grow



**Black Olive**  
Zones 10b-11b  
Saline tolerant, wind resistant, flowering, dense canopy



**Eastern Red Cedar**  
Zones 2a-9b  
Heat-tolerant evergreen, low maintenance, bears food for wildlife





## Green Spaces: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange

When you mindfully increase your urban tree canopy, invest in infrastructure, and build green spaces in ways that consider the needs of your community, life can be even more beautiful.



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When you mindfully increase your urban tree canopy, invest in infrastructure, and build green spaces in ways that consider the needs of your community, life can be even more beautiful.





# Infographics

## Before You Grow...

Remember: Planting trees is a great thing, but before you dig, you should always determine what benefits you want and where trees are most needed. For guidance, check out these helpful tools. With proper guidance, you can plant the right tree in the right place that can do the most good for your community.



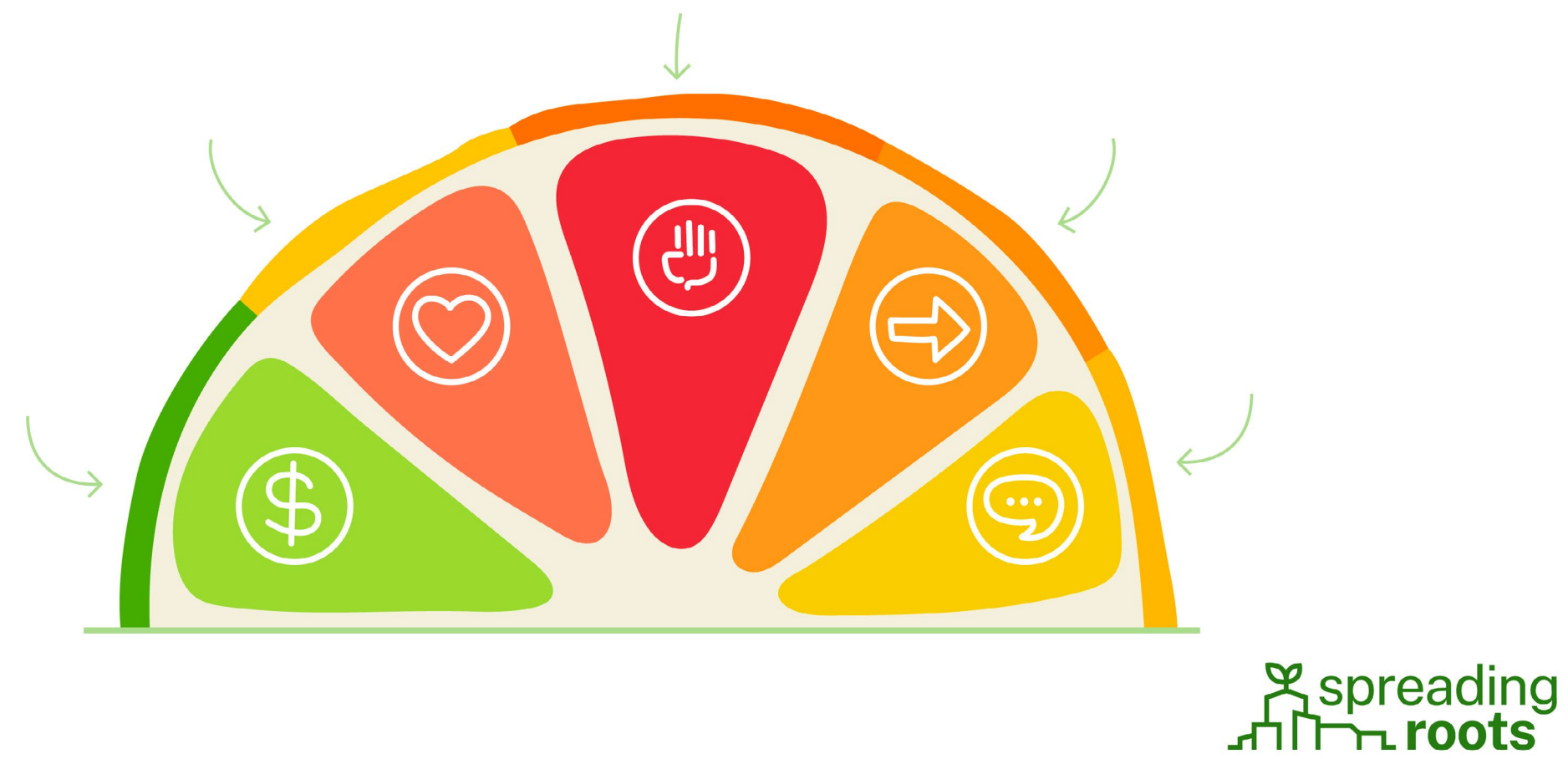
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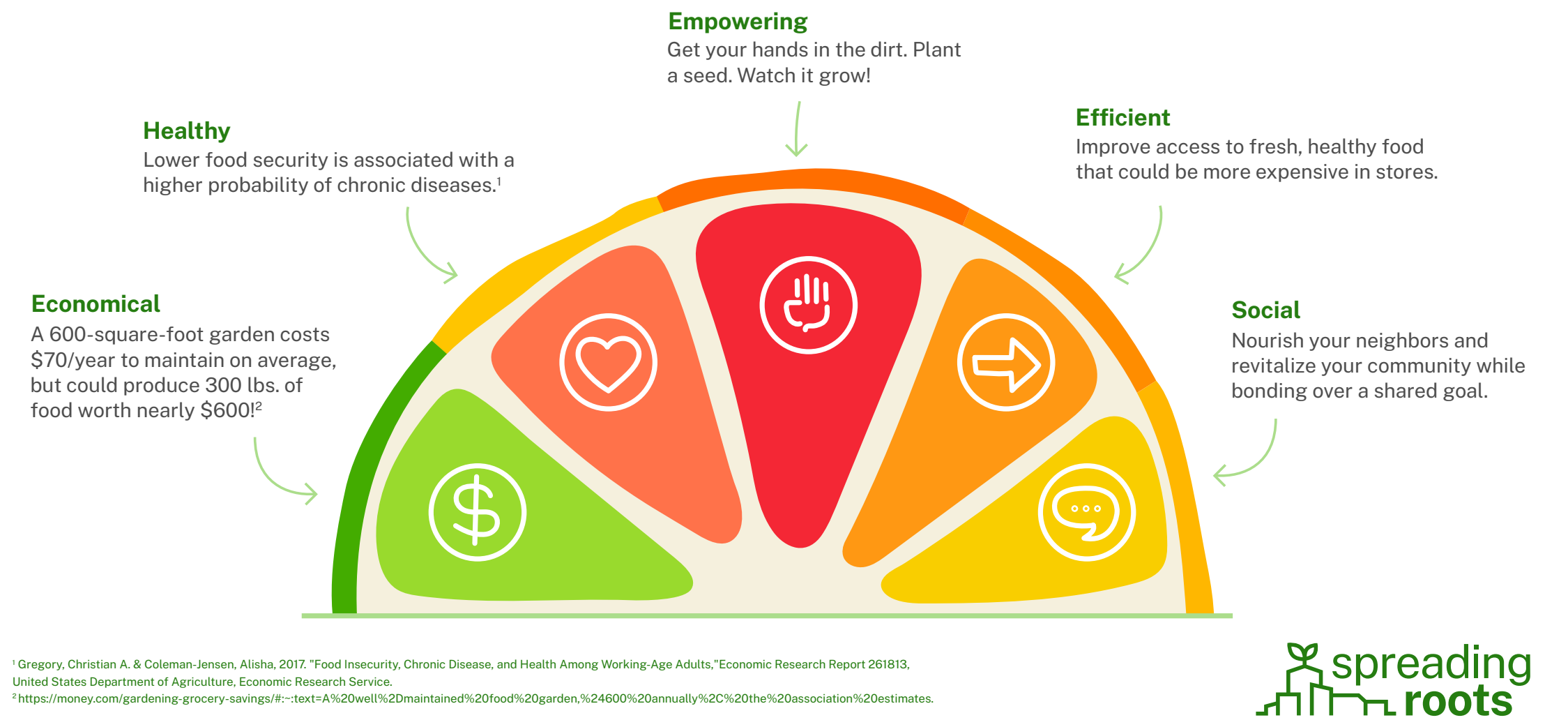




