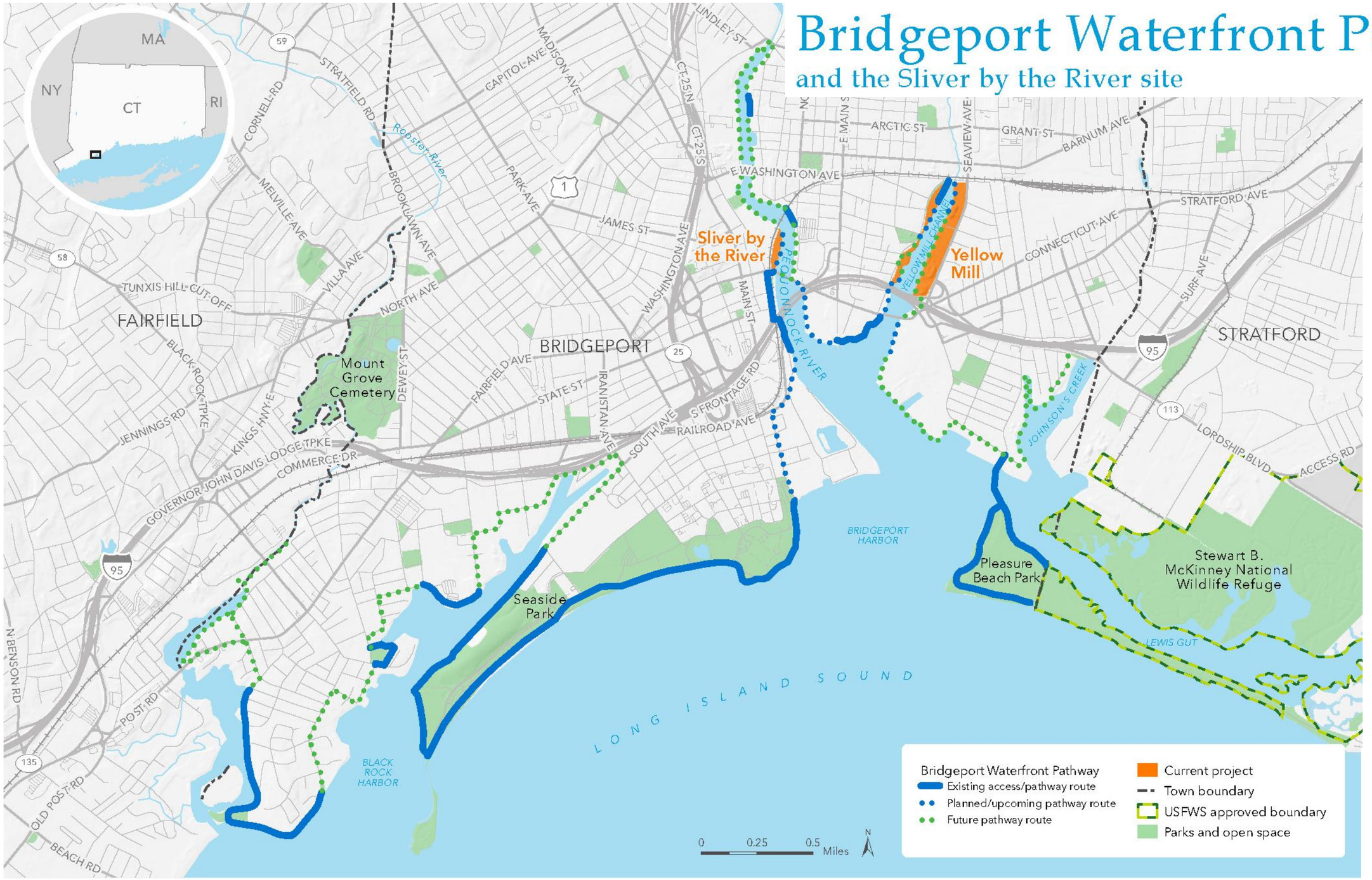
Please provide a 250-word text explaining the selection criteria used to choose the five projects representing the school in the Ribas Piera Prize. Detail the aspects evaluated, such as conceptual quality, innovation, thematic relevance, technical resolution, or any other criteria considered in the selection process with a single image, characteristic of the academic process, to accompany the text.

The five projects selected for this prize entry include: 1) Bridgeport Waterfront, 2) Hartford Vacant Lots, 3) Campus Pollinator Pathways, 4) Parks for Older Adults, and 5) Prison Landscapes. The Bridgeport Waterfront project was chosen for its innovative community engagement methods and action framework. The Hartford Vacant Lots project was selected for its relevance to post-industrial and shrinking cities. The Campus Pollinator Pathways project stood out for its technical resolution, visual efficiency, and innovation in ecological design. Parks for Older Adults was recognized for its conceptual quality, particularly in addressing the needs of often-overlooked populations. Finally, the Prison Landscapes project was selected for its unique focus on a non-traditional landscape—prison environments—which is typically beyond the scope of conventional landscape architecture design. Other selection criteria included creativity and innovation, design quality and representation, thematic significance, depth of concepts, community/system impacts, and feasibility. All of these projects align with the University of Connecticut's mission as a land- and sea-grant institution that emphasizes community engagement. Each project was conducted as a real-world service-learning initiative within UConn's Landscape Architecture programs, involving a range of local, regional, and national stakeholders. Except for the Campus Pollinator Pathways project, all of these initiatives have either been implemented or are in the process of implementation. Many of the sites are located in historically marginalized, economically distressed, and environmentally impacted neighborhoods, reinforcing the importance of addressing social and environmental justice in landscape architecture.

