

Impact Summary



Taking Tree Equity to Scale - Every Tree Can Change a Life
Natural Areas Conservancy

New York City, NY

Project Goals

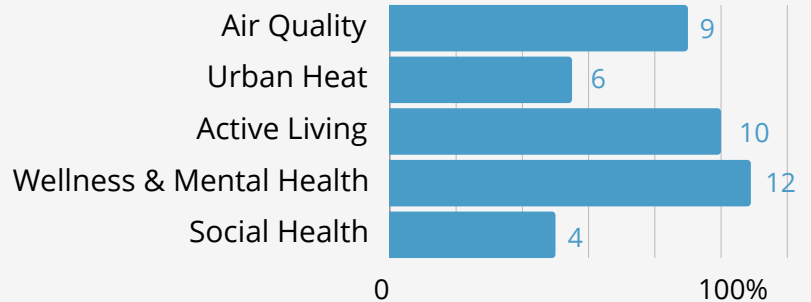
With the support of American Express and in collaboration with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks) and American Forests, the Natural Areas Conservancy (NAC) launched a two-year effort to **plant** 3,000 trees in NYC's natural areas parks, **grow** 3,000 climate-smart trees, and **train** the next generation of urban forestry professionals. In Fall 2023, about 3,000 trees were planted in and around trails of Willowbrook Park on Staten Island and Alley Pond Park in Queens. Both are natural areas parks that serve communities burdened by disproportionately high levels of air pollution. The new trees will restore degraded areas near publicly accessible park trails, cleaning air, buffering noise pollution, creating new wildlife habitat, and enhancing the use of the trails for recreation, refuge, and relaxation.



Human Health



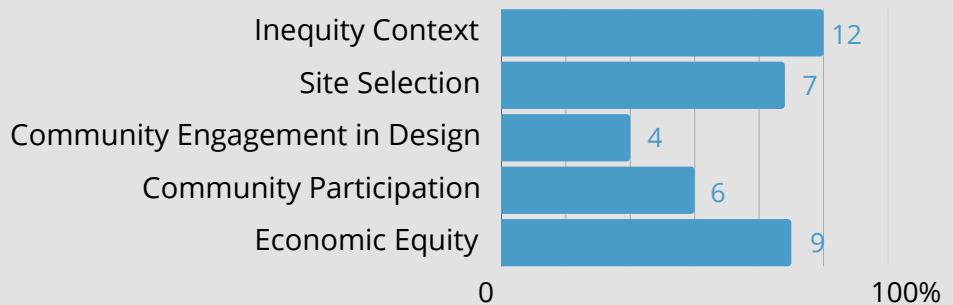
41/50
Exceptional



Social Equity



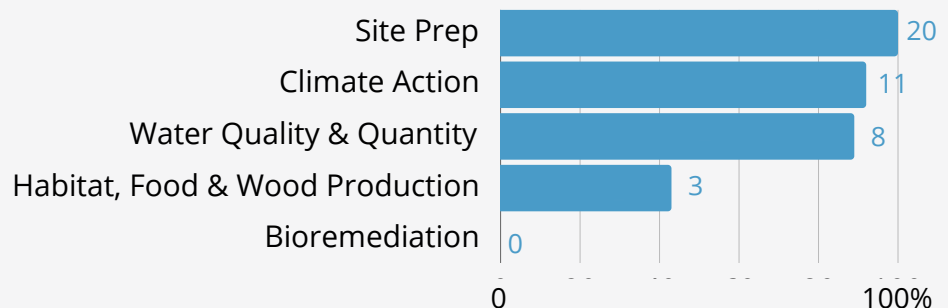
38/50
Excellent



Environment



42/50
Exceptional



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Photo Credit: Aleksandr Watson / American Forests

Advancing equitable tree canopy, workforce development, & climate resilience

The project also supported one NYC Parks gardener position and three paid internships for local college students from diverse backgrounds to assist in the propagation and growth of 3,000 climate-adapted seeds at the Greenbelt Native Plant Center in Staten Island. Through hands-on training and mentoring, these hires gained the skills they need to succeed in the environmental sector. By addressing pipeline shortages in both climate-ready nursery supply and workforce development, this project aims to create a more resilient urban forest sector, ensuring greenspace benefits for generations of New Yorkers to come.

UN Sustainable Development Goals



Promote recreation for improved health



Restore wetlands



Green job training and employment



Increase tree canopy and benefits for all



Inclusive access to greenspaces



Reduce urban heat and energy needs



Deliver local climate action, quantify benefits



Enhance habitat connectivity



Community-based partnerships

Quantified Benefits

Projected values (avoided costs) for ecosystem benefits per year in 25 years

Carbon Sequestration

4,764 metric tons of CO₂
\$119,097 (at \$25/ton)

Rain Interception

45,012 m³/year
\$95,127 per year

Air Quality

O₃: 1.52 t/yr
NO_x: 0.65 t/yr
PM₁₀: 0.76 t/yr
\$36,350 per year

Energy Savings

Electricity - 572,611 kWh/yr
Natural Gas - 20,708,505 kBtu/yr
\$369,857 per year