

Core Principles

for Lawn & Landscape Management

The Principles described below were developed over the course of the second year of the Nashua River Communities Resilient Lands Management Project in partnership with the Lawn and Landscape Task Group.

1. Health and well-being

- We value the health of all beings – from the smallest microorganisms, to plants, animals, and humans. Health is not just the absence of illness or exposure to toxic environments, but the maintenance of physical, social, and ecological well-being.
- As such, lawn and landscape care practices ensure the health of lawns, landscapes, children, future generations, and the planet. Further, they ensure that people and places that are exposed to disproportionate environmental and health burdens are no longer exposed, and have equitable access to health and well-being.

2. Interdependence

- Every being in an ecosystem – plants, animals, humans, and all the living beings underground – plays a role in the health and wellbeing of people and the planet. As individuals, we are each part of a larger whole that sustains us, and the ability of the whole to thrive is impacted by each of our individual actions.
- As such, lawn and landscape care practices are thoughtfully implemented to take impacts on soil health, availability of natural habitat, biodiversity, water quality, and user accessibility into account, with the recognition that they're all connected, even if their connections to each other are not immediately apparent.

3. Reciprocal relationships

- Just as the trees, plants, and animals around us sustain us, we, too, have an active role to play in caring for and protecting all the life forms that make up our home. We are all in relationships with each other that require respect, reciprocity, accountability, and balance.
- As such, lawn and landscape care practices encourage mutually beneficial exchanges with all beings in an ecosystem, enable more intentional stewardship of lands and natural ecosystems, and ensure equitable access to benefits of a healthy ecosystem for marginalized and oppressed groups.

4. Accessibility

- All people have the right to local lawns and landscapes that provide space for community connection, health, learning, and accessing lifeways.
- As such, lawn and landscape care practices ensure that spaces are welcoming and create a sense of belonging for people of all abilities, experiences, cultures, and genders.

5. Curiosity

- Curiosity allows us to take the time, and cultivate the willingness, to learn from the landscape about how we can care for it. It enables openness to finding information and learning from various types of knowledge and expertise.
- As such, lawn and landscape care practices increase pathways for knowledge to be shared from multiple sources (human and non-human), particularly from sources that have been historically undervalued because of systemic discrimination and marginalization.

6. Small is powerful

- We recognize that every action, no matter how seemingly small, can bring myriad benefits to people and the ecosystems within which we live. A small tweak in mowing height on the edges of a playing field, or in the design of public spaces, can have significant implications for the health and accessibility of our landscapes.
- As such, the lawn and landscape care practices that we invest in as a group will be easily implementable across multiple scales.

For more information, visit the project website by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://climateresilient.wixsite.com/nashuariver>.