## Why Community Gardens Are A-Peeling



## Why Community Gardens Are A-Peeling





# Infographics

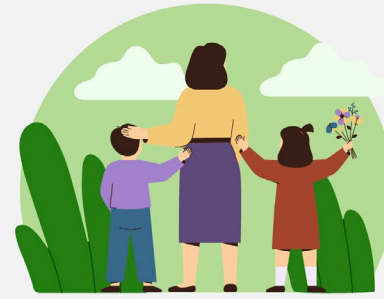
## Community Well-Being

Strong social connections have been linked to improved health and well-being.



### Family

Green spaces are associated with greater longevity in older people. They also provide places for parents and children to engage in outdoor activities and spend time together.



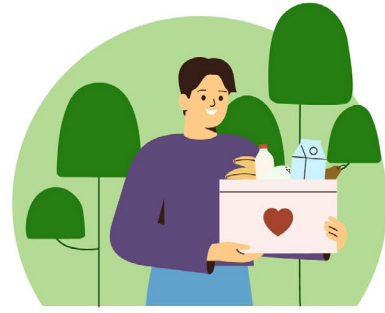
### Place-making and Time

Turning vacant spaces (lots etc.) into vibrant places that reflect a community's aesthetic and cultural values and strengths advance community centered revitalization.



### Safety and Peace

Neighborhoods with homes fronted with street trees experience lower crime rates.



### Connection and Civic Engagement

Communities where residents are immersed in trees and nature may be kinder and more compassionate.



## Environmental Benefits

Trees, green spaces, and nature provide crucial environmental benefits to urban areas.

**17.4M**

Tons of Air Pollution Removed in the United States

**80%**

Runoff Reduction Compared to Asphalt

Approximately  
**1.83B**

Trees Planted Globally Each Year

About  
**45°F**

Cooler Under Tree Coverage

“Green spaces create wildlife corridors in cities essential for the survival of urban wildlife.”

Green Canopy, Better World: Exploring the benefits of trees. (n.d.). Gardemia - Creating Gardens. <https://www.gardemia.net/guide/green-canopy-better-world-benefits-of-trees>



## Food Forests

Supporting ecosystems and connecting communities with nature.

Food forests are areas planted with many different edible plants of different heights and sizes. They are often arranged in patterns like natural forests with layers ranging from groundcover to tall trees. In addition to many annual plants typically grown in fruit and vegetable gardens that must be planted each year, food forests include perennial plants which do not have to be replanted year after year but will continue to grow for many years.

There are currently

**85+**

Food Forests in the United States



### Benefits

Food forests can provide healthy food to eat as well as places to gather and stay healthy in the shade.

### Starting and Upkeep

When choosing a site, consider whether it will be sunny or shady, and whether it will have water access.

### Particular Plants

Location will affect which types of trees will grow best in your food forest.





# Infographics

## Community Well-Being

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## Food Forests

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# Public Outreach

## Media Scripts

Radio scripts allow you to tell your story. You can raise public awareness about the importance of trees, green spaces, and nature while educating your community about your program and promoting your events. Here are three templates, each using a different benefit of green spaces, for you to determine which connects with the broadest audience.

### Universal

Imagine a community where community gardens grow, trees offer shade and protect water quality, and green spaces provide a peaceful place for connection and introspection. Oh, and these benefits are for everyone to enjoy. That's what the Spreading Roots initiative is all about. We're on a mission to improve communities and lives. It starts by preserving and protecting the spaces where we live. And we want you to join us. Come to <EVENT> on <DATE> to learn more about our work and how together we can help our community and residents thrive. Dig into our initiative on <WEBSITE>. We know that the roots of a community hold it together. So, let's build a stronger foundation together. We'll see you at <EVENT> on <DATE>.

