

# Verification Report

## **Hennepin County Planting Project 2020-2022**

City Forest Credits Project Number 039

August 1, 2023

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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Matthew Lee (a Validation and Verification Body (VVB) acting as a third-party verifier) was engaged to verify the Hennepin County Planting Project 2020 - 2022 (Project), Hennepin County, Minnesota, for the planting of 968 trees during the period between May 4, 2020 – November 3, 2022. The goal of the verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion is materially correct, and that the assertions made by the project are well documented.

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Green Minneapolis and Hennepin County partnered on an urban tree planting project together, to issue carbon credits in the State of Minnesota. This project includes 968 trees that were planted within the County limits from May 4, 2020 - November 3, 2022. The trees have been planted in public right-of-way along County streets as well as on Hennepin County Facility or tax forfeited land where Hennepin County has the authority to plant and maintain trees. The method of planting is single-tree dispersed. The carbon quantification tool is “The Single Tree Initial Credit Tool for the Midwest Climate Zone”.

## 1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION

### Project Operator

Green Minneapolis

81 S 9th St Suite 260, Minneapolis, MN 55402, United States

Contact: Michaela Neu, Director of Programs & Operations

email: [mneu@greenminneapolis.org](mailto:mneu@greenminneapolis.org), phone: #904-404-2669

### Verifier

Matthew Lee

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Scottsville, VA 24590

Contact: [leemattthew82@gmail.com](mailto:leemattthew82@gmail.com); #434-426-2448

## 1.3 OBJECTIVE

The goal of this GHG emission removal verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion made by the Project is materially correct, that the assertions and assumptions used in the offset calculations are appropriate, that the offset calculations conform to the City Forest Credits (CFC) Protocol, and that the Project is in compliance with all CFC requirements relating to eligibility, accounting, and documentation.

# 2 VERIFICATION CRITERIA

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## 2.1 GENERAL

The Registry will accredit VVBs to act as third-party verifiers who meet the Registry's qualifications and complete training. Those accredited VVBs can then act to verify compliance with this Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol per International Standards Organization 14064-3. Specifically, the Registry adopts and utilizes the following standards from ISO 14064-3:

- Upon receiving a Project Design Document with data on eligibility, quantification of carbon and co-benefits, and a request for credits, the Registry will conduct a validation. If it validates the project at that stage, the Registry will retain a VVB to act as third-party verifier to verify compliance with this Protocol.
- The Registry requires a reasonable level of assurance in the accuracy of the asserted GHG removals to a reasonable level.
- The verification items identified in Tables 1 and 2 are all material elements, and any asserted GHG removals must be free of errors, misstatements, or omissions regarding those elements.
- The Registry will record, store, and track all quantification and verification data and either display it for public review or make it available for public review upon request.

## 2.2 PROTOCOL

The verification was conducted to the City Forest Credits Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol, version 11, dated February 24, 2023 which matches the recorded protocol in the Project Implementation Agreement.

## 2.3 LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

This verification was conducted to a reasonable level of assurance. The Verification Report accurately reflects the documentation contained in the Project Design Document and supporting documents.

# 3 SCOPE OF VERIFICATION

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- The Project is located in Hennepin County, specifically described in the Project Design Document.
- Period is May 4, 2020 - November 3, 2022.
- The verification includes review of documents, data, imagery, and other evidence provided by the Project Operator; independent checking of selected data; checking of calculations for accuracy and conformance with the Protocol.

## 4 VERIFICATION PROCESS

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### 4.1 VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES

The verification process consisted of the following activities:

- Verifier checked all requirements in the Protocol, confirmed that documentation satisfies the requirements of the Protocol, and that values extracted from the documents and conclusions drawn from the document are accurate and appropriate
- Verifier checked the maps of project location and the GIS data submitted of tree planting locations. Verifier also checked the attestation of planting which was signed and contained images of tree plantings and receipts of trees purchased for the project. Hennepin County staff affirmed the tree plantings happened during the period described in the Project Design Document.
- Verifier reviewed the accuracy of the carbon quantification and City Forest Carbon Forward Removal Credit calculations. Verifier reviewed the Project Operator's assertion that the Project results in total GHG emissions mitigation of 2,045 tons CO<sub>2</sub>e over the 26-year Project Duration. Verifier reviewed the Project Operator's assertion that the Project results in GHG emissions mitigation of 204 tons CO<sub>2</sub>e after initial tree planting.
- Verifier did not submit any requests for clarifications or revisions to the Project Operator.

### 4.2 CITY FOREST CREDITS AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS

Verifier reviewed the Project against all CFC Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol requirements and confirmed the following:

- Project Operator Identity (Section 1.1): Verifier confirmed identity by reviewing Project Operator's Articles of Incorporation and bylaws for the organization which were submitted with other project verification documents. Verifier also visited the Project Operator's website.
- Project Design Document (Section 3): Verifier reviewed and confirmed Project Design Document is complete and accurate.
- Project Implementation Agreement (Section 1.3, 3, and 4): Verifier confirmed fully executed Project Implementation Agreement on file.
- Location (Section 1.4): Verifier reviewed mapping and location data. The data met the eligibility criteria of being within a boundary of a regional metropolitan planning agency (locally called Metropolitan Council) or council established by legislative action or public charter.

- Land Ownership or Right to Receive Credits (Section 1.7): Verifier confirmed the Right to Receive Credits by verifying the signed Agreement for Collaboration between the Project Operator (Green Minneapolis) and Hennepin County.
- Commencement (Section 2.4, 3): Verifier reviewed Approval of Application Letter. Verifier reviewed the Attestation of Planting and confirmed the date the last project tree was planted.
- Project Documentation (Section 3 and Appendix A): Verifier confirmed all required project documentation present.
- Additionality (Section 4): Verifier reviewed for additionality as follows:
  - Legal requirements test (Section 1.8) – no law or ordinance for Project Operator to plant trees.
  - Performance Standards Baseline (CFC Standard, Section 4.9) – per the program wide performance standard baseline showing net tree loss, these trees are additional. The performance standard baseline is attached to the Project Design Document.
  - The Project did not plant trees on sites that were forested and then cleared of healthy trees (Section 1.9)
  - Project Operator signed a Project Implementation Agreement with City Forest Credits for 26 years.
  - The 26-year Project Duration commitment is additional to and longer than any commitment the Project Operator makes to non-carbon project tree plantings.
  - Project Operator completed and signed the Attestation of Additionality (Section 4).
- Permanence (Section 1.3, 2.2, and 8): Verifier confirmed Project Implementation Agreement imposes a legal obligation to Project Operator to conduct this project for 26 years, including a reversal obligation.
- Quantification (Section 10 and Appendix A):
  - Verifier confirmed Project Operator utilized the Single Tree Planting Design and Quantification Method, a CFC quantification methodology described in Appendix A. A total of 968 trees were planted 10' or more apart and took place on County Road ROW, County Facility land, or County tax forfeited lots.
  - Verifier reviewed the accuracy of the data integrity in the quantification methodology.
  - Verifier reviewed the tree data collected which identified tree species planted and location data. A GIS shapefile was also provided which contained tree species and location information.
  - Verifier reviewed the completed and signed Attestation of Planting and Attestation of Planting Affirmation.
- Co-Benefits (Appendix A): Verifier confirmed the calculation of ecosystem co-benefits as set forth in the City Forest Credits quantification tool.
- Attestation of No Double Counting of Credits and No Net Harm (Section 5)

- Verifier reviewed the completed and signed Attestation of No Double Counting of Credits and No Net Harm.
- Verifier compared the Project geospatial data to the registered urban forest carbon afforestation and reforestation projects geospatial database using the software ESRI ArcGIS Pro and determined there was zero overlap between the two spatial datasets.

## 5 VERIFICATION FINDINGS

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The Project documents and data were reviewed, and the Verifier found that the emission reductions claimed are reasonable and in accordance with the Single Tree Planting Design and Quantification Method Protocol. The Verifier makes no further recommendations.

## 6 VERIFICATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

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This verification of the Hennepin County Planting Project 2020 - 2022 for the period May 4, 2020 - November 3, 2022 was completed in a manner consistent with ISO 14064-3 and in conformance with relevant CFC standards and guidelines.

The table below is a summary of the verified GHG emissions removals for the Project for initial credit issuance. These City Forest Carbon Forward Removal Credits are ex-ante credits based on forecasted removals and subject to multiple safeguards, including sampling, and which convert to ex-post at Year 26.

**Table 1. Project GHG Removals**

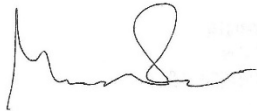
| Project Name                                 | GHG Removals Attributed to the Project (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e) | GHG Removals After Deductions for Mortality (20%) (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e) | GHG Removals After Deductions for Reversal Pool Account (5%) (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e) | City Forest Carbon Forward Removal Credits to be Issued to Project (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e) |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Hennepin County Planting Project 2020 - 2022 | 2,690  | 2,152   | 2,045  | 204  |
| Cumulative                                   | 2,690  | 2,152   | 2,045  | 204  |

**Table 2. Ecosystem Co-Benefits Per Year After 25 Years**

| Ecosystem Services                         | Resource Units | Value       |
|--|----------------|-------------|
| Rainfall Interception (m <sup>3</sup> /yr) | 5,186          | \$37,126.97 |
| Air Quality (t/yr)                         | 0.1512         | \$649.33    |

|                                 |           |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Cooling – Electricity (kWh/yr)  | 156,600   | \$11,885.91        |
| Heating – Natural Gas (kBtu/yr) | 2,262,062 | \$22,020.56        |
| <b>Grand Total (\$/yr)</b>      |           | <b>\$71,682.77</b> |

**Verifier Signature**



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**Matthew Lee**