

PRESSRELEASE

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Michigan City Awarded Tree City USA Distinction



Michigan City, Indiana (April 14, 2003) – Mayor Sheila Brillson announced that Michigan City has once again been named as a Tree City USA.

“I would like to thank the Tree Board, the City Team and the citizens of our community,” said Mayor Brillson, “for their contributions that resulted in Michigan City being honored with the Tree City USA designation again this year.”

The National Arbor Day Foundation explains that Tree City USA recognizes communities that have proven their commitment to an effective, ongoing community forestry program. Such a program is one marked by renewal and improvement.

To be recognized as a Tree City, a community must meet standards which provide initial direction for an urban or community forestry program. “Like the first rungs on a ladder,” the National Arbor Day Foundation states, “the standards help get a community started toward annual, systematic management of its tree resources.” The Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters set the standards for the Tree City program.

“Michigan City has met the standards for achieving Tree City status since 2001,” said Mayor Brillson. “These standards include education, public image, citizen pride, and financial assistance.”

The first criteria a city must meet for the Tree City status is to have a Tree Board, which is legally responsible for the care and management of the community's trees.

“Michigan City’s Tree Board is comprised of concerned volunteer citizens charged by ordinance with developing and administering a comprehensive tree management program. They have developed an urban forest management program which protects, maintains and replaces trees on city property. The Tree Board has worked to regulate those who cut and prune trees in our community, and to compile a tree inventory, including size, species and condition of area trees, as well as a comprehensive tree maintenance plan,” Brillson said. “Members of the Tree Board are William Bolton, Robert Frame, Dan Carabine, Dave Morlan, Joseph LaRocco, John Flegel, and Mick Wulff. I would like to commend them for their efforts in protecting our community’s trees and for their vision for the future of our urban forest.”

There must be a Tree Care Ordinance before a community may be defined as a Tree City. Michigan City’s tree ordinance designates the establishment of a tree board and gives this body the responsibility for writing and implementing an annual community forestry work plan. This plan addresses species diversity, planting needs, hazardous trees, insect and disease problems and a pattern of regular care such as pruning and watering.

A community must have in place a Forestry Program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita. Working toward Tree City USA recognition was used to re-examine our community's budget priorities and re-direct funds to properly care for its tree resource. There are 45 Indiana cities who have been awarded the Tree City USA distinction; 29 of those cities have populations of 33,000 or less.

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