



FOUNDED: As a grassroots committee in 1994.
Became a 501(c)(3) in 2016.

CURRENT ANNUAL BUDGET: \$684,342

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Investment Opportunity

GreenRoots seeks to raise a total of \$3M over the next two years to support the advocacy for and construction of three waterfront parks/public access points along Chelsea Creek and Mill Creek and three urban agricultural areas in Chelsea and East Boston. This funding will also enable GreenRoots to hire four additional program organizers, expand the number of Environmental Chelsea Organizers (“ECO”) Youth members, and add a Development Coordinator and Communications Manager to its staff. With expanded staff capacity, GreenRoots will be able to reach more community members to enhance leadership skills and foster lasting civic engagement in Chelsea and East Boston.

GreenRoots is a resident-led organization working to address environmental, public health, and social justice challenges in Chelsea and East Boston.

In Chelsea, the smallest and second most densely populated city in the Commonwealth, 73% of residents identify as ethnic minorities and 24% live below the poverty line. East Boston faces similar challenges, with 53% of residents identifying as Latino and 17% living below the poverty line. The Chelsea Creek connects these two culturally rich communities, but it is also home to a Designated Port Area and various industries, such as:

- Storage tanks for 100% of the jet fuel used by Logan Airport and 70-80% of the region’s heating fuel
- A 400,000+ ton salt dock used by 350+ New England cities and towns
- The largest privately owned produce center in the United States serving all of New England and some mid-Atlantic and southern Canadian states
- The collective activities of these industries over many decades have caused air, noise, land, and water pollution in Chelsea and East Boston and have compromised public health. The industries’ presence along the Chelsea Creek has also blocked residents’ access to their own waterfront.

Two-Year Goals

- Develop three waterfront parks or public access points along Chelsea Creek and Mill Creek
- Develop three new urban agricultural spaces in Chelsea and East Boston
- Grow staff from 14 to 23 by increasing the Community Organizing team and the ECO Youth Crew, and adding a Development Coordinator and Communications Manager

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$825,000 to develop three new waterfront parks or public access points along the water
- \$225,000 to build three new urban agricultural spaces
- \$318,750 to hire four Community Organizers, a Development Coordinator, and Communications Manager
- \$38,575 to hire three ECO Youth Crew members

IN-KIND

- Pro bono assistance (legal, database, and IT support; landscape architects)
- Kayaks, canoes, life jackets, and other marine-related equipment
- Retreat/meeting space

GREENROOTS' MODEL

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE



Leadership & Governance

GreenRoots first started in 1994 as a grassroots committee called Chelsea Green Space. In 2016, GreenRoots became an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. GreenRoots' leadership includes Executive Director Roseann Bongiovanni, Associate Executive Director Mariá Belén Power, and Resource Manager Yaritza Morales Gonzalez, who are all Chelsea residents with 40+ years of collective experience.

GreenRoots' nine-member Board of Directors is led by Eugene Benson, JD, an environmental lawyer, and Madeleine Scammell, D.Sc., Chelsea resident and professor of public health.

“

GreenRoots has helped me to make a difference in my community. No one should wait for the right time to make a difference, that time is now.

”

STEPHANIE ALVARADO
ECO Youth Crew, GreenRoots



GreenRoots engages and empowers the most impacted and vulnerable residents of Chelsea and East Boston – low-income families, youth, and people of color – to effectuate change in their communities. Partnering closely with more than 300 resident members annually, GreenRoots implements projects around critical health, environmental, and social justice issues in the following focus areas:

- Waterfront Access
- Green Spaces and Parks
- Urban Agriculture and Food Justice
- Transit Justice
- Climate Justice and Resiliency
- Youth Leadership and Empowerment
- Public Health, Air, and Water Quality
- Energy Democracy and Independence

GreenRoots engages community members through traditional organizing strategies, such as door-knocking, while fostering the growth of leadership skills. Its members, many of whom are non-native English speakers, reflect the rich diversity within Chelsea and East Boston across gender, age, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. GreenRoots meets people where they are in terms of the issues that deeply affect their lives, drawing upon the contributions and skills they are able to bring to the effort. Members convene during annual planning retreats to devise their work plans for the year and continue with monthly meetings to implement their plans.

GreenRoots has been tremendously effective engaging some of the youngest residents of Chelsea through its Environmental Chelsea Organizers (ECO) Youth Crew: a team of six teens who work on projects important to youth. Over the past 20 years, the ECO Youth Crew has successfully led campaigns for the full implementation of the youth pass pilot program; community-wide surveys to document health and displacement concerns; advocacy and design for teen parks; tree planting projects; expansion of peer teaching initiatives in public and private after school programs; and other campaigns envisioned by youth within the community.



Supporting grassroots organizations like GreenRoots is about investing in building leadership in the community and requires long term commitment in order to have impact.



