Trees Riverview

December 5, 2021

City of Winnipeg
500 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1B9

Re: The 2022 operating and capital budget

Dear City of Winnipeg,

The preservation, restoration and enhancement of the public tree canopy in Winnipeg is of vital importance to the health, beauty and sustainability of our city.

Our public parks and streets lined by elms and ash and other species provide shade for our homes, habitat for birds and other life, and beauty to our neighbourhoods. Our trees support our collective climate change fight, help with flood control and provide energy savings.

Yet, we are losing thousands of trees every year--an average of 5,500 public trees are removed annually. Yet just 2000 trees are planted per year on average. This is a deep and tragic loss to our city.

In 2017, the City's records show that the number of boulevard and park trees numbered 304,530. By 2020, that had dropped to 294,444--a decline of 10,000 trees in just three years.

Trees Riverview is a new grassroots community group in Riverview, in south Winnipeg. We are committed to doing our part to protect, restore and enhance the public tree canopy in our small neighbourhood, but the plight of our shared urban forest across the whole city requires all hands on deck. The City of Winnipeg needs to do more!

As the City prepares its 2022 operating and capital budget, please prioritize support for our endangered boulevard and park trees.

We are pleased to see there has been an increase of $2 million in the Urban Forest Department's proposed operating budget for the coming year--but this will not do nearly enough to catch up on the 80% backlog in tree replacement, nor help the City get close to the 7-year best practice pruning cycle needed to preserve our existing tree canopy.

We recognize there are many competing and demanding issues the City of Winnipeg needs to consider in preparing each year's budget. We urge you, however, to support the goal of securing sustainable funding for our urban forest that is commensurate with the danger our trees are in--and the value that these trees provide all of us.

Sincerely,



Carol Thiessen (On behalf of Trees Riverview)