



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TITLE: Wisconsin Urban Wood and Waukesha County Green Team partner on Urban Forestry Project to Assist Municipalities in Waukesha County develop urban forestry and wood use programs.

In partnership with the Waukesha County Green Team (WCGT), Wisconsin Urban Wood (WUW) was selected to receive funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry. The program is to conduct outreach and to provide technical assistance to municipalities in Waukesha County to incorporate urban forestry and wood use into their sustainability plans.

Most people view trees as valuable, whether standing in a wooded grove or as a commodity on a logging truck. Strangely, we don't value our urban trees in quite the same way. Cities, neighborhoods and homeowners lovingly plant and nurture trees to add beauty and value to urban landscapes and there are nearly four billion trees in America's urban landscapes. Historically when these trees need to be removed due to death, disease, or development, their stories end; they've been just another thing to discard.

Every year thousands of trees are removed from our streets, backyards, parks and other green spaces due to storms, construction, disease or insects such as the Emerald Ash Borer. This process costs municipalities money and time while bringing little value back to the community. Much of this removed urban wood is suitable for lumber, flooring, furniture, art, architectural design and household goods. By establishing an urban wood plan, communities can utilize this local, sustainable and renewable resource to boost local economies and reduce community expenses.

Wisconsin Urban Wood (WUW) is an organization committed to the social, economic and ecological benefits of urban trees. WUW's motto is *Trees First, Wood Next*. WUW members like the Waukesha County Green Team share the understanding that trees are most beneficial to communities when those trees are growing healthy and strong, but when urban trees must be removed, WUW's goal is to find the highest use for the removed wood. Through the WUW partnership of municipalities, arborists, sawyers, kiln operators, makers, artisans, retailers, architects, organizations and advocates

those trees are connected with local processors and woodworkers so the trees can be used for their highest and best uses in lumber, flooring, furniture, art, architecture, and a variety of goods made from wood.

Repurposing urban trees after they are removed changes the way industry sees its supply chain. People who manage urban forests and those that use wood in their projects are finding opportunities to connect and partner toward building new urban forest product markets, while building stronger relationships between clients, consumers and communities in the process. Wisconsin Urban Wood is working to build common understanding, language, commitment and consumer confidence in an urban wood brand shared by our membership. We are poised to help individuals and businesses looking to expand their operation or start a new business dedicated to urban wood.

The Waukesha County Green Team (WCGT) is a voluntary organization of Waukesha County residents who care about the environment in which county residents live and raise their families. The WCGT is concerned about the quality of our water, our food, the air we breathe, and preserving the phenomenal natural resources, abundant in Waukesha County. The WCGT believes that Waukesha County will continue to be a great place to live for years in the future if we continue to educate ourselves on the wise use of our resources and take action to preserve those resources for today and future generations.

In 2018 the WCGT partnered with Waukesha County and Gilbane Development to host an interactive forum to create awareness, share success and encourage collaboration in developing practices and programs that lead to proactive sustainability efforts within the county. At the event titled “Sharing the Waukesha County Sustainability Plan” and in follow-up work, the WCGT identified communities well-poised to move forward with enhancing their sustainability plans to include urban wood. WUW and the WCGT will be reaching out to these interested municipalities to offer assistance in the upcoming year.

To view the entire list of selected urban forestry grant recipients, or for more information about the DNR urban forestry grant program, search the [DNR website](#) for keyword “UF Grant.”

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact:

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