Trees Winnipeg (Coalition to Save the Elms) funding request

To: The Chair and Members of Executive Policy Committee

From: Trees Winnipeg

Date: February 4, 2009

Trees Winnipeg is a not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of the urban forest. We have been in existence since 1992, and have broadened our focus from protecting the city's elms, to caring for the urban forest as a whole. There are few, if any, major cities in North America that can boast an urban forest as spectacular as Winnipeg's. It is a piece of living infrastructure of which our citizens can be justly proud.

We are the only not-for-profit organization in the city to do tree banding on a mass scale, and the annual fall banding campaign protects thousands of the city's trees from damage and stress caused by defoliation from cankerworms.

Trees Winnipeg survives on a limited number of sources of revenue. These include a few government grants, which are always given to fund specific projects and do not provide us with core funding. We also receive membership fees and private donations, as well as the proceeds from our annual tree banding campaign.

We are proud to be recognized as a partner to the City, and to be doing work that supports the City's own goals. For example, our work in tree banding compliments and supports the work done every spring by the City's Insect Control Branch on the cankerworm issue. Many citizens band trees on City property, thanks to the work done by Trees Winnipeg.

Trees Winnipeg also receives funding from the City of Winnipeg by way of a fee for service agreement, which is largely centered around public education. This includes education about Dutch elm disease, and the stimulation of citizen action to help protect Winnipeg's green infrastructure

The amount paid under this agreement is only $20,000 per year and has not been increased since its inception.

We are requesting an increase so that we may continue to support the City's work, and to preserve the living infrastructure that makes Winnipeg such a special place to live.