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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# MEDIA RELEASE

FOR EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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## Westerville Receives Urban Forestry Accreditation

WESTERVILLE, OH – The City of Westerville, Ohio is the latest community to join a prestigious group of communities accredited by the Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA).

SMA Accreditation is the highest honor for municipal urban forestry programs. To obtain this honor takes a professional and compassionate approach to tree care. SMA accredited programs must have an ISA Certified Arborist on staff, an approved Local Forest Master Plan, a Tree City USA growth award certification, show private contract preference for TCIA accredited tree care companies, adhere to ANSI standards for safety and performance, and follow SMA's Code of Ethics.

Communities with a growing appreciation for the value of green infrastructure are taking steps to maintain their trees. Unlike other parts of a city's infrastructure an urban forest can actually increase in value. A healthy urban forest provides many benefits for cities, some of which include: beautification, reduction of the urban heat island effect, reduction of storm water runoff, reduction of air pollution, and reduction of energy costs through increased shade over buildings, enhancement of property values, improved wildlife habitat, and mitigation of overall urban environmental impact. Furthermore, research has shown that city trees can improve real estate values, attract shoppers, improve worker productivity, reduce crime, and improve children's school performance.

### ABOUT SMA

The Society of Municipal Arborists ([www.urban-forestry.com](http://www.urban-forestry.com)) is a not-for-profit international organization of municipal arborists, urban and community foresters, members of tree boards, tree wardens, consultants, municipal officials, and students who are involved in the professional management of trees where over 114 million people live, work, and play. SMA leads the world in building the confidence, competence, and camaraderie of the family of professionals who create and sustain community forests.

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