



March 19, 2019

### **Trees Winnipeg Celebrates First Day of Spring with Long-Term Vision**

Tree planting program sets out to strengthen Winnipeg's urban forest

**Winnipeg, MB** – With spring officially starting tomorrow, **Trees Winnipeg** encourages Winnipeggers to play a role in the long-term health of the city's forest canopy by participating in its **Winnipeg ReLeaf Tree Planting Program**. Each spring, ReLeaf program tree seedling packages are available to residential and commercial property owners in and around Winnipeg.

"The ReLeaf program has the potential to help improve the overall health of the city's urban forest as it is **the only program in Winnipeg dedicated to diversifying tree species on private property**," says **Gerry Engel** of Trees Winnipeg, a non-profit organization. "With the growing incidence of Dutch elm disease, the arrival of the emerald ash borer, and substantial decreases to the city's urban forest budget, Winnipeg's urban canopy on private and public property is facing serious challenges."

Our program ensures that private property owners have access to healthy young trees at an economical price, learn tree-planting best practices, and help contribute to the strengthening of Winnipeg's beautiful urban forest canopy for decades and generations to come, he adds.

This year, the four ReLeaf tree collections are crab apple, maple, linden and mountain ash, and lilac and plum. Also included in the heavily-subsidized \$55 fee are tree planting and care workshops to be held in May. Participants will learn, for instance, that the leading cause of tree mortality in newly-planted trees is improper planting (typically, by planting too low.) Technical support is also available. The ReLeaf program is available until May 1 <http://treeswinnipeg.org/releaf-tree-planting-program/>

Every year, ReLeaf is delivered by **Trees Winnipeg** in partnership with the **City of Winnipeg** and the volunteer support of the **International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)**. While the City of Winnipeg replants trees on public property, it is estimated the number of trees replaced on private property is extremely low.

**Trees Winnipeg** is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to protecting, preserving and educating the public on the urban forests and urban environments in Winnipeg and surrounding communities. We accomplish this by offering events and programs that raise public awareness about the role, value and benefits of the urban forest, by providing education and training opportunities to the arborist community and the public, and by collaborating with like-minded organizations and community groups. Trees Winnipeg, formerly known as The Coalition to Save the Elms, was founded in 1992 in response to the heightened threat to Winnipeg's extraordinary American elm tree population by Dutch elm disease.

#### **CONTACT:**

**Media:** Tamara Bodi, Trees Winnipeg board member, 204-781-9002 [tbodi@mckimcg.ca](mailto:tbodi@mckimcg.ca)

**ReLeaf Program and Trees Winnipeg:** Lisa Jones, Trees Winnipeg Program Director, 204-832-7188 [office@treeswinnipeg.org](mailto:office@treeswinnipeg.org)

