

Dear Minister Freeland:

I am writing in support of the *Trees Please Winnipeg Coalition's* submission to the Pre-Budget Consultations calling on the Government of Canada to make natural infrastructure funds available to cities and municipalities for the maintenance, protection, diversification and expansion of urban forests.

I am dismayed and alarmed to see so many mature city trees coming down and then waiting, sometimes for years, to see them replaced with saplings.

Urban forests are essential and valuable natural assets that provide a host of services to urban dwellers, from carbon storage and offsetting energy costs to absorbing pollution and enhancing our health. Besides providing beauty and shade to our urban heat-islands, trees provide many more benefits, including: clean our air, absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, reduce flooding from rainfall, limit erosion, give UV protection, contribute to biodiversity, act as wind-breaks.

In June of 2014, TD Economics (Toronto Dominion Bank) issued a Special Report entitled "Urban Forests: The Value of Trees in the City of Toronto", thereby outlining the economic value of trees to the City. Back then, the authors of the report estimated that Toronto's urban forest was worth **\$7 Billion, provided \$80 million in environmental benefits and cost savings. In addition, the report states, "for every dollar spent on annual maintenance, Toronto's Urban Forest returns anywhere from \$1.35 - \$3.20 worth of benefits and cost savings each year."**

Urban trees face multiple threats ranging from invasive pests and disease to urban development and climate change. Canadian cities cannot keep up with the needs of urban forests if they bear sole financial responsibility for the maintenance, protection, and development of their urban forests.

It is time for change. Please work with cities to classify urban trees assets, include them as an essential part of urban infrastructure and make provisions in the federal budget to help fund their maintenance and development, to ensure a green future for generations to come.

Sincerely,

cc. Your local MP

**LINK TO: [Trees Please Winnipeg Coalition Submission to Pre-Budget Consultations](#)**