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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WAKE FOREST NAMED TREE CITY OF THE YEAR

WAKE FOREST, NC – October 19, 2010 – The Town of Wake Forest has been named Tree City of the Year by the N.C. Division of Forest Resources. The designation was announced as part of the 2010 North Carolina Urban Forestry Awards program.

The annual program rewards cities, towns, organizations, businesses, and individuals for outstanding work to protect and enhance community forests and raise awareness about the importance of urban forestry projects.

In addition to naming Wake Forest the Tree City of the Year, the N.C. Division of Forest Resources also announced winners in the following award categories:

- Outstanding Project Grand Award: City of Winston-Salem Community Roots Day
- Outstanding Project Merit Award: Town of Boone Urban Forest Master Management Plan
- Outstanding Individual Grand Award: Mr. Verne Deason of Gastonia
- Outstanding Professional Grand Award: Mr. David Grant of Monroe
- Outstanding Professional Merit Award: Mr. John Robards of Whiteville
- Outstanding Tree Board or Urban Forestry Committee Grand Award: Trees Across Raleigh
- Outstanding Tree Board or Urban Forestry Committee Merit Award: Fort Bragg Arbor Board

Winners were selected by a panel that included N.C. Division of Forest Resources' urban forestry staff and members of the North Carolina Urban Forest Council. Entries were judged for impact, quality, innovation and the degree to which the work serves as a worthy example for others to follow. The winners may also be nominated for the National Arbor Day Awards program.

"I am very pleased with the response we have received to the awards program," says Jennifer Rall, Urban Forestry program assistant and administrator of the awards program. "The

judging committee did not have an easy time deciding on winners. All of the nominees showed a true passion and dedication to advancing urban forestry in their communities.”

Wake Forest and the other award recipients were recognized at the N.C. Urban Forest Council’s 2010 Annual Conference Awards Banquet on Sept. 14. Rall will officially present the Tree City of the Year award to the Town during the Board of Commissioners’ regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 19, at 7 p.m.

The Town of Wake Forest has been a Tree City USA community for the past 31 years and has received 15 Tree City USA Growth Awards during this time. Wake Forest was recognized as Tree City USA of the Year because of the efforts of its tree board and planning department staff, who work hand-in-hand to promote tree care and maintenance and tree planting.

The planning department has implemented a street tree maintenance program, conducted a town-wide street tree inventory, and partnered with the N.C. Department of Transportation to plant trees at various road intersections. The tree board hosted a tree planting event where almost 400 tree seedlings were planted.

Wake Forest’s most significant project was the Franklin Street “Road Diet” in which a four-lane road was reinvented as a two-lane road with bike lanes, two roundabouts and generously landscaped medians. A total of 176 trees were planted along this new roadway. The project has been described by many as “public art.”

For more information, contact Jennifer Rall at (919) 857-4849.

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