



CITY OF HARRISONBURG PUBLIC WORKS

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Friendly by Nature, Harrisonburg designated Tree City USA for 15th time

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The Friendly City’s Public Works department is dedicated to Urban Forestry. And it’s that dedication to trees in our community which has resulted in Harrisonburg once again being honored as a Tree City USA.

The selection, made by the Arbor Day Foundation, is the 15th such honor for the City.

“Trees are so important, as they beautify the community, reinvigorate neighborhoods, and clean our air and drinking water,” U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (Va.) wrote in a letter to Harrisonburg City Manager Eric D. Campbell regarding the honor. “As good stewards of our natural resources, caring for and planting trees creates a brighter and healthier future for us all. I commend you for your leadership.”

Through the support of City departments such as Public Works and Parks & Recreation, Green Space Manager Jeremy Harold has been able to grow tree management into an Urban Forestry Program. The Urban Forestry team manages existing trees on public lands in the City, plans for future tree growth of native species, provides education and informational assistance for those looking to plant trees on private property and helps in organizing volunteer tree planting events on public lands, in communities and at our schools.

Each of these activities works toward Harrisonburg earning the Tree City USA designation, as there are many ways Harrisonburg remains Friendly by Nature.



(Above) An ash tree provides shade for a shelter at Ralph Sampson Park. Maintaining the tree canopy is a vital goal of Harrisonburg staff.

“There are a number of ways that residents can help us protect the local environment and keep our tree canopy strong,” Harold said. “One way is to help keep an eye out for emerald ash borers, which have done serious damage to our local ash trees. Another is to take part in our upcoming survey seeking input from residents about how to increase our tree canopy. We need everyone to pitch in to help this be a success.”

Want to learn more? Visit www.harrisonburgva.gov/urban-forestry-program and stay tuned for more information as the team develops the Urban Forestry Management Plan over the next several months. Funding for the plan development is thanks, in large part, to a grant from the Virginia Department of Forestry.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov

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