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### **ESSEX FOUNDATION RESPONDS TO LOCAL PROJECTS IN NEED OF FAST ACTION**

*Underwrites material costs for Essex gateway bridge painting, plans for further grounds beautification*

Essex, CT – For 46 years, the Essex Foundation has been quietly tending to the unique and special needs of the Essex community, answering calls for assistance when fast action is needed. Most recently, the nonprofit group lent financial support to the highway bridge painting project at the Route 9, exit 3 section of town. The Connecticut Department of Transportation's tree and shrub removal along state highway barriers had further exposed the patched-paint and rusted appearance of the bridge and left the landscape bare. Public outcry over the "tacky" condition of what is considered the gateway to Essex was fierce, with local residents asking town officials to find a solution. That solution came in the form of a collaboration between Essex residents Steve and Susan Bogan, owners of Blast-All Construction, who provided the in-kind donation of project planning, supervision, equipment, and labor services; the Town of Essex who provided police supervision and traffic re-routing services; and the Essex Foundation, the Essex Rotary Club, and many individual donors, who together provided a total of \$18,000 for the purchase of the paint.



The initiative started in 2015 when the Bogans approached the Essex Foundation with a plan for painting the bridge at no cost to taxpayers. As a contractor for state and federal bridge work, Blast-All worked with the CT D.O.T. and the Union Apprenticeship program to have the Essex gateway bridge serve as a training site. The Bogans also met with town officials to secure local police assistance for traffic re-routing and worker safety, while the Essex Foundation, the Essex Rotary Club and many individual donors provided financial support

for the paint and material costs. In less than a year, with an entire community behind the effort, the bridge painting work is complete with the exception of the end panels, which are soon to be repaired by the D.O.T. and then painted by Blast-All. The Essex Foundation is now in the planning stages of a grounds beautification project that will include plantings for the area around the gateway bridge.