Bridgeport Waterfront Pathway

and the Sliver by the River site



May 12, 2020.

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

Country/City	United States/ Storrs
University / School	University of Connecticut
Academic year	Fall 2020
Title of the project	Reimagine Bridgeport Waterfront
Authors	Sohyun Park

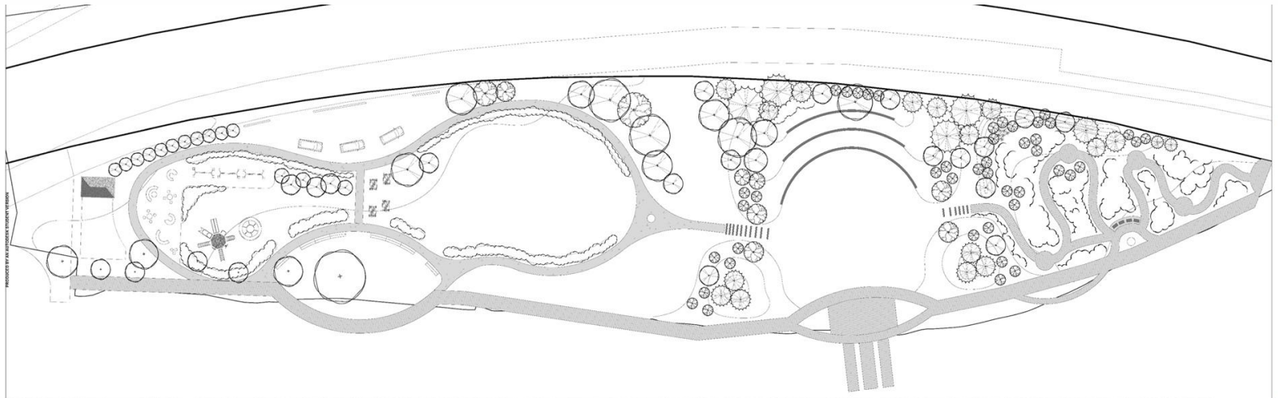
TECHNICAL DOSSIER

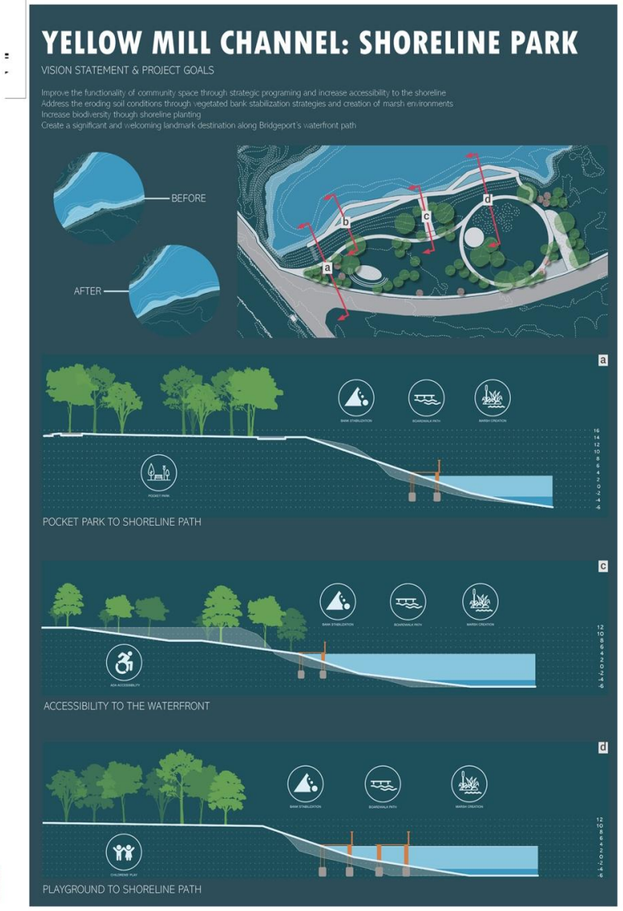
Title of the project	Reimagine Bridgeport Waterfront
Authors	Sohyun Park
Title of the course	LAND Design IV: Community Planning; LAND 4450 Design V: Capstone
Academic year	Fall 2020, Fall 2021, Spring 2023, Fall 2024
Teaching Staff	Dr. Sohyun Park & Prof. Jill Desimini
Department / Section / Program of belonging	Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
University / School	University of Connecticut

