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#### **An iconic tree converted into a public work of art**

**Quebec, March 10, 2021** -Quebec City will soon be slaughtering the American elm, better known as the boulet tree, located at the corner of Saint-Louis and du Corps-de-Garde streets in Old Quebec. . In order to immortalize this hundred-year-old tree that has been able to feed the collective imagination, part of the trunk, branches and the wheel stopper located in its base will be preserved and transformed into a public work of art which, in the long term, will be installed. to the exact location of the elm.

"The large cavities present at the base of the tree have led us to inspect it regularly in order to analyze its state of health and its mechanical resistance," declared the mayor of Quebec, Mr. Régis Labeaume. Last fall, the conclusions of the report of an external firm in urban forestry noted the structural precariousness of the elm and the high risk of it breaking or falling to the ground, during conditions of strong winds by example and leads to a dramatic incident. In order to ensure the safety of citizens and neighboring buildings, the elm will be slaughtered next week. "

#### **Analysis method and results State**

-of-the-art resistography and tomography analyzes of American elm in rue Saint-Louis have shown that the proportion of internal void and decay (wood rot) varies from 59% at 73% on the parts of the trunk located between 80 and 258 cm from the ground, thus affecting its mechanical resistance.

The possibility that a serious event could occur if the tree breaks or falls to the ground was calculated using the *Quantified Tree Risk Assessment* (QTRA) method. The firm specializing in urban forestry has therefore estimated the degree of accident risk based on the current condition of the trunk combined with traffic data for the sector.

"Assumptions obtained demonstrate levels of accident risk of one chance in 35 to one chance in 526, according to periods of high or low traffic sector, announced M<sup>me</sup> Marie-Josée Savard, Vice President of the Committee executive responsible for land use planning and town planning. The estimates are well above a risk of 1 in 1000 which corresponds, according to the QTRA method, to an intolerable threshold for the safety of the public. The possibility of installing a restraint system to stabilize the elm in a safe way was evaluated, but rejected given the restrictions that such a device would have created on Saint-Louis Street and the risk that despite everything, the tree continues to deteriorate. "

#### **A source of inspiration for artist Paryse Martin**

Even if it must be felled, the tree will not completely disappear from the landscape. Indeed, during the cutting, certain parts of the elm will be preserved and molded by the

Bronze Workshop of Inverness and will be used for the realization of a public work of art.

"The American elm is the emblematic tree of Québec City, added M<sup>me</sup> Alicia Despins, responsible for Culture, techno and major events. The decision to cut down the one on rue Saint-Louis, this tree which contributed to the urban canopy and which was known for the wheel stopper at its base, was not taken lightly. We wanted to pay homage to this majestic colossus in order to mitigate this loss. We therefore called on professional artist Paryse Martin to create a public work of art that will highlight the historical and poetic memory of this majestic elm tree. "

"My preliminary concept is to suggest the idea of the persistent and elegant tree fragment that lasts over time, which a character will fit into, as if the tree and the human come together in a fertile collaboration," said M<sup>me</sup> Paryse Martin, a professional artist. To give scale and height to the sculpture, branches of the elm will be integrated into the character. These will symbolize the tree structure, genealogy, women. "

The creative process will be enriched with cultural mediation workshops to which residents, identified by the Table de concertation and the Conseil de quartier du Vieux-Québec, will be invited.

An amount of \$ 308,000 plus taxes is provided for the production of the work.

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