

## CANSTAR COMMUNITY NEWS

News Media Canada  
Médias d'Info Canada



The *Lance* is a member of the National Newsmedia Council, which is an independent organization established to determine acceptable journalistic practises and ethical behaviour. If you have concerns about editorial content, please contact managing editor John Kendle at john.kendle@canstarnews.com or 204-697-7093. If you are not satisfied with the response and wish to file a formal complaint, visit the website at [www.mediacouncil.ca](http://www.mediacouncil.ca) and fill out the form or call toll-free 1-844-877-1163 for additional information.

*Publisher's liability for error: The publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.*

# City at risk of losing its ash trees



**Michele  
Kading**  
COMMUNITY  
CORRESPONDENT

## ST. VITAL

Nature is priceless to me. It is my refuge, my entertainment, my teacher.

Describing the intrinsic value of nature is easy. Putting a dollar value on natural assets is more difficult. And yet, Winnipeg has tried to do this in its 2018 City Asset Management Plan (AMP).

This approach is useful for assessing grey infrastructure — things people have built. It is problematic for assessing green infrastructure like forests, rivers, and prairie.

What assets do we own? Winnipeg has approximately 2,000 acres of forest in parks. This is 1.7 per cent of Winnipeg's total area. The city's tree inventory describes over 300,000 publicly owned trees. It does not include trees in natural areas, along the Seine River, or on private land.

What is the asset worth? While we can estimate the monetary value of an individual tree, this cannot be extrapolated to an entire forest ecosystem. A forest is much more than just trees.

How old is the asset and what is its life expectancy? The age of a boulevard tree can be determined and the life expectancy for various species is known. A forest can be hundreds of years old. It can replace itself in perpetuity with no capital investment.

What is the asset's condition and replacement cost? Winnipeg is at risk of losing all

of its ash trees, with an estimated value of over \$1.5 billion, to the emerald ash borer. It would cost over \$222 million dollars (\$740 per tree) to replace the city's 300,000 public trees on streets, in parks, and along trails.

What are Winnipeg's forests, parks, and open spaces worth to you? Complete the city's on-line survey ([www.winnipeg.ca/recandparks](http://www.winnipeg.ca/recandparks)) before June 30 to weigh in on the city's recreation and parks strategies that will guide investment into Winnipeg's parks for the next 25 years. Watch for workshops in June.

If you need some inspiration, Wilma Sotas is leading a walk along the South Trail to Creek Bend Road on Sat., June 2. Meet at 815 St. Anne's Rd. at 1:30 p.m.

*Michele Kading is a community correspondent for St. Vital and the executive director for Save Our Seine ([www.saveourseine.com](http://www.saveourseine.com)).*