

March 5, 2008

“Take Root” to Break Ground on March 7
Mayor Ron Littlefield to plant the first tree at Arbor Day celebration

Mayor Ron Littlefield will help celebrate Chattanooga going greener as the “Take Root” program is announced at the Arbor Day Celebration this Friday, March 7, at Battle Academy. Take Root allows individuals, groups and businesses to buy a tree or trees, which will then be planted and maintained by the city. The event will also feature guest Cindy Sexton of WRCB-Channel 3.

In 2006, Mayor Littlefield signed the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which committed Chattanooga to cutting carbon dioxide emissions 7 percent below our 1990 levels. “This is really a unique way to help with the greening of Chattanooga,” said City Forester Gene Hyde. “Our goal is to achieve a 15 percent canopy goal in the downtown area. Every new tree planted gets us a little closer to that goal.”

“Take Root” is a project that has brought together many partners, Project Green Team of the 2007-08 Leadership Chattanooga class, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga’s Graphic Design department, The Community Foundation, The Urban Century Institute, The City of Chattanooga’s Tree Commission, City Forester Gene Hyde, Select Trees of Athens, Georgia (www.selecttrees.com), and Chattanooga State, in a shared vision of greening our city while reducing our carbon footprint.

“A healthy, growing tree is essentially a pollution-eating device and a mini-air conditioner,” Hyde notes. He has assigned a specific species of tree to each of the nearly 1,500 initial planting spots, which are located primarily in the downtown area.

During the ceremony, Chattanooga also will be recognized as a Tree City USA community for the 18th consecutive year. The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation and the USDA Forest Service. Chattanooga has met the four standards to become a Tree City USA community: A tree board, a tree-care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program, and an Arbor Day observance.

This award will be made by the Tennessee Division of Forestry to the Chattanooga Tree Commission.

What: Arbor Day “Take Root” Kick-Off

When: 9:30 a.m., March 7, 2008

Where: South end of Battle Academy, 17th Street at Market Streets