### Economic & Ecological Resilience

Imagine a community where residents don't simply plant trees or grow green spaces, they mindfully invest in the vibrancy of their community. This is a place where every act of beautification – from cultivating a community garden to implementing green infrastructure – counts toward protecting the wellbeing of our people and our planet. That's what the Spreading Roots initiative is all about. We're on a mission to build a more resilient community that we can enjoy for years to come. And we want you to join us. Come to <EVENT> on <DATE> to learn more about our work and how together we can help our community and residents thrive. Dig into our initiative on <WEBSITE>. We know that the roots of a community hold it together. So, let's build a stronger foundation together. We'll see you at <EVENT> on <DATE>.

### Community Well-being

Imagine a community where every resident has access to nature...where people have a sense of pride in their green spaces and use them as invaluable places to connect, learn, and collaborate. Places where they can make new friends, meet up with old ones, or simply unwind. That's what the Spreading Roots initiative is all about. We're on a mission to unite people around a common cause in common spaces that enrich, engage, and inspire. And we want you to join us. Come to <EVENT> on <DATE> to learn more about our work. Dig into our initiative on <WEBSITE>. We know that the roots of a community hold it together. So, let's build a stronger foundation - and a deeper connection - together. We'll see you at <EVENT> on <DATE>.





# Public Outreach

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Radio scripts allow you to tell your story. You can raise public awareness about the importance of trees, green spaces, and nature while educating your community about your program and promoting your events. Here are three templates, each using a different benefit of green spaces, for you to determine which connects with the broadest audience.

### Health

Imagine a city where trees stand tall, providing shade and fresh air... where gardens grow, and everyone feels connected to the earth and land. That's what the Spreading Roots initiative is all about. We're on a mission to improve our community's health and happiness by planting and caring for more trees and preserving our green spaces. And we want you to join us. Come to <EVENT> on <DATE> to learn more about our work. Dig into our initiative on <WEBSITE>. We know that the roots of a community hold it together. So, let's build a stronger foundation together. We'll see you at <EVENT> on <DATE>.

### Equity

Imagine a city where every resident has access to green spaces... where gardens grow, and everyone feels connected to the earth and land. That's what the Spreading Roots initiative is all about. We're on a mission to build up our community by planting and caring for more trees and preserving our green spaces. And we want you to join us. Come to <EVENT> on <DATE> to learn more about our work. Dig into our initiative on <WEBSITE>. We know that the roots of a community hold it together. So, let's build a stronger foundation together. We'll see you at <EVENT> on <DATE>.

### Youth

Imagine a city where our youngest residents can experience the wonder of nature... where they can grow gardens, get their hands in the dirt, and learn about the earth and land. That's what the Spreading Roots initiative is all about. We're on a mission to build up our community by planting and caring for more trees and preserving our green spaces. And we want you to join us. Come to <EVENT> on <DATE> to learn more about our work. Dig into our initiative on <WEBSITE>. We know today's children are future leaders of our community. So, let's nurture them together. We'll see you at <EVENT> on <DATE>.





# Public Outreach

## Phone Scripts

Phone scripts are a way to directly communicate with community members, stakeholders, and potential supporters. With these, you can personally invite community members to tree-planting events, workshops, or informational sessions, creating a sense of connection and importance.

Remember to communicate your message clearly, persuasively, and in a friendly manner following these suggested steps:

1. Greet the person and introduce yourself
2. Establish interest by highlighting the importance of urban and community forestry (Hint: Use a brief, compelling fact or story)
3. Explain your initiative and event, if applicable
4. Discuss the benefits of involvement
5. Address questions or concerns
6. Close by thanking the participant for their time, provide contact information, and discuss any next steps (Ex. Informational material, event invitation)

Here we have three phone scripts that follow the same format. However, the difference lies in how your initiative is positioned: as a national movement, a crucial component of a national movement, or a community-driven campaign.



### Community Driven

#### Intro

Caller: Hello! This is <Name> from Spreading Roots. Am I speaking with <Recipient's Name>?

Recipient: Yes, this is <Name>. How can I help you?

#### Purpose

Caller: Great! I'm reaching out to tell you a little bit about Spreading Roots, a national initiative designed to support community-led urban forestry, so that people can have a voice in creating and preserving the right green spaces in our neighborhoods. Because we know that when we come together, we can create a better community for us all to enjoy.

#### Highlighting Mission

Caller: Our mission is to <INSERT MISSION STATEMENT>.

