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Arbor Day Foundation Recognizes City of Fitchburg with a *Growth Award*
City of Fitchburg receives recognition for efforts to inventory trees, passing a tree protection ordinance, and City residents donating over 500 volunteer hours dedicated to tree planting and maintenance.

Fitchburg, Wisconsin – City of Fitchburg, a *Tree Cities of the World*, received a *Growth Award* from the Arbor Day Foundation for committing to go above and beyond the *Tree City of the World* designation by demonstrating dedication to planting and maintaining trees on city streets and parks.

To earn the *Growth Award* recognition, the City of Fitchburg has demonstrated its commitment to urban forestry by updating a tree inventory, passing a tree protection ordinance, and managing a robust volunteer program. Volunteers planted and maintained over 50 trees in 2023. Some of these trees were bare-root trees planted in narrow terraces in neighborhoods that traditionally did not have street trees. Through this effort, the City of Fitchburg is working to achieve a 30% tree canopy goal in the Urban Service Area.

Volunteers also donated hundreds of hours of time removing invasive shrubs from City parks along with planting and maintaining native trees. Because of severe drought, this included many hours of hand watering trees.

In addition to these efforts, the City of Fitchburg recognizes the benefits of trees by planting over 400 trees a year and maintaining over 14,000 trees on public properties. These trees have many benefits including enhancing and improving property values, alleviating air and water pollution, conserving energy, providing a noise and visual buffer, providing wildlife habitat, and promoting the health and safety of all residents. Perhaps most of all, trees increase the quality of residents' life in the City of Fitchburg every day.

Mayor Julia Arata-Fratta will celebrate this designation by planting a tree on Arbor Day, Friday April 26th on the City Hall Campus. The event will take place at 10:30 AM. Please feel free to attend.

About the Arbor Day Foundation

Founded in 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation is the world's largest membership nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees. With a focus in communities and forests of greatest need, the Foundation — alongside its more than 1 million members, supporters and valued partners — has helped to plant nearly 500 million trees in more than 50 countries. Guided by its mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees, the Arbor Day Foundation is committed to unlocking the power of trees to help solve critical issues facing people and the planet. Learn more about the impact of the Arbor Day Foundation at arborday.org. More information on the Tree City of the World program can be found at <https://treecitiesoftheworld.org/>.

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