



Bridgeport  
Downtown Special  
Services District

DSSD

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 6, 2021**

**For More Information:**

Lauren Coakley Vincent, President + CEO  
Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District  
(203) 908-3622  
[lauren.dssd@infobridgeport.com](mailto:lauren.dssd@infobridgeport.com)

## **DOWNTOWN BRIDGEPORT ESTABLISHES STOP ON NORTHEAST POLLINATOR PATHWAY**

**BRIDGEPORT, CT** – July 6, 2021 – The Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) is delighted to announce that with the completion of its multi-site “Colorful Bridgeport” public space beautification project, Downtown Bridgeport is now established as a Pollinator Pathway site. Pollinator-friendly habitats and food sources attract the bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other wildlife whose pollination enables the plants in our yards, parks, farms, and therefore our food system to reproduce. The public parks and independently owned restaurants and shops that populate the street-level spaces in Downtown Bridgeport create connection points that foster the sense of community so special to the Downtown and the city.

Green and open space beautification projects are essential to ensure a safe, welcoming setting while also serving as a platform for the community’s many cultural offerings. The goal of the project was to activate the Downtown’s open spaces as a means to drive demand for and more frequent return visiting to locally owned businesses within the Downtown district. The various planting sites “colored in” the neighborhood by improving the physical setting of McLevy Green, the Broad Street Steps, Peacock Alley, and Bank Street; making them a destination within Downtown Bridgeport.

“The Bridgeport DSSD is thrilled to re-establish the Downtown as a friendly stop along the state and region’s pollinator pathway. The native plantings installed in McLevy Green, Bank Street, on Peacock Alley, and along the Broad Street Steps provide an opportunity to add vibrancy, spread color and joy, and create a waystation for the hard working bees, butterflies, and birds that ensure the health of our local food system. None of this would have been possible without the support from the City of Bridgeport’s Community Development Block Grant funding. We thank the City, our Council Members, and the Citizen’s Union for their commitment to Downtown Bridgeport,” said Lauren Coakley Vincent, President and CEO of the Bridgeport DSSD.

The sites connect Downtown Bridgeport to other pollinator pathway stops within the city and around Connecticut. The DSSD teamed up with partners at Pollinator Pathway Bridgeport, which works at the local level to establish pollinator sites within the city and the state, to identify key locations and types of plantings that would benefit each site.

“The sites in Downtown Bridgeport, along with the recently completed Fairfield Avenue Planter Project and a new pollinator garden at the Geraldine Claytor Magnet Academy in Black Rock are fantastic steps towards Pollinator Pathway’s goal of connecting pollinator-friendly habitats throughout Fairfield County, the state of Connecticut and the rest of the country. They serve to promote the public’s understanding of the importance of replacing popular imported plants that offer nothing to our pollinators with the native plants that they need to survive. As people recognize the importance of providing pesticide-free corridors of native plants in home gardens, parks, schools, public space and along the waterfront, Bridgeport, all

these gardens will eventually be joined to pathways in neighboring towns to support pollinating insects and wildlife,” said Mardi Morrow from Pollinator Pathway Bridgeport.

The network of partners that participated in the project are as diverse and vibrant as the plantings and pollinators they will attract. The Bridgeport DSSD was privileged to engage Groundwork Bridgeport and the Bridgeport Arts + Cultural Council to design the installations at the various sites and infuse each greenscape with complementary public art. Pullman & Comley’s Community Outreach Committee and volunteers from Groundwork Bridgeport assisted with the installation of the plantings.

“Working together with partners to improve our community is something we are always excited to do and look forward to doing more of in the future! This was a fun project for both our staff and volunteers. Contributing to the health of our ecosystem is something we love doing,” said Christina Smith, Executive Director of Groundwork Bridgeport.

“We thoroughly enjoy engaging in functional public art that serves multiple purposes. We get to engage with a wide variety of community members, artists, and volunteers of all ages and backgrounds to complete these projects. They serve as a means of indirect networking, fellowship with neighbors, and the strengthening of bonds by sharing in contributing to the diversity of our environment and local pollinators. We look forward to designing more projects like this alongside our partners at the CDBG Fund, DSSD, Groundwork Bridgeport and others,” said Razul Branch, Executive Director of Bridgeport Arts + Cultural Council.

“We are honored to participate in the Downtown Bridgeport Beautification Project and Bridgeport’s Pollinator Pathway, and thank the DSSD for making this happen. As we walk around Downtown this summer to grab lunch, or shop at the Farmer’s Market, we look forward to catching a glimpse of bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinating insects and wildlife, as a result of this rewarding project,” said Kathleen Zancewicz from Pullman & Comley’s Community Outreach Committee.

“I love the organic way the art on the Broad Street Steps and the surrounding nature complement each other. It’s a testament to the dedicated parties making a conscious effort to maintain this unique asset in our downtown. I’m grateful to our friends and neighbors for their determination in making and keeping Bridgeport beautiful,” said Liz Squillace, Lead Artist for the “Painted Stairway” public artwork at the Broad Street Steps.

“I applaud the local organizations and individuals who have created a stop for the Pollinator Pathway in Downtown Bridgeport; they are thinking globally, acting locally, and beautifying our streets and sidewalks,” said Ed Lavernoch, President of the Bridgeport Economic Development Corporation.



The DSSD's friendly Downtown Ambassador team is in place to continue maintenance at the various pollinator sites within the district. The DSSD is also in the process of forming an all-volunteer group to assist with the maintenance of each site and keep the Downtown colorful and beautiful. We welcome volunteers regardless of skill level. Contact Lauren Coakley Vincent (information below) for more details on joining the beautification volunteer group.

# # #

---

Bridgeport  
Downtown Special  
Services District

**DSSD**

### **About Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District**

As the Business Improvement District for the Park City, the mission of the Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) is to “promote the preservation and development of the downtown business district; make the area more attractive and accessible; and enhance the public perception of downtown Bridgeport through overseeing and managing its appearance, security, and cleanliness.” The DSSD is operated under the direction of a nine member Board of Commissioners representing property owners in downtown Bridgeport. **Contact Lauren Coakley Vincent at [lauren.dssd@infobridgeport.com](mailto:lauren.dssd@infobridgeport.com) or (203) 908-3622** and learn more at [www.colorfulbridgeport.com](http://www.colorfulbridgeport.com).



### **About Northeast Pollinator Pathway**

This Pollinator Pathway project is organized by volunteers from town conservation organizations working together to establish pollinator-friendly habitat and food sources for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinating insects and wildlife along a series of continuous corridors. Most native bees have a range of about 750 meters, so the goal is to connect properties that are no farther apart than that. This project began in 2017 in Wilton, CT. Since then, pathways have been established in over 200 towns in CT, NY, MA, NJ, PA and the list keeps growing. **Contact Mardi Morrow at [mardimorrow@yahoo.com](mailto:mardimorrow@yahoo.com)** and learn more at [pollinator-pathway.org/towns/bridgeport](http://pollinator-pathway.org/towns/bridgeport).