

RHODE ISLAND TREE EQUITY

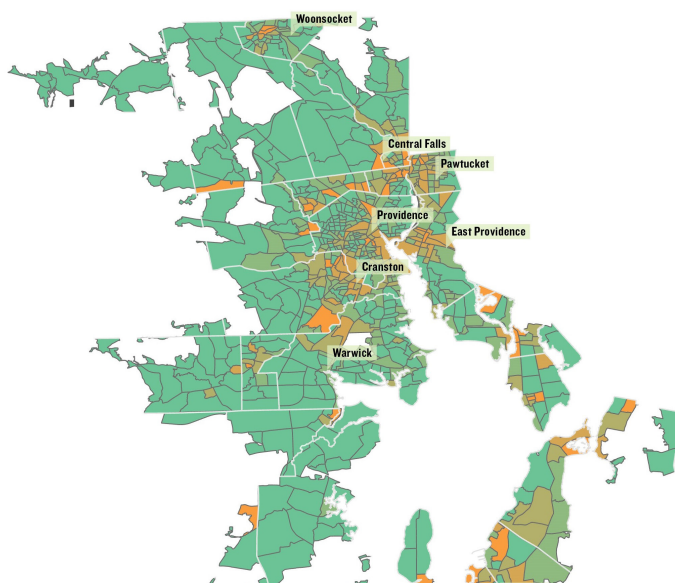
Funding, Financing, and Policy Guide



Providence, RI: Tree Equity Score 100 Credit: Eben Dente



Providence, RI: Tree Equity Score 60 Credit: Eben Dente



Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA) Credit: American Forests

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This guide assists the state, municipalities, and non-profit organizations of Rhode Island, particularly communities with low tree canopy coverage as identified through American Forests' Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA) tool, in identifying funding, financing, and policy mechanisms to further tree planting, maintenance, and preservation goals.

This guide provides information on making the case for trees, current urban forestry funding and policy mechanisms in Rhode Island, underutilized and innovative urban forestry funding and policy mechanisms, as well as state and federal resources. In doing so, it accomplishes four key goals, including:

- **Acknowledging** and highlighting the financial and political support for urban forestry that is already present in each level of government;
- **Identifying** current in-state funding, financing, and policy mechanisms that could be further supporting planting, maintenance, and preservation efforts;
- **Focusing** on promoting mechanisms and delivering recommendations that can be utilized by the state, municipalities, and non-profit organizations; and
- **Seeking** innovative, up and coming funding and policy mechanisms that RI can implement to strengthen its support for urban forestry.

NEED FOR TREE EQUITY

In U.S. cities, maps of tree cover often mirror maps of income and race. The resulting poor air quality and increased temperatures experienced by those without access to enough trees has led to pollution and heat related impacts. In 2018, approximately 10,000 deaths could be attributed to poor air quality across the United States. It is projected that 1,200 heat related deaths are prevented nationally each year due to trees, as well as countless other heat related illnesses - however, these benefits are not equitably experienced in areas that lack tree canopy cover.

RHODE ISLAND TREE EQUITY

Funding, Financing, and Policy Guide

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Local case studies helped to identify many key areas of concern regarding urban forestry funding, financing, and policy, and these challenges and barriers were confirmed through a survey of 14 Rhode Island urban and suburban municipalities. The top challenges included **finding funding and policy support for tree maintenance**, as well as **dedicating time and limited staff resources to urban forestry work**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

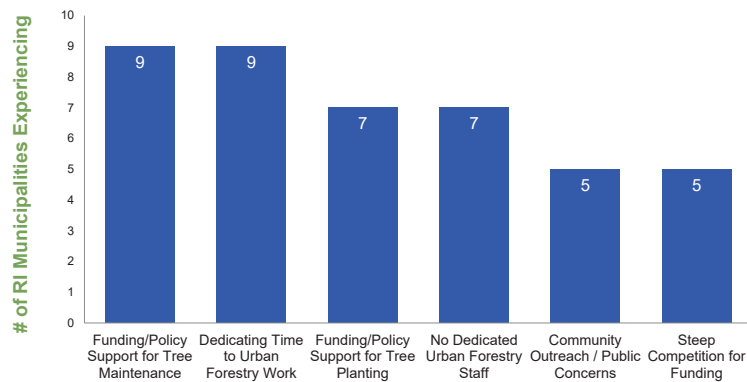
Nationally Utilized Opportunities for Rhode Island

Funding and Financing Recommendations Include:

- Corporate & Foundation Partnerships
- City Forest Credits Carbon Credits
- Grant Sources Focused on Tree Co-Benefits
- Clean Water & Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
- Loans & Bridge Loans
- Environmental Impact Bonds
- Stormwater Utility Fees
- Parking Benefits Districts
- Special Taxes
- Developer's Fees
- Business Improvement Districts

Policy and Planning Recommendations Include:

- Urban Forestry Plans
- Smart Growth Planning
- Incentives / Cost Shares
- Transit Oriented Development
- Invasive Species Municipal Policy
- Forest Preservation Ordinances



Top Challenges and Barriers

RI Urban Forestry Top Challenges and Barriers



Woonsocket, RI Arbor Day 2019 Credit: Office of Gov. Gina Raimondo



Newport, RI Tree Planting Credit: Savana Dunning



DORIS DUKE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



AMERICAN FORESTS
- SINCE 1875 -



RHODE ISLAND
INFRASTRUCTURE BANK

For the full report, visit:

<https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/resources/rhode-island-tree-equity-funding-financing-and-policy-guide/>