#### Engagement

Caller: Have you ever thought about the benefits of having more green spaces in <PLACE>, like <INSERT BENEFITS>?

#### Invitation

Caller: We're inviting community members to join us in our upcoming <EVENT> on <DATE> at <LOCATION>. It's a fantastic opportunity to get involved, meet other people who care about our town, and help us create a more vibrant community.

#### Call-to-Action

Caller: Would you be interested in joining us for the event or learning more about Spreading Roots and our community initiatives? Your support can make a real difference.

#### Closing

Caller: Thank you so much <NAME>. We appreciate your time and your interest. Feel free to visit our website or contact us at <NUMBER> for more details. I'm really looking forward to making positive changes in our community with you!



# Phone Scripts

## National Movement

### Intro

Caller: Hello! This is <Name> from Spreading Roots. Am I speaking with <Recipient's Name>?

Recipient: Yes, this is <Name>. How can I help you?

### Purpose

Caller: Great! I'm reaching out to tell you a little bit about a national initiative called Spreading Roots. It's designed to support urban forestry led by the people and for the people. Because we know that greater access to nature can dramatically improve people's lives. And yet, there is a drastic inequity in who has access to it. So, we're giving people a voice in creating and preserving the right green spaces in our neighborhoods. Because then we can create a better community that we all can enjoy.

### Highlighting Mission

Caller: Our mission is to <INSERT MISSION STATEMENT>.

### Engagement

Caller: Have you ever thought about the benefits of having more green spaces in <PLACE>, like <INSERT BENEFITS>?

### Invitation

Caller: We're inviting community members to join us in our upcoming <EVENT> on <DATE> at <LOCATION>. It's a fantastic opportunity to get involved, meet other people who care about our town, and help us create a more vibrant community.

### Call-to-Action

Caller: Would you be interested in joining us for the event or learning more about Spreading Roots and our community initiatives? Your support can make a real difference.

### Closing

Caller: Thank you so much <NAME>. We appreciate your time and your interest. Feel free to visit our website or contact us at <NUMBER> for more details. I'm really looking forward to making positive changes in our community with you!

## Umbrella

### Intro

Caller: Hello! This is <Name> from Spreading Roots. Am I speaking with <Recipient's Name>?

Recipient: Yes, this is <Name>. How can I help you?

### Purpose

Caller: Great! I'm reaching out to tell you a little bit about <NAME>, a local initiative that's part of the national Spreading Roots campaign that supports urban forestry led by the people and for the people. We know that greater access to nature can dramatically improve people's lives. And yet, here in <PLACE>, there is a drastic inequity in who has access to it. So, we're giving people a voice in creating and preserving the right green spaces. Because then we can create a better community that we all can enjoy.

### Highlighting Mission

Caller: Our mission is to <INSERT MISSION STATEMENT>.

### Engagement

Caller: Have you ever thought about the benefits of having more green spaces in <PLACE>, like <INSERT BENEFITS>?

### Invitation

Caller: We're inviting community members to join us in our upcoming <EVENT> on <DATE> at <LOCATION>. It's a fantastic opportunity to get involved, meet other people who care about our town, and help us create a more vibrant community.

### Call-to-Action

Caller: Would you be interested in joining us for the event or learning more about Spreading Roots and our community initiatives? Your support can make a real difference.

### Closing

Caller: Thank you so much <NAME>. We appreciate your time and your interest. Feel free to visit our website or contact us at <NUMBER> for more details. I'm really looking forward to making positive changes in our community with you!





# Public Outreach

## Elevator Speeches

Elevator speeches provide a concise, compelling, and memorable message that can be delivered quickly, like in the time it takes to ride an elevator. They are often the first point of contact between campaigns and individuals who may not be familiar with your initiative. A well-crafted speech creates a positive first impression and raises awareness about your goals.

Here again, we've explored positioning as a national movement, a crucial component of a national movement, or a community-driven campaign to determine the highest engagement.

Words in bold are unique to each elevator speech.



### National

Spreading Roots is a national initiative that gives people the support they need to build up their urban and community spaces and turn them into thriving green spaces. We believe in the power of community-driven change. By planting trees, nurturing green spaces, and uniting neighborhoods, we can create healthier, happier cities for us all to enjoy. Join us in this movement. Together we can make our cities more equitable and more resilient, one tree and one plant at a time.