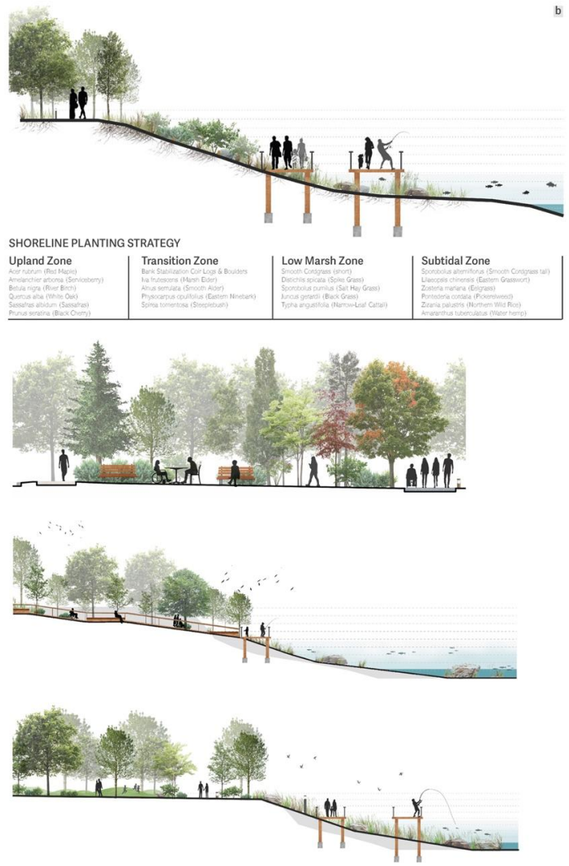
13

Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

This project focuses on reimagining the coastal waterfront in Bridgeport, Connecticut, through a participatory design process. Situated at the mouth of the Pequonnock River, Bridgeport lies on the land of the Paugussett people, who were forcefully removed without consideration of their culture and livelihood. Over time, Bridgeport's waterfront, which is the longest shoreline in Connecticut, has been scarred by brownfield sites and industrial uses. Despite its potential, the waterfront has become fragmented and inaccessible, with around 70 percent of it privately owned. The city faces high poverty rates compared to state and national averages, contrasting sharply with the nearby wealthy suburbs. The waterfront has been divided and hardened over the years, leaving many communities disconnected from this vital resource. This project emphasizes a collaborative planning and design approach to transform the waterfront. Over the past five years, we have partnered with the City of Bridgeport, the Trust for Public Land, Groundwork Bridgeport, the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, and the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Together, we have worked on design marsh restoration, parks and recreational spaces, and youth gathering areas, as part of the Bridgeport Sea Walk initiative. Through early community engagement, site research, co-design charrettes, and public outreach, this project fosters co-learning and collective action. While progress is slow, transformation is happening with new designs being implemented and ongoing efforts to restore and activate the waterfront.





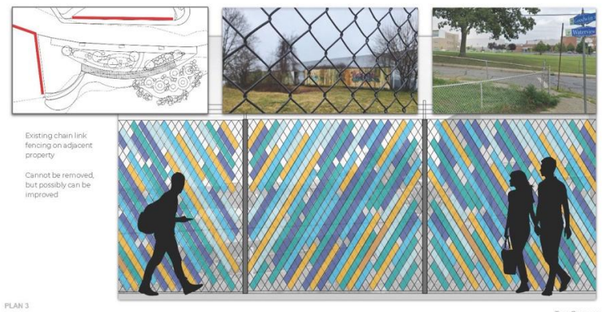


COMMUNITY PROJECT: STREET PAINTING

PLAN 3

Tara Sweeney

COMMUNITY PROJECT: FENCE CAMOUFLAGE



PLAN 3

Tara Sweeney

EDUCATIONAL

PERSPECTIVE

Country/City	United States/ Storrs
University / School	University of Connecticut
Academic year	Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2024
Title of the project	Greening Vacant Lots for Community Benefits
Authors	Sohyun Park

TECHNICAL DOSSIER

Title of the project	Greening Vacant Lots for Community Benefits
Authors	Sohyun Park
Title of the course	LAND 3311 Landscape Architecture Construction II: Planting Design
Academic year	Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2024
Teaching Staff	Dr. Sohyun Park
Department / Section / Program of belonging	Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
University / School	University of Connecticut

13

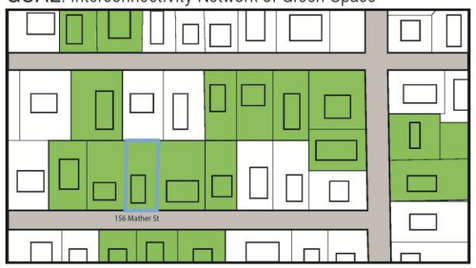
Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

This project focuses on vacant properties in a residential neighborhood in Hartford, Connecticut, particularly in underserved communities of color that face urban vacancy, blight, and high crime rates. In partnership with the Hartford Land Bank, a local nonprofit that repurposes vacant lots, we aimed to transform these spaces into areas for housing development and green spaces. With limited resources and funding for landscaping, our project sought to create a sustainable model that enhances curb appeal, develops low-maintenance residential landscapes, and provides ecological benefits while revitalizing the community as a whole. We envisioned a collective impact by transforming multiple vacant lots within a block and across adjacent blocks into a network of connected green spaces. Our design prototypes included naturalized yards, pollinator gardens, rain gardens, and other nature-based solutions that could be replicated in similar areas. In our Planting Design studio, we proposed native plants, pollinator meadows, community gardens, street orchards, fruit trees, mini forests, and edible gardens. Sustainable features like rain barrels were also incorporated for stormwater management. The project addresses the immediate need for green spaces and aims to foster long-term benefits, such as improved environmental quality, enhanced climate resilience, and strengthened community well-being. By turning vacant lots into vibrant, ecologically rich spaces, the project seeks to create lasting change that positively impacts both the neighborhood and its residents.

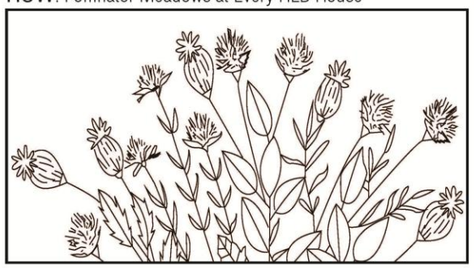
Biodiversity + Interconnectivity In Hartford

This effort is looking to redefine what an inner city landscape looks like by utilizing land bank properties to begin to create "Green Space Highways" in urban neighborhoods that allow for flowing more native plantings, a diversification of species, increased animal habitats and food resources, as well as a storm water management aspect.

