

MEMORANDUM



TO: JEFFREY HERCZEG, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
FROM: KEITH SALOWICH, FORESTER/CONTRACTS SUPERVISOR
SUBJECT: 2025 ARBOR DAY RECAP
DATE: MAY 8, 2025

The City of Novi's annual Arbor Day event was held at Lakeshore Park on Saturday, April 26, to cap off an entire week of events and partnerships celebrating Earth Day and Arbor Day. Some of the highlights include:

- A trail along Lakeshore Park was lined with 22 signs listing interesting tree facts.
- The City partnered with Wild Birds Unlimited to host a guided birdwatching hike at Lakeshore Park on Monday, April 21.
- The City partnered with Novi Youth Council to develop and share seven eco-challenges to encourage more environmentally sustainable habits.
- City staff led another guided hike at Lakeshore Park on Thursday, April 24.
- Representatives from the Environmental Sustainability Committee planted an elm tree as the commemorative 2025 Arbor Day tree in Lakeshore Park.
- Dozens of volunteers helped remove invasive garlic mustard from Lakeshore Park to improve habitat.
- Five local environmental groups partnered with the City to provide educational booths for residents to visit during the Arbor Day event.
- There were 91 residents that signed up to receive and plant 726 native tree and shrub seedlings distributed by the City.

SEEDLING DISTRIBUTION BACKGROUND:

The City began celebrating Arbor Day by distributing free seedlings to residents in 2021. Since then, a total of 973 residents have signed up to receive and plant 6,045 seedlings.

This program not only engages the community with its urban forest but also increases the City of Novi's native canopy cover by encouraging residents to plant on their own private property, where the City is unable to plant.

The total cost for all 6,045 seedlings purchased since the program's inception in 2021 is \$11,045. Planting 6,045 tree and shrub seedlings using the City's planting contractor would cost approximately \$120,900. Empowering Novi residents to plant the trees has resulted in significant canopy growth at minimal costs.

Several residents sent in unsolicited, appreciative messages following the seedling distribution in 2025. Some of those messages are included below:

"Thank you for offering this to the community to help beautify Novi!"

"We love tree planting, and this is a great opportunity. Thank you!"

"Thank you for doing this! We took part a few years ago and the tulip tree in particular is doing amazing—it's more than 5 feet tall now! We are trying to clear the buckthorn out of our small woods that separate us from school grounds so it's nice to plant seedlings to try to help in the never-ending buckthorn battle! Thank you!"

"I am a teacher and will care for the plants with my class until the end of the school year."

"Thank you! I'm hoping to extend the small ninebark hedge I planted nearly two years ago. It's doing great... This is such a great program!"

"Thank you for this wonderful program!"



Novi High School student Rohan Joshi volunteers to help distribute free tree and shrub seedlings to the community.



A representative from Oakland County Parks converses with a Novi family during the City's Arbor Day event.



A volunteer works to remove invasive garlic mustard from Lakeshore Park to improve habitat and encourage species diversity.



City of Novi Councilpersons Brian Smith and Priya Gurumurthy planted an elm tree in Lakeshore Park as the 2025 commemorative Arbor Day tree.