### Community

**Spreading Roots is a national initiative that supports urban and community forestry led by the people and for the people.** We assist people when they want to build up their urban and community spaces and turn them into thriving green spaces. By planting trees, nurturing green spaces, and uniting neighborhoods, we can create healthier, happier cities for us all to enjoy. Join us in this movement. Together we can make our cities more equitable and more resilient, one tree and one plant at a time.

### Umbrella

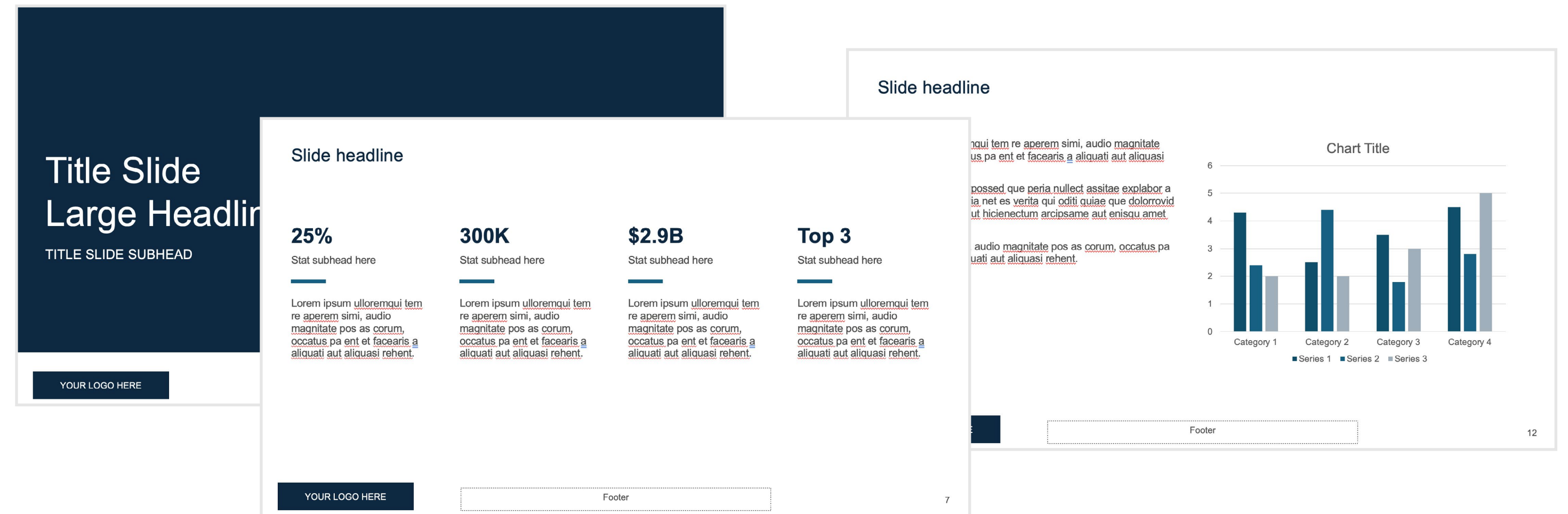
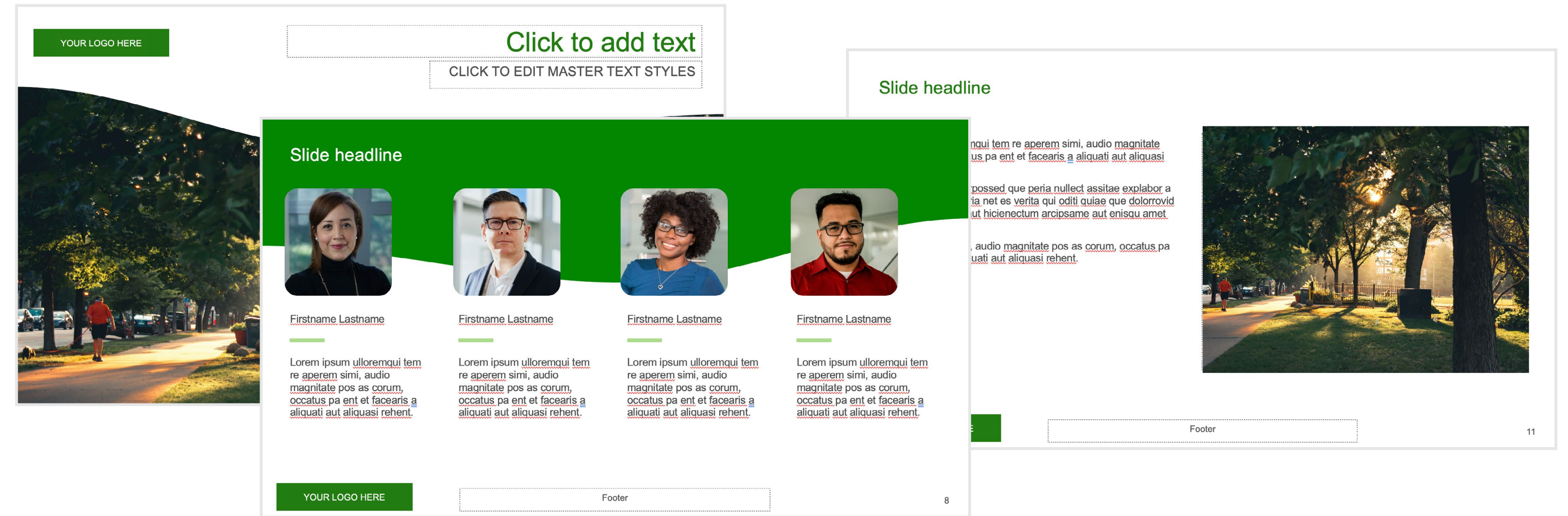
**<NAME> is the local arm of Spreading Roots,** a national initiative that gives people the support they need to build up their urban and community spaces and turn them into thriving green spaces. We believe in the power of community-driven change. By planting trees, nurturing green spaces, and uniting neighborhoods, we can create healthier, happier cities for us all to enjoy. Join us in this movement. Together we can make our cities more equitable and more resilient, one tree and one plant at a time.