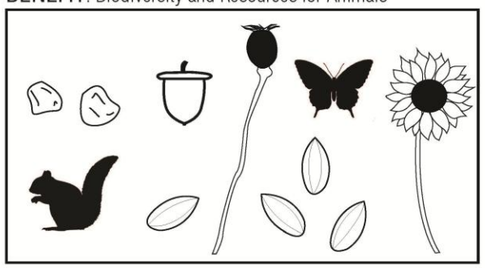
GOAL: Interconnectivity Network of Green Space



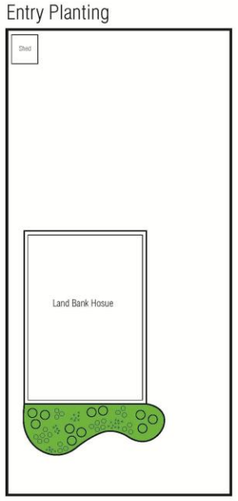
HOW: Pollinator Meadows at Every HLB House



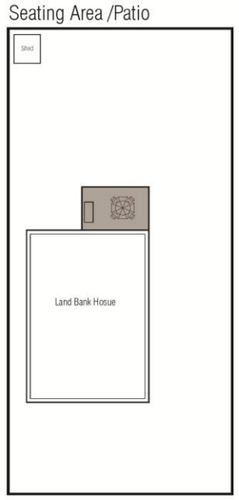
BENEFIT: Biodiversity and Resources for Animals



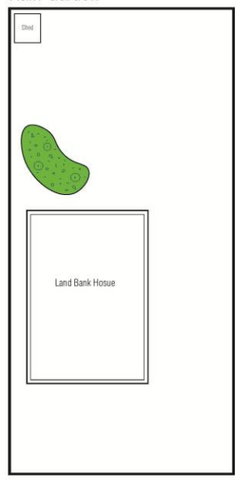
Entry Planting



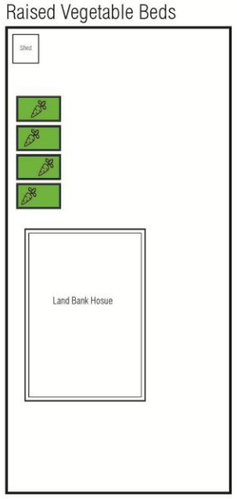
Seating Area /Patio



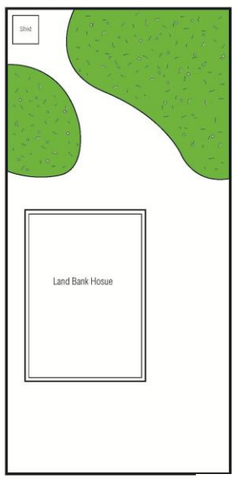
Rain Garden



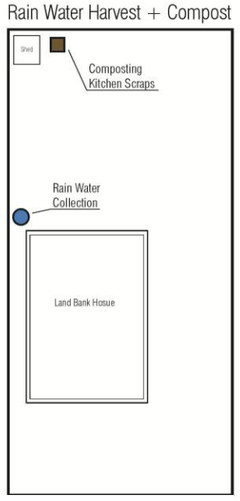
Raised Vegetable Beds

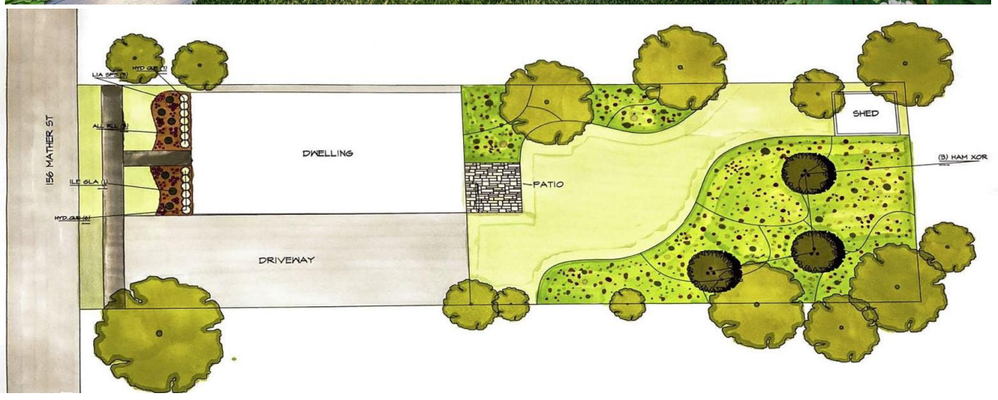


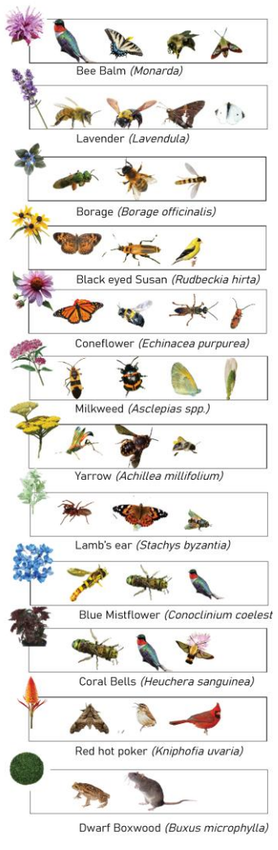
Pollinator Oasis



Rain Water Harvest + Compost







Country/City	United States/ Storrs
University / School	University of Connecticut
Academic year	Spring 2024
Title of the project	UConn Science Quad Pollinator Pathway
Authors	Sohyun Park

