



Trees Please Winnipeg

Investing in Trees for a Healthy, Thriving City

February 17, 2021

Budget Submission:

Request for Natural Infrastructure Funding for Urban Forests

Dear Minister Freeland,

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

Canada's urban forests are a precious resource and much-loved feature of the urban landscape. They are also valuable natural assets. Based on the structural value and benefits Winnipeg's urban forest provides – including carbon storage, energy cost savings and enhancing human health – the City of Winnipeg's Urban Forestry Branch estimates the value of the City's urban canopy at more than \$3 billion.

But urban forests across Canada, like Winnipeg's, also face mounting threats from invasive pests and disease to the pressures of urban development and climate change. **Maintaining, protecting, diversifying and expanding our mature urban canopies in the face of multiple threats can no longer be the primary or sole financial responsibility of city and municipal governments.**

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

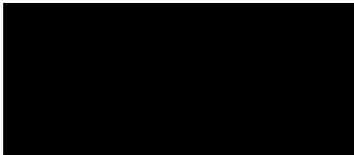
Request: The Trees Please Coalition calls on the federal government to designate urban forests as natural assets, and invest in their maintenance, protection and expansion as follows:

1. Provide funding for urban forests as essential infrastructure, and require that municipal governments include or be in the process of including natural assets, like urban forests in their asset management plans.
2. Establish a designated Natural Infrastructure Fund for the protection, maintenance, expansion and diversification of urban forests and other natural assets.
3. Renew and expand the Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund and lower the minimum request for new natural infrastructure projects from \$20 million.
4. Require all federally funded infrastructure projects to include plans for the protection and enhancement of natural assets.
5. Introduce urban canopy enhancement programs in the Two Billion-Tree Initiative.

The Trees Please Winnipeg Coalition is a citywide association of resident and community groups, working together with the David Suzuki Foundation, Trees Winnipeg, OURS Winnipeg, the Manitoba Urban Forest Council, The Ontario Urban Forest Council, LEAF Ontario, The Manitoba Eco-Network, Reforest London, REEP, Green Ventures and The Oakvillegreen Conservation Association Inc. to secure long-term sustainable funding for Winnipeg's urban forest and those across Canada.

For more information please contact:

Erna Buffie



Tree Canada's letter of support is appended to this submission. The following organizations have signed on in support of the Trees Please Winnipeg Budget 2021 submission:





February 16, 2021

Attn: The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, PC, MP
Deputy Prime Minister, Government of Canada

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the budget submission made by the Winnipeg Trees Please Coalition

This letter is to indicate Tree Canada's support for the budget submission prepared by the Winnipeg Trees Please Coalition.

Tree Canada is the only national non-profit organization dedicated to planting and nurturing trees in rural and urban environments through community granting programs, research initiatives, and engagement efforts. We recognize and understand the value that trees bring to urban communities, particularly in a time of critical need.

Urban trees provide millions of dollars in environmental benefits through the reduction of heat islands, air quality improvement, carbon sequestration and storm water retention to more than 80% of Canadians. In addition, trees provide many other ecological, social and economic benefits. Understanding that resource is the first step in being able to effectively and sustainably manage it as a community resource.

The budget submission made by the WinnipegTrees Please Coalition is consistent with Tree Canada's mission to bolster Canada's urban forests and we applaud their efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danielle St-Aubin".

Danielle St-Aubin, MBA
CEO, Tree Canada