

This flag raising ceremony ushers in a week of events planned for National Forest Week, and we are so proud of everyone taking part. A flag, and the city proclamation are both important symbols of National Forest Week and of utmost importance to the citizens of the City of Saskatoon. Flags are a display of honor and support for our urban forests, our street and boulevard trees, city park and riverbank forests, Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area, and George Genereux Urban Regional Park. Flying a flag is a powerful method to honour the life giving benefits we derive from forests.

As you continue, you will discover what the National Forest Week flag represents and why flag-raising ceremonies take place in Saskatoon. We encourage you to keep your eye peeled for the National Forest Flag whenever you walk, bus, bicycle or drive past City Hall.

How can you show support for trees and forests in Saskatoon? Come out to the flag-raising ceremony Monday September 20 at 2:00. We will have a ceremony to usher in National Forest Week. There will be nine days of presentations by zoom from speakers across Canada, and local to Saskatoon. There will be tours, and in-person events taking place as well. Stay tuned for the complete calendar of events. National Forest Week is truly exciting, and a great way to pay our respects to trees and forests!

Urban forests celebrated by National Forest Week and Maple Leaf Day in September. Commemorations for trees and forests resonates with the City of Saskatoon strategic goal of environmental leadership, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Climate Action Plan, Low Emissions Community Plan, and the city's official community plan. A celebration focus on forest heritage, culture, traditions, and history highlights the importance of trees, their essential ecological services. Trees support biodiversity and ecosystems, mitigate flooding, raise the water table, absorb carbon dioxide, and provide life saving oxygen. National Forest Week provides public support for the tree decisions made by Urban Forestry, Parks, Public Works, Long range planning. It's a time for residents of the city to tell stories about their love of trees, and appreciation of forests, and how very blessed we are. The flag raising and proclamation are a reminder of our responsibilities, relationship and solidarity with trees and forests.

Flag Symbolism.

By raising a flag, this act unites citizens across the city to recognize the value of trees and forests in our life and community. A flag raising ceremony inaugurates a campaign to commemorate all the amazing benefits that our urban forests provide. This flag is a tribute to the role of urban forests in our life. More than one tree – an urban forest – is depicted inside a gold shield. This golden symbol of protection relates the value of protecting trees and urban forests through the Official Community plan, city departments Urban Forestry, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Parks and the tree policy. The shield of protection recognizes the value of biodiversity, nature-based solutions to climate action, and the very oxygen we breathe. The shield, stripes and use of the city's colors green and gold resonate with the symbolism of the City of Saskatoon, and the pride in the strategic goal of environmental leadership and the strategic goal of quality of life. The gold stripes, tell the same story as the City of Saskatoon flag, the diverse neighbourhoods in the city and how much the residents appreciate a green city. The green bands correlate with our ecosystem in a moist mixed grasslands prairie, and how fortunate we are that the city provides a beautiful green environment with trees in our parks and boulevards - a veritable forest on the prairies. The double green bands resonate with the National Maple Leaf flag of Canada symbolising our city's cultural heritage choosing yellow and green as our city's colors. The white bands resonate with peace, hope, tranquility – and therefore, this flag might be referred to as a city united between all the neighbourhoods as represented by the gold bands. The city protected forests and trees

in our neighbourhoods are flanked by two vertical green bars symbolizing our grassland prairies and our urban parks and forests. The gold is also the symbol of the harvest, reaping the invaluable history of ethnobotany, food forests, and the rich interdependence between the citizens of Saskatoon historically, and the harvest of enriched health and wellness for our residents and eco-system biodiversity presently and into the future.

The three trees of varied and mixed species together, an urban forest. The tree canopy providing shade, symbolizes the health benefits provided to residents from the cooling effect of trees during this era of climate change, and the reflection of trees in the water, as Saskatoon is a river city.

