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City launches tree-planting program

Grant from TD Bank helps fund initiative, starting with 11 saplings in Hird Park Tuesday

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CLIFTON — Not all good deeds are necessarily punished. In fact, if a city takes on the job of planting trees, it may just get duly rewarded.

In Clifton's case, the reward was a \$20,000 grant from TD Bank to plant about 50 trees in three of the city's parks.

Called the Green Streets Grant, it supports tree-planting initiatives for low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

As a thank-you, the city feted TD Bank and others on April 24 while planting 11 trees in Hird Park and invited students from Clifton School 12 to take part.

The other 39 trees are to be planted in



Volunteers plant a tree Tuesday in Clifton's Hird Park. MATT FAGAN/NORTHJERSEY.COM

Trees

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Randolph and Nash parks by Arbor Day.

The trees are needed, said City Councilman Ray Grabowski. The wintry blasts that brought snow and high winds took a toll on the parks' trees.

Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr. said he couldn't pass up a chance to visit his old haunts. He told students from School 12 that as youth he would come over from Paterson to play stickball at their school.

"This is a reflection of how the mayor and City Council feel about the environment and keeping Clifton green," Pascrell said.

After all, trees are a gift that keeps on giving, providing cooling and cleaner air and having a calming effect on neighborhoods.

There are studies that suggest greenery is linked to reduced crime, possibly because trees encourage outdoor socializing and reduce irritability.

While these theories are debatable, Clifton's Recycling and Clean Communities Coordinator Al DuBois said what's not in dispute is that trees pro-



A newly planted tree with an older one in the background at Hird Park.

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vide shade, absorb carbon dioxide and harmful pollutants and release oxygen.

These factors work to reduce the effects of climate change. As a bonus, a leafy neighborhood tends to increase home values.