

CITY OF JEFFERS AWARDED GRANT FUNDS THROUGH MINNESOTA DNR'S SHADE TREE PROGRAM

The City of Jeffers was awarded grant funds through the Minnesota DNR's Shade Tree Program to conduct the City's Shade Tree Project. The primary focus of this project is removal of ash trees from public park property within the City of Jeffers, followed by planting replacement trees to maintain & improve tree canopy cover. Proactively removing ash trees is important as emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) threatens the future of ash trees across Minnesota. Emerald ash borer, known as EAB, bores into ash trees and cuts off food and water supply, ultimately killing the trees. These dead trees can become safety hazards, and the safety of the City's residents is a top priority.

Physical labor for the project, including removal of ash trees, site preparation for planting of new trees, and the planting of new trees, will be contracted out to a qualified contractor and covered by the grant. A variety of replacement trees will be planted, and are anticipated to consist of elm, birch, and aspen, to boost diversity in the tree canopy within the City of Jeffers.

The project will result in enhanced public spaces which may be utilized by all residents for recreation & outdoor gatherings, providing an opportunity for residents to connect with nature while creating a resilient, sustainable community for current and future generations. The City will host an educational workshop to train residents on proper tree care and invite them to "Adopt-a-Tree." These dedicated residents will assist the City in maintaining these newly planted trees to ensure their longevity and help build a stronger community. Information on the workshop will be provided at a later date.

Total grant funds awarded for the project is \$81,180. Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.

This project is being conducted in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