MARIELLA PUERTO
Co-Director of Climate,
Barr Foundation



Key Investors

- BARR FOUNDATION
- COMMON STREAM
- HYAMS FOUNDATION
- NEW WORLD FOUNDATION

Partners

- BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
- CITY OF CHELSEA
- COMMUNITY LABOR UNITED/ GREEN JUSTICE COALITION
- MGH/CHELSEA HEALTHCARE CENTER HEALTHY CHELSEA COALITION
- MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

IMPACTING SOCIETY

GreenRoots’ goal is for residents to be informed, engaged, and have a seat at the decision-making table for all developments in their communities, particularly along the Chelsea Creek waterfront. Its ultimate vision is for Chelsea and East Boston to become communities that are healthy, clean places where everyone can live, work, and play.

Over the course of GreenRoots’ 20 years of community organizing, the organization and its members have amassed an impressive track record of victories. Most notable among them are:

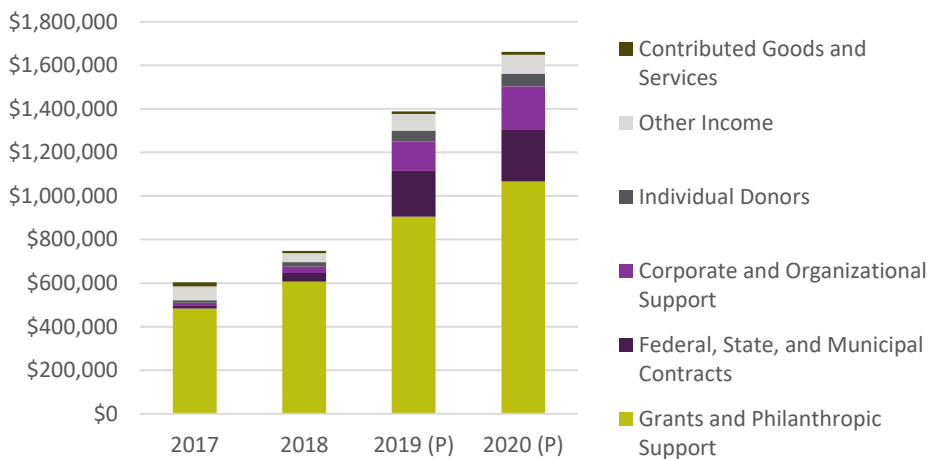
- Defeated a dirty power plant from being constructed along the Chelsea Creek and across from Chelsea’s elementary school complex
- Eliminated 2,000 tons of annual pollutants through the replacement or retrofitting of 132 dirty diesel engines at the New England Produce Center and throughout Chelsea
- Developed the Creekside Commons Park, Chelsea’s most dynamic and active open space along Mill Creek
- Co-led Chelsea’s successful application for a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize in 2017

GreenRoots has also been successful in building strong working relationships with many of the industries along the Chelsea Creek, organizing a quarterly business roundtable meeting of all seven of the oil storage facilities, and having regular dialogue with businesses like the New England Produce Center, Harbour Food Service Equipment, PreFlight Parking, Eastern Minerals, the Admirals Hill Marina, and many others.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

GreenRoots is funded largely through foundation grants along with contributions from corporate and individual donors, and federal, state, and municipal contracts. In order for GreenRoots to expand its presence and influence in Chelsea and the surrounding communities, the organization seeks to increase and diversify its revenue streams in the upcoming years.

Revenue by Source



Note: GreenRoots conducted its first financial audit in FY17 after becoming an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 2016.



Success Story: GreenRoots Defeats Construction of Dirty Diesel Power Plant

In the fall of 2006, Energy Management Inc. filed plans with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts proposing the construction of a two-stack 250-megawatt, dirty diesel power plant on Eastern Avenue along the banks of the Chelsea Creek and directly across from Chelsea’s only elementary school complex.

GreenRoots mobilized a community grassroots campaign against the power plant, citing numerous environmental and health concerns. Residents ranging from elementary school aged children to the elderly engaged in broad-based opposition, which included a student letter-writing campaign to the governor, appearances at numerous community meetings, and protests. These community-organized efforts led to Energy Management withdrawing its plans for the power plant in November 2007.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures GreenRoots tracks to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, capture lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary. Note: Fiscal Year is July 1 to June 30.

	FY 2018	FY 2019 (P)	FY 2020 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Increase Number of Waterfront Parks/Public Access Points and Urban Agricultural Spaces	9	12	15
Increase Total Number of Community Leaders	75	100	150
Increase Total Number of Active Members	300	450	600
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Staff Members	14	19	23
Board Members	9	9	9
Advisory Board	0	3	5
Total Revenue	\$748,000	\$1,388,450	\$1,662,000

SOCIAL IMPACT

While GreenRoots focuses on the communities of Chelsea and East Boston, the positive changes achieved over the last 20 years have influenced regional policies and created replicable models being implemented across the country. GreenRoots’ model and impact helped contribute to the successful pursuit of the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize for the City of Chelsea in 2017. This annual prize honors communities throughout the U.S. for their unwavering, innovative, and collaborative efforts to ensure all residents have the opportunity to live healthier lives.

INDICATOR	2017
Youth engaged in GreenRoots and/or ECO activities	125
Number of waterfront-related events	5
Flourishing Gardens/Urban Agricultural Space	3
New opportunities to develop waterfront access	3

