



Trees Please Winnipeg

Investing in Trees for a Healthy, Thriving City

February 17, 2021

Budget Submission to the Manitoba Government: Request for Natural Infrastructure Funding for Urban Forests

Dear Minister Fielding,

The Trees Please Winnipeg Coalition requests that the Manitoba government include provisions in its 2021 Budget for long-term sustainable investment in the province's urban forests.

Our urban forests are a precious resource and much-loved feature of our town and city landscapes. They are also valuable natural assets. Based on the benefits Winnipeg's urban forest provides – including carbon storage, mitigating storm runoff, offsetting energy costs and enhancing human health – the City of Winnipeg's Urban Forestry Branch estimates that the value of the City's urban canopy is more than \$3 billion.

But urban forests across this province, like the one in Winnipeg, also face mounting threats from invasive pests and disease, the pressures of urban development and climate change. **To address these multiple threats, the City of Winnipeg and Manitoba municipalities require stable long-term investment to maintain, protect, diversify and expand their mature urban canopies.**

To preserve urban forests across the province for the benefit of future generations, we're calling on all levels of government to classify urban trees as natural assets and make long term, sustainable natural infrastructure funding available to Winnipeg and Manitoba municipalities for the maintenance, protection and expansion of our urban canopies.

Requests: To accomplish that, Trees Please Winnipeg calls on The Manitoba Government to:

1. Declare urban forests essential municipal infrastructure and treat urban forests as assets;
2. Work with federal and municipal counterparts to invest in urban forests as infrastructure;
3. Include urban forests and other natural assets in provincial green infrastructure, climate change adaptation and carbon-capture funding programs;
4. Include urban forests in regional planning and infrastructure strategies;
5. Investigate how the provincial government might further assist the City Of Winnipeg in the maintenance, protection and diversification of its urban and riparian forests, under the Forest Health Protection Act.

*The Trees Please Winnipeg Coalition is a citywide association of resident and community groups, working together with **Trees Winnipeg, OURS Winnipeg, The Manitoba Eco-Network and the Manitoba Urban Forest Council** to secure long term, sustainable funding for Winnipeg's urban forest and those in municipalities across Manitoba.*

For more information please contact:

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The following organizations have signed on in support of the Trees Please Winnipeg Budget 2021 submission:



OURS-WINNIPEG

Outdoor Urban Recreational Spaces