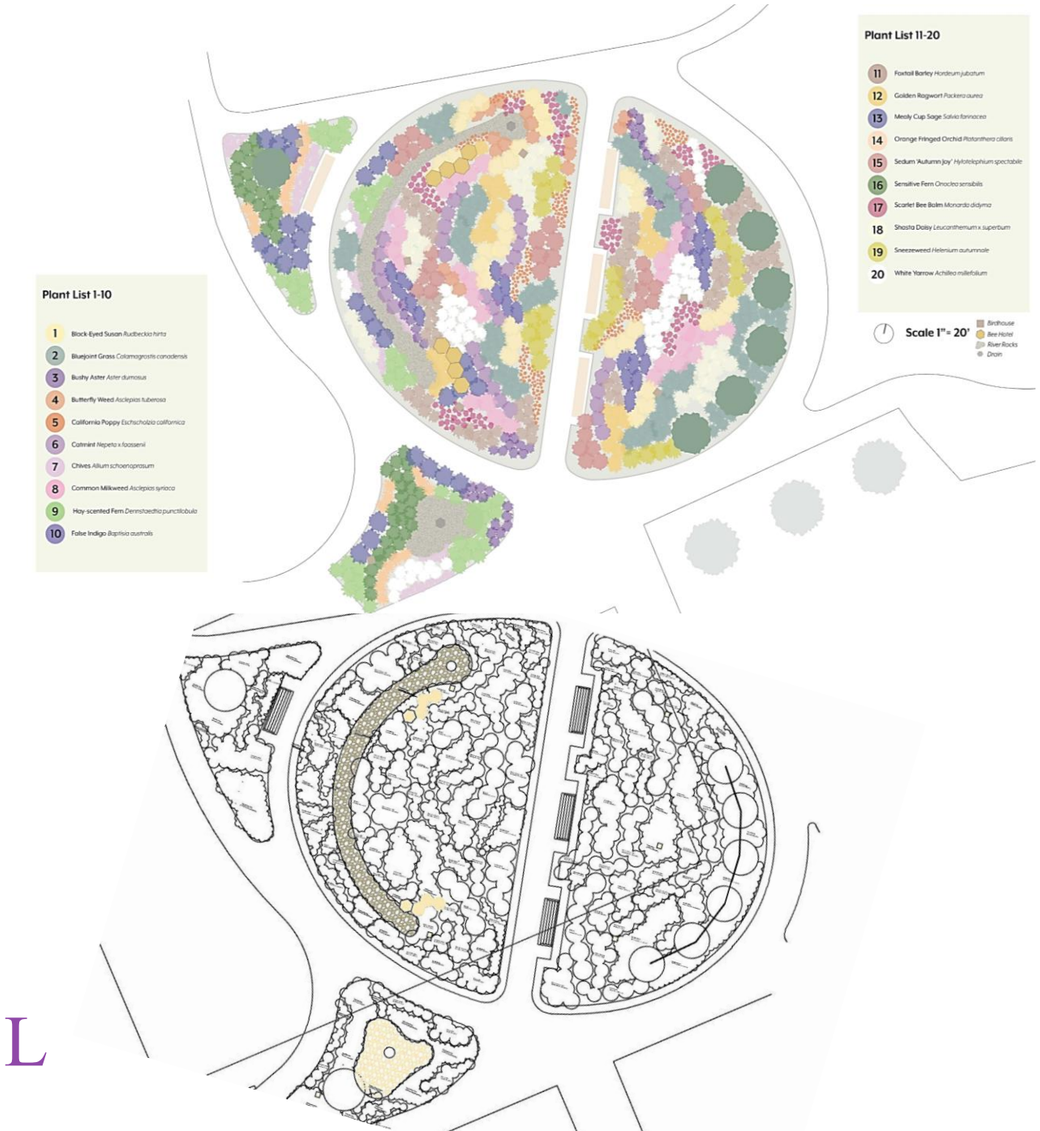
TECHNICAL DOSSIER

Title of the project	UConn Science Quad Pollinator Pathway
Authors	Sohyun Park
Title of the course	LAND 3311 Landscape Architecture Construction II: Planting Design
Academic year	Spring 2024
Teaching Staff	Dr. Sohyun Park
Department / Section / Program of belonging	Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
University / School	University of Connecticut

13

Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

This project aims to transform an underutilized, shaded site located between the Chemistry, Pharmacy, and Engineering Science buildings (aka, the Northeast Science Quad) into a thriving "Pollinator Pathway" ecosystem. Despite heavy foot traffic between buildings, the area remains underappreciated by the campus community. Currently, the site is dominated by unattractive, drought-stricken turf with minimal ecological or aesthetic value. The design focuses on creating colorful pollinator gardens using shade-tolerant native plants like indigo, ferns, and poppies, complemented by monarch-friendly milkweed, hummingbird-attracting blooms, birdhouses, pollinator hotels, benches, and a rain garden. These features aim to attract native bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects while also addressing the lack of gathering and resting spaces on campus. The site includes pathways and two berms in semi-circular forms that cover underground labs. Gathering areas were designed to encourage social interaction and offer spaces for rest, all while minimizing maintenance and drainage challenges. Faculty from Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Pharmacy, and Landscape Architecture, along with University Facilities & Planning, Design, and Construction staff, volunteered their time, helping students design the space and donating seeds. The project culminated in a student competition, with the winning design receiving a Merit Award from the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. While the project has yet to be implemented, it serves as a platform for future discussions on enhancing the UConn campus environment.


