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CITY OF NORFOLK CELEBRATING TREES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS ARBOR DAY

The City of Norfolk has a lot to celebrate this Arbor Day. Late last fall, the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) awarded tree planting grants to nine communities within the LENRD. Norfolk is one of the communities that received tree planting funds through the LENRD's Community Forestry Grant. The Parks Tree Replacement and Landscaping Project received \$4,415.00 which will go towards adding trees to Embrace Park and replacing trees at the Skyview Arboretum as well as along Thirteenth Street.

Not only did the City receive grant money to continue beautifying the community, but was also named a 2017 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation in honor of its commitment to effective urban forest management. The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. The community also received a Tree City USA Growth Award for demonstrating environmental improvement and higher level of tree care.

Norfolk achieved Tree City USA recognition by meeting the program's four requirements: a tree board or department, a tree-care ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

"We're proud to continue our tradition as a Tree City," said Norfolk Mayor, Josh Moenning. "This Arbor Day we encourage all citizens to participate by planting a tree. Increasing our tree population and varieties benefits the entire community by improving appearances, increasing property values, reducing home cooling costs, and improving air quality."

Citizens are encouraged to plant one tree before Memorial Day in honor of Arbor Day this year, and share a tree planting selfie with us on Facebook and Twitter using #NorfolkNETreeSelfie

Dr. Tom Surber, Chairman of the Norfolk Tree Advisory Board, has a few suggestions about what kinds of trees may do well in Norfolk.

"The Nebraska State Forest Service, Nebraska Extension Service, and Nebraska Arboretum all have lists of suggested trees for Nebraska, or more specifically Eastern Nebraska, on their websites," said Surber. "Be very careful of plant zones. I still look for Zone 4 plants. Some trees that may do well in Norfolk include:

- Japanese Lilac Tree – large white flower clusters in June; 30-50 feet tall when mature
- Sycamore – White bark on upper branches; prefers low lands
- Catalpa – large, white petal flowers; Drops large petals, later the large pods, and later the large leaves
- Star Magnolia – needs protection by other trees; excellent mass of white in early spring (there are two on the west side of Skyview)
- Ginkgo – unusual leaf shape which makes it interesting; leaves turn a golden hue before falling

If you're not able to plant a tree this year, take a visit to a local arboretum. Skyview Park, for example, is the home to the state accredited Skyview Arboretum. It has grown from a few trees into a collection of over 166 plantings representing over 127 different cultivars of trees and shrubs. A partial list of the plantings is available on the website: <https://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/parks/arboretum.htm>

As important as it is to plant trees in the community, it is also important to keep trees on your property and terrace trimmed, pruned, and maintained in a healthy manner. Trees need to be trimmed to provide a required 14' clearance over streets and alleys, and 8' clearance over the public sidewalk. Not only does this keep the city aesthetically pleasing, but safe as well.