

# Red Lodge Parks, Trees and Recreation Board

## Tree Committee Report – June 2018

Committee members: Rue Freeman & Theresa Whistler

City Staff: James Caniglia

*Respectfully submitted by Theresa Whistler*

The Tree Committee and City Staff met June 6th to check on progress of RL Program trees (Arbor Day and Cost-shares) for 2018 and forestry maintenance activities.

### **FY 2018 Urban Forestry Grants:**

DNRC forestry program development grant of \$3,000 was awarded to Red Lodge.

Tree City USA grant of \$750 was awarded to Red Lodge.

### **URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE**

1. Address Critical Concerns – Jeff Hermanns, DNRC in Billings, is coming out to Red Lodge near future to check out a Cottonwood in Finn Park and get an opinion on whether or not it should be removed for public safety.
2. Pruning – Pruning season has passed and as many public trees as possible have been pruned thanks to the actions of several volunteers in tandem with the Parks Board Tree Committee. Special thanks to Jennifer Lyman, Leslie Marty, Chris Mullaney, Don Williams and Hope Smith for helping to prune our public trees. Here's a summary of trees that have been pruned this past spring:
  - HWY 212 ROW trees from Robinson Ln to 8<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Trees lining Coal Miners Parking Lot above ball fields
  - Core business district ROW trees (unless too tall/unsafe)
  - Carnegie Library Trees (during pruning workshop with Leslie M.)

All other public trees that may need pruning for purposes of canopy cleaning or thinning require high ladders, a cherry picker bucket or specialized equipment and expertise that is above the general set of volunteers that offered their service.

Any additional requirement or request for pruning City trees or removing high-up dead branches will need to be met by Public Works.

3. Irrigation Systems turned up
  - **HWY 212** - irrigation system that waters small public trees from round-about down to Robinson Ln (Hwy 212) needs to be turned on and tested for the season to water young trees. City is looking into this.
  - **Field School Park** - Procuts turned this system on and it's in working order
4. Watering Plan for Core Business District (8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>)

Water tank and equipment formally owned/used by Matters for watering was purchased by the City

  - contractor truck and/or trailer bed needs to be used to carry water tank and distribute the water)
  - Gator bags need to be placed around trees for watering (City stored)
  - Contract for watering core business district public trees drafted (ready for June), but funding a contractor to water the trees during July and August is not certain.
  - If contract/contractor not available July/August, City will need to find volunteers to implement watering plan
  - Watering volunteer(s) will need trailer or truck to cart tank and equipment (July/August)
  - Tree Committee needs to create "cheat sheet" with map of "core district trees" and directions for watering

5. Cage, Trunk guard adjustments – need to have contractor adjust cages and/or replace along HWY 212 Robinson to 8<sup>th</sup>. Many of the trees were constricted and damaged by tight cages.
  - The cages have already been expanded as much as possible and they're all too tight.
  - Cages that were cutting into or destroying branches were lowered to ground during pruning
6. Fertilization – no budget this year to cover cost
7. Pest Control – no budget this year to cover cost with the exception of Pine Weevil spraying. Spraying for this year in Lions, Field School and Round-about was completed the week of 5/7
8. Rock Creek Reclamation Assessment – need to assess areas for reclamation along Rock Creek especially along Rotary Park where most of the young trees or sprouts are trampled, cut or eaten by wildlife on the banks.
  - DNRC Billings POC, Jeff Hermanns, was asked to help conduct an assessment.
  - Expected to visit RL week of June 18<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>
9. Replace or remove topped, dying or inappropriately placed trees
  - Former 4<sup>th</sup> Street Meats location (3 maples topped)
    - no longer tenant there to ensure tree care,
    - will wait on tenancy for replanting
  - Larch trees in ROWs along HWY 212
    - conflict with HWY shoulders and sidewalks and cages too small to contain them
    - Tree Committee reached out to MDT (Stefan Streeter) to see if the City has permission to remove and/or relocate the trees – awaiting response
  - 2 honeylocust in front of Wells Fargo
    - have not recovered this spring and will be left for next tenant to replace
  - Field School Park Trees North End
    - Cut last summer due to wire conflict
    - Contractor planting 4 Flame Amur Maples (multi-stems) this month

## FORESTRY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH

**Arbor Day and Cost-Share Trees:** The goal this past month was to engage property owners where RL would greatly benefit by planting public trees and move quickly on planting while weather conditions are most favorable and budget allows.

### Milestone Updates

- Target locations reviewed by Public Works – **accepted 4/17**
- Encroachment Permit application Broadway trees submitted to MDT, Billings for approval 5/2
  - Permit approved for trees on Broadway within planting strips – **approved 5/7**
  - Locations that require concrete cutouts and grates require approval from Helena for ADA compliance (T. Tilzey, MDT, forwarded the RL application) – **approval pending**
- Multiple tree price quotes obtained for City of RL (Baldwins and ProCuts) – **5/30**
- 2018 Cost share application updated and posted to public (urban forestry web page) – **6/3**
- Follow up to proposals for targeted locations with property owners
  - RL Community Church applying for 3 trees, Mtn Springs 2, Broadway homeowner 2, other TBD
  - Met with other targeted property owners with planting strips (GeoLink would have issues since irrigation system directly down center of ROW, so, no-go)
- Locations/applications finalized - application submissions actively coming in – **still in progress**
- Trees ordered by City for Delivery, trees planted – **needs to be completed by end of June**
- Arbor Day tree planting –
  - still need to be planned based on responses to proposed locations

- MDT meeting with City 6/20 to discuss proposals and limitations

### **MDT Robinson to 2-Mile Project**

The plans for the MDT Red Lodge Robinson to 2-Mile project contain approximately 197 trees and 123 shrubs of several varieties mapped among the schematics that were shared. Some of the trees are not on the City's preferred tree listing and recommendations for substitutes were submitted to MDT.

The project is not planned to begin until 2022, but the MDT project team needed feedback from Red Lodge so they could finalize their plans with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party landscape architect they contracted.

A rough layout and location of the proposed trees was created using the City/County GIS. A listing of the proposed trees and shrubs was evaluated and responses to the landscape plan submitted to MDT. Updated Sheet with responses was submitted on 5/2 (see May '18 minutes)

- Tree Committee contacted Kirk Spaulding to see if there is any response to RL recommendations and substitutes
- Sanderson Steward (for MDT) is "working through the RL recommendations now" – response pending as of 6/14

### **TRAINING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- **TreeKeeper (DNRC) Training for City Staff and Volunteers (Parks Board)** – conducted May 15
- **Pruning Workshop** – conducted May 6
- **Street Trees Checklists/Door hangers** – volunteers needed to check status of cost share trees and leave door hangers with recommendations for care (to ensure