# Public Outreach PowerPoints

PowerPoint presentations are an effective way of organizing multiple complex ideas into an easily digestible format. Use PowerPoint when presenting to government stakeholders, community members, or peers within the urban and community forestry professional ecosystem.

Spreading Roots has developed two simple, clean PowerPoint templates. Keeping the design of the presentation minimal allows for audiences to focus on what truly matters: your message.





# Public Outreach

## Video Scripts

Studies have shown that people retain 80% of what they see. Further, in the second quarter of 2023, it was reported that online videos had a 92.3% audience reach. With these powerful statistics in mind, videos could do a world of good for your urban and community forestry initiative. They can do everything from raise awareness about your organization, educate others about the benefits of green spaces, showcase community success stories, and even promote engagement.

This is a video script that promotes the Spreading Roots movement while highlighting the benefits of equal access to nature.

	Video	Voiceover and/or On-Screen Text
Frame 1	Animated Spreading Roots logo.	
Frame 2	Group of volunteers at a planting event.	“Join a community-driven movement...”
Frame 3	Young families or groups of children interacting with an urban green space.	“... that understands that trees and green spaces can affect our present and shape our future. “
Frame 4	Vibrant park or parklet, teeming with activity.	“And that everyone should access.”
Frame 5	Aerial view of densely populated urban area with a healthy tree canopy.	“Urban green spaces aren’t just beautiful... they’re vital.”
Frame 6	Group of individuals harvesting fruits, vegetables, and greens in a community garden.	“They connect us, make neighborhoods more vibrant, and foster a sense of community.”
Frame 7	Spreading Roots logo and URL.	“Join our cause today. Together, we can nourish a more beautiful world.”





# Thank you.

We want to express our profound gratitude for working tirelessly to advance, protect, and preserve trees, green spaces, and nature in under-resourced communities. Your dedication, passion, and commitment to creating more vibrant places that everyone can enjoy are extraordinary. Together, we can spark a movement that drives meaningful and lasting change.

Get in touch at [spreadingroots.org/contact-us](https://spreadingroots.org/contact-us).



 spreading  
roots