



QUICK FACTS FALL 2025

OVERVIEW

Most Winnipeggers are concerned about climate change (77%) and almost half say this impacts their physical or mental health.

Two thirds of Winnipeggers are concerned that climate change is or will impact green spaces and trees. They also worry about extreme heat, and sewer and storm damage. 43% say preserving our green spaces should be one of the top three priorities for the city's climate change initiatives.*

In Winnipeg, projections show that between 2051-80 the number of days on average per year with temperatures above 30 C will range from 27 to 50, up from 12 days for the period 1951-80.**

The vast majority of Winnipeg's tree canopy is on private property. The trees in our yards and businesses create an urban forest of over three million trees. Winnipeg risks losing almost 50% of our public trees in the next four decades to pests and disease. Development means even more stress and lost trees.

In 2023, Winnipeg City Council adopted a new Urban Forestry Strategy that promises our canopy will cover a quarter of our city by 2065. (Our canopy coverage was 17% in 2018). To help achieve this goal, Winnipeg's first public/private tree protection bylaw is now in development at City Hall.

WHY OUR TREES ARE SO IMPORTANT

We need to protect our big, healthy trees, because our trees protect us in return.

A well-treed neighbourhood provides shade and can be four degrees cooler than a neighbourhood without trees.

Trees absorb rainwater, reducing the stress on our sewers and pipes.

A large, healthy tree can store approximately 65 times more carbon and remove 15 times more air pollution than a small tree.

Shade from trees can double the life of an asphalt road.

HOW WE PROTECT OUR TREES IN CANADA

Many other Canadian cities have bylaws governing private property trees: ***

- Toronto (pop 2.8 million) and many other Ontario municipalities have a private tree bylaw with permits required/fines.
- Vancouver (pop 662,000) bylaw passed in 1994, updated in 2014 - permit required, fines
- Edmonton (pop 1.2 million) - permit required for significant tree removal on private property - under the Community Standards Bylaw.
- Burnaby (pop 250,000) - bylaw passed in 2014 - permit required
- Surrey (pop 568,000) - bylaw passed in 2006 - permit required/fines
- Mississauga (pop 718,000) - bylaw passed in 2022 - permit required/fines
- Ottawa (pop 1 million) - bylaw passed in 2021 - permit required/fines
- Brampton (pop 656,000) - bylaw passed in 2012 - permit required/fines

WINNIPEG'S ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

Mayor Scott Gillingham and all City Councillors signed the Trees Please Pledge in 2022, and have made excellent progress.

In 2020, the replanting rate was just 20% and now it has jumped to 100%, meaning that for every tree that's removed, a new one is planted. Pruning public trees has also improved substantially, from 31 years. As of 2023, the rate for park trees is now every 13.8 years (target = every 12 years) and for boulevard trees is every 10.4 years (target = every 7 years).

HOW WE CAN HELP OUR TREES AND GREEN SPACES

Winnipeg is falling behind in protecting our urban canopy on private property.

City Council is reviewing what could go into a new bylaw to protect trees on private property in 2025

We need more work in two main areas, and call on all concerned citizens to get involved!

1. Review the Upcoming Draft Tree Bylaw for trees on private property. A report on what that bylaw could include is expected to be released in 2025. Sign up to receive updates for consultation at: <https://engage.winnipeg.ca/about-engagement>

2. Improve construction practices in both public and private spaces that protect trees and increase their chance of survival during construction projects.

We advocate that the City work with the housing and construction industries to develop a policy based on the United Kingdom model: “*The Considerate Constructors Scheme*” (<https://www.considerateconstructors.com/>), sets standards for best practice in worker wellbeing, community relations and environmental impact.

Builders who comply with these standards have a competitive edge when bidding on projects, as many clients and local authorities prefer to work with registered Considerate Contractors.

We call on the City and all construction industry professionals to work together to:

- Develop and implement a tree protection protocol/standards for construction activities that can damage or kill trees;
- Encourage all companies engaged in construction in Winnipeg to respect those protocols; and
- Ensure their workers understand, respect, and follow those protocols.

*Probe Research, City of Winnipeg, released April 2025.
<https://clkapps.winnipeg.ca/DMIS/ViewPdf.asp?SectionId=766123>

**The projections from the federally funded ClimateData.ca portal are based on 24 different climate models. Comparing 30-year averages ensures that what is described reflects the overall climate and not the more variable experience of weather.

***Trees Winnipeg commissioned Jurisdictional Scan: Private Tree Bylaws and Urban Forest Strategies in Jurisdictions Across Canada 2024)

Trees Please Winnipeg is coalition of volunteer resident groups lobbying all levels of government to make long-term, sustainable infrastructure investments in the maintenance, diversification and expansion of our urban forests.