Plant List 1-10
1 Black-Eyed Susan Rudbeckia hirta
2 Bluejoint Grass Calamagrostis canadensis
3 Bushy Aster Aster dumosus
4 Butterfly Weed Asclepias tuberosa
5 California Poppy Eschscholzia californica
6 Catmint Nepeta x faassenii
7 Chives Allium schoenoprasum
8 Common Milkweed Asclepias syriaca
9 Hay-scented Fern Dennstaedtia punctilobula
10 False Indigo Baptisia australis
Plant List 11-20
11 Foxtail Barley Hordeum jubatum
12 Golden Ragwort Packera aurea
13 Mealy Cup Sage Salvia farinacea
14 Orange Fringed Orchid Platanthera ciliaris
15 Sedum 'Autumn Joy' Hylotelephium spectabile
16 Sensitive Fern Onoclea sensibilis
17 Scarlet Bee Balm Monarda didyma
18 Shasta Daisy Leucanthemum x superbum
19 Sneezeweed Helenium autumnale
20 White Yarrow Achillea millefolium
Scale 1"= 20'
Birdhouse
Bee Hotel
River Rocks
Drain

L

Country/City	United States/ Storrs
University / School	University of Connecticut
Academic year	Spring 2019
Title of the project	Wanat Park for Older Adults
Authors	Sohyun Park

TECHNICAL DOSSIER

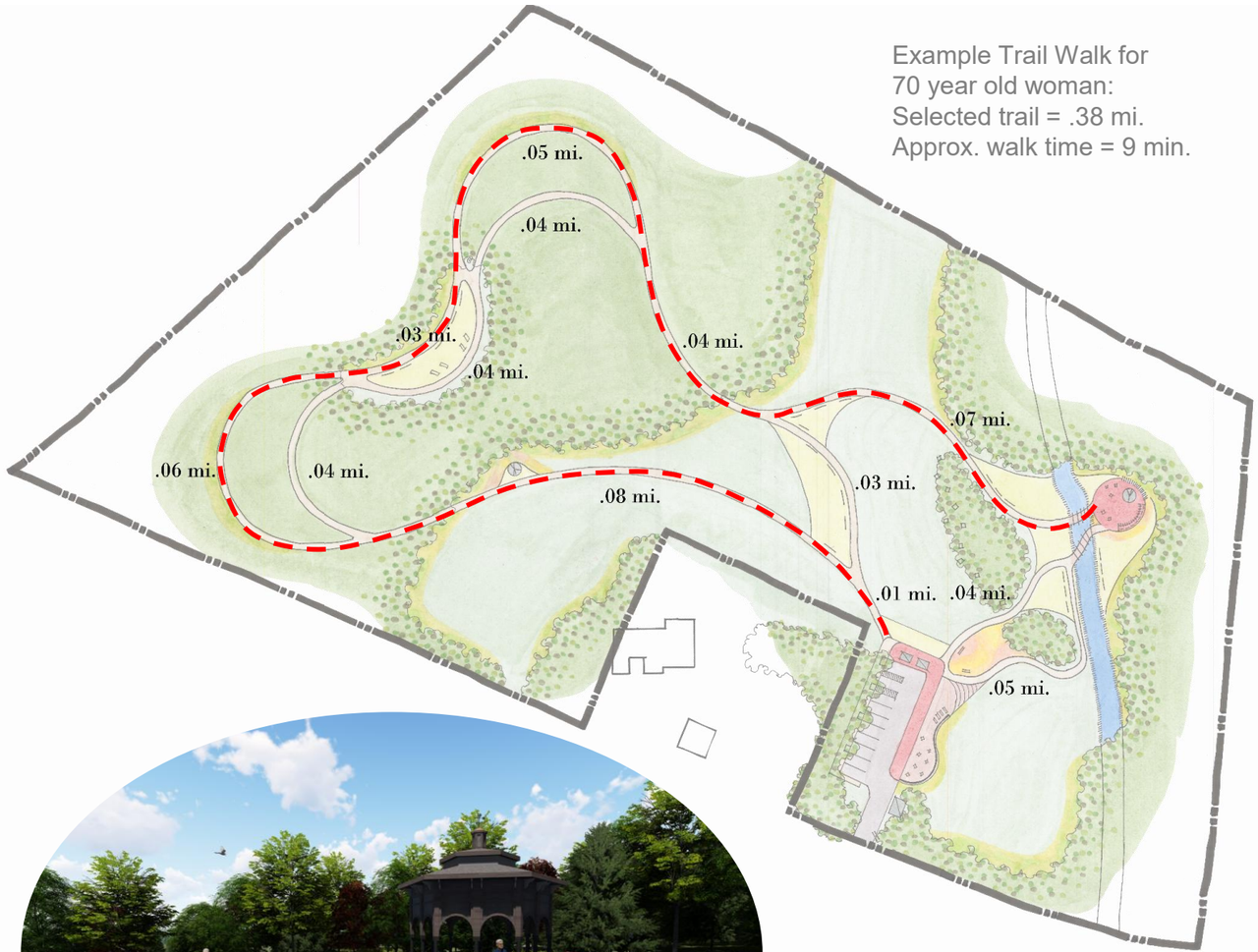
Title of the project	Wanat Park for Older Adults
Authors	Sohyun Park
Title of the course	LAND 4440 Landscape Architecture Design IV: Community Planning
Academic year	Spring 2019
Teaching Staff	Dr. Sohyun Park
Department / Section / Program of belonging	Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
University / School	University of Connecticut

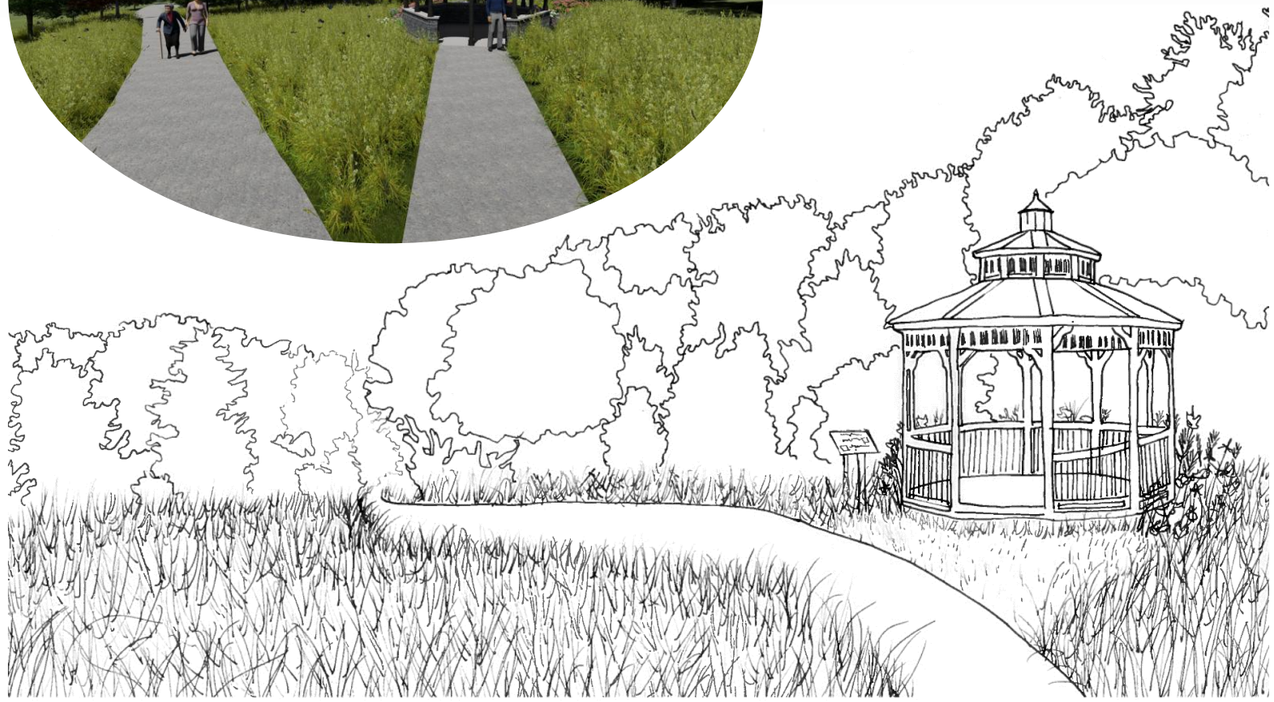
13

Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

Wanat Park, located on Sugar Hill Road in Tolland, is a 10-acre green space designed to promote community engagement and well-being. Donated to the town with the stipulation of developing it for the elderly population, the park is intended as an inclusive space for seniors, families, and the entire community. Originally, the site featured turf, surrounding woods, and a grain silo, serving as a backyard for a nearby house. In the design process, over 50 senior residents actively participated in community meetings and design charrettes, collaborating with students using maps, strings, blocks, and other materials to share their ideas. This participatory action design ensured that their voices shaped the park's future. The park's key features focus on birding, walking, and socializing—activities that were prioritized by participants. Birding emerged as a top interest, so plant groves and shrubs were added to attract birds and butterflies. Trail options vary from simple loops to more adventurous routes, designed with careful consideration for seniors, particularly the walking pace of a 70-year-old woman. The park also incorporates ADA accessibility and plant diversity, moving away from a homogenized landscape to enrich the environment. One standout feature is an intergenerational seating area honoring local history and nature. Wanat Park focuses on both the physical and mental health of seniors while supporting local ecological health. This project serves as a model for creating inclusive, health-promoting spaces for all generations. Phase I of the project implementation began in 2021.


EXIT


Example Trail Walk for
70 year old woman:
Selected trail = .38 mi.
Approx. walk time = 9 min.
.05 mi.
.04 mi.
.03 mi.
.04 mi.
.04 mi.
.06 mi.
.04 mi.
.08 mi.
.07 mi.
.03 mi.
.01 mi.
.04 mi.
.05 mi.




EXIT

Country/City	United States/ Storrs
University / School	University of Connecticut
Academic year	Spring 2025
Title of the project	Prison Landscape Design for Normalization, Beautification, and Well-being
Authors	Sohyun Park

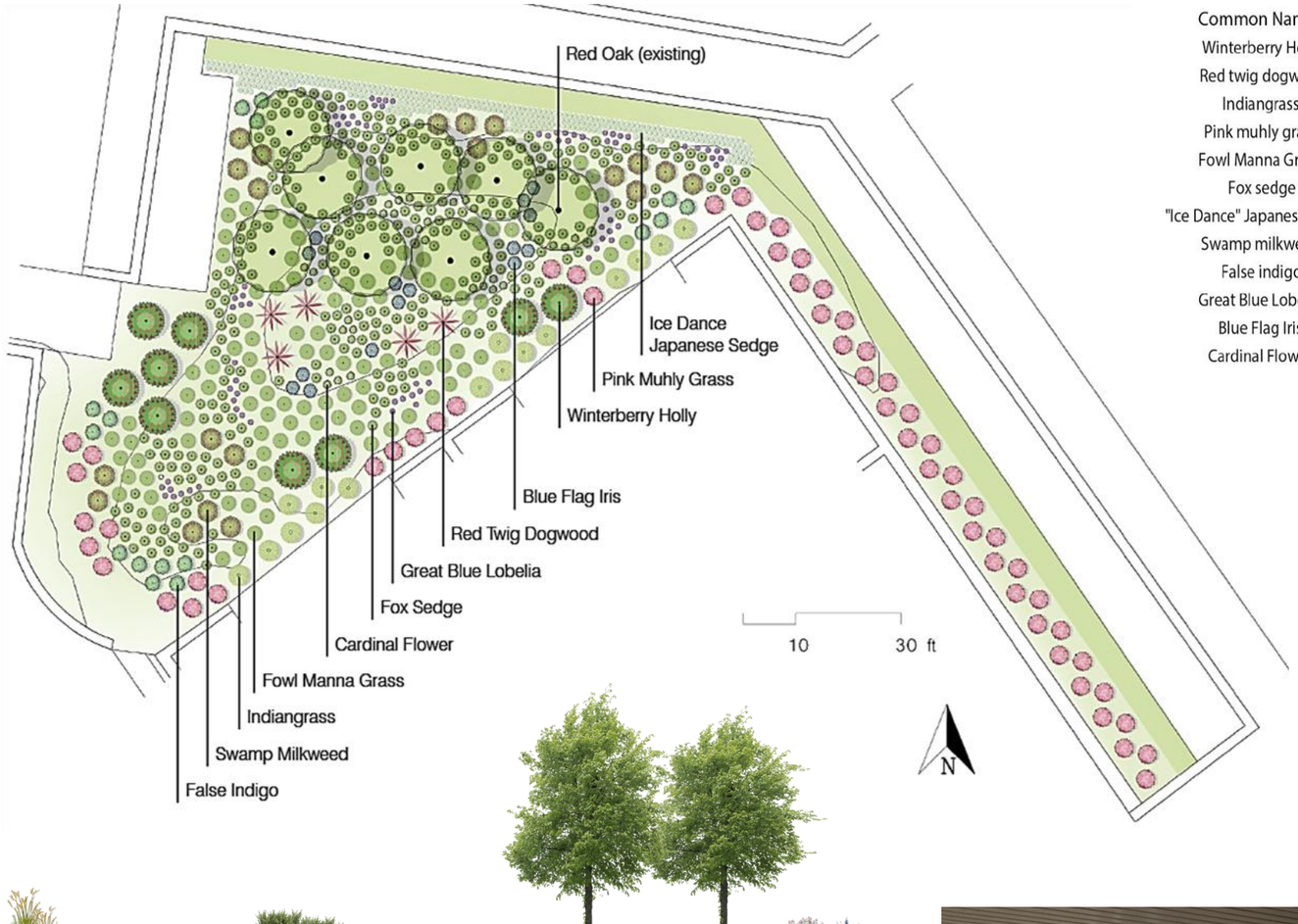
TECHNICAL DOSSIER

Title of the project	Prison Landscape Design for Normalization, Beautification, and Well-being
Authors	Sohyun Park
Title of the course	LAND 3311 Landscape Architecture Construction II: Planting Design
Academic year	Spring 2025
Teaching Staff	Dr. Sohyun Park
Department / Section / Program of belonging	Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
University / School	University of Connecticut

13

Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

This project aims to design and create green spaces that promote the health and well-being of both prison staff and incarcerated individuals at York Correctional Institution, the only women's prison in the state. This high-security facility sits on land that was originally a farm operated by a woman, adding historical significance to the project. Dozens of potential sites were identified by Correctional Institution staff as areas of interest, both inside and outside the compound. Following site visits, informal conversations, and formal focus group discussions, several key areas were prioritized for transformation. These include an outdoor courtyard, the front entry spaces, and a busy exterior pathway frequently used by both staff during shift changes and inmates during daily movement. These spaces were selected for aesthetic transformation through the integration of plants, murals, and green infrastructure interventions. One notable feature includes murals to be co-created by incarcerated individuals with artistic skills in collaboration with RISE, a local arts organization focused on incarceration. The mural designs are intentionally coordinated with the live plantings in the adjacent garden beds to create a sense of visual connection. The courtyard, a favorite spot for staff will include planting beds, a BBQ area, spaces for recreation and meditation, and zones for staff to gather and socialize helping to reduce stress. These interventions are currently being implemented, along with horticultural therapy programs. This project is part of a larger interdisciplinary research effort that aims to influence prison environments, advancing principles of normalization, beauty, and well-being within correctional settings.



Common Name	Scientific Name
Winterberry Holly	Ilex verticillata
Red twig dogwood	Cornus sericea
Indiangrass	Sorghastrum nutans
Pink muhly grass	Muhlenbergia capillaris
Fowl Manna Grass	Glyceria striata
Fox sedge	Carex vulpinoidea
"Ice Dance" Japanese sedge	Carex morrowii 'Ice Dance'
Swamp milkweed	Asclepias incarnata
False indigo	Baptisia australis
Great Blue Lobelia	Lobelia siphilitica
Blue Flag Iris	Iris versicolor
Cardinal Flower	Lobelia cardinalis

Winterberry Holly

Soil: Moist to dry
Sun: Full sun to part shade
Height: 6-10 ft

Red Twig Dogwood

Soil: Moist to dry
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 6-8 ft

Indiangrass

Soil: Moist to dry
Sun: Full sun
Height: 4-6 ft

Pink Muhly Grass

Soil: Dry
Sun: Full sun
Height: 2-3 ft

Fowl Manna Grass

Soil: Moist to wet
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 3-4 ft

Fox Sedge

Soil: Moist to wet
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 1-3 ft

"Ice Dance" Japanese Sedge

Soil: Moist
Sun: full sun to shade
Height: 1 ft

Swamp Milkweed

Soil: Moist to wet
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 3-5 ft

False Indigo

Soil: Moist
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 3-4 ft

Great Blue Lobelia

Soil: Moist to wet
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 1-4 ft

Blue Flag Iris

Soil: Moist to wet
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 2-3 ft

Cardinal Flower

Soil: Moist to wet
Sun: full sun to part shade
Height: 2-4 ft