

“The City of Alma places a high value on community trees, especially in the downtown area. Their shade and beauty benefit visitors and residents alike.

However, in recent years, some of the trees in downtown Alma have been affected by a pathogen called *Ceratocystis Platani*, also known as canker stain of planetree. This pathogen is a fungus that attacks London plane trees, causing dieback and ultimately death of the tree.

The City of Alma is taking steps to address this issue. When signs were first noticed, an arborist accredited by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) was brought in to assess the trees. Samples were taken and sent to the University of Arkansas plant pathology lab for diagnosis. The Arkansas Department of Forestry was contacted and a community forester was on site for assessment as well. After determining the extent of the outbreak, affected trees were selected for removal and will be replaced by tupelo trees, also known as black gum trees. The city is also continuing to work with the Arkansas Department of Forestry to develop long-term strategies to support tree health in the city.

Despite the challenges posed by this setback, the city’s trees are still a vital part of our community and the City of Alma is committed to protecting them.”