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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Community Foundation Offering Free Trees to
Highland Homeowners Through Arbor Day
Foundation's Community Canopy Project**

Lincoln, Neb. [August 27, 2018] – With assistance from a \$2,000 NIPSCO Environmental Action Grant, Highland Community Foundation is providing up to two free trees to homeowners via a Community Canopy Project, an Arbor Day Foundation program that helps expand the tree canopies of cities and towns across the United States. The trees will provide a multitude of community benefits including air pollutant absorption, storm water filtration, carbon sequestration and energy conservation along with helping homeowners lower energy bills through strategic planting.

Highland homeowners can reserve their free trees at www.arborday.org/highland beginning August 27, 2018. A limited number of trees are available and will be distributed on a first come-first served basis. An online tool will help participants plant trees in the most strategic location near their homes to enable maximum environmental benefit and help estimate annual money savings that will result from planting the trees.

Homeowners can reserve up to two trees if they pledge to plant, water and care for them in the location provided by the online tool. The species of trees to be offered tentatively include: Northern Red Oak; American Sycamore; Swamp White Oak; Black Tupelo; and Baldcypress.

The Community Canopy Project for Highland will continue until 100 trees are reserved. The one-gallon trees will be delivered directly to homeowners at an ideal time for planting – tentatively around October 15, 2018.

“Not only does this project help beautify our town’s landscape, it also provides immense environmental benefits and can help our homeowners save money on their energy bills,” said Lance Ryskamp, President, Highland Community Foundation. “Trees will be sent to homeowner participants via UPS or USPS Priority Mail. Homeowners will not be required to pay anything. The trees will be FREE to them.”

The “Community Canopy Project” online tool was created by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Davey Institute, a division of Davey Tree Expert Co., and uses peer-reviewed scientific research from the USDA Forest Service’s i-Tree software to calculate estimated benefits. In addition to providing approximate energy savings, the tool also estimates the trees’ other benefits, including cleaner air, reduced carbon dioxide emissions and improved storm water management.

“My model shows that for 100 trees, the estimate of economic benefit would be about \$25,000 (20-year cumulative value)”, said Kristen Bousquet, Arbor Day Foundation Community Canopy Program Development Manager. “My estimate is based on the compilation of all Community Canopy programs and the impact that is being measured for all of these trees, but it will vary depending on species and planting location that homeowners choose.”

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About the Arbor Day Foundation

Founded in 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees, with more than one million members, supporters, and valued partners. During the last 44 years, more than 250 million Arbor Day Foundation trees have been planted in neighborhoods, communities, cities and forests throughout the world. Our vision is to help others understand and use trees as a solution to many of the global issues we face today, including air quality, water quality, climate change, deforestation, poverty and hunger.

As one of the world's largest operating conservation foundations, the Arbor Day Foundation, through its members, partners and programs, educates and engages stakeholders and communities across the globe to involve themselves in its mission of planting, nurturing and celebrating trees. More information is available at www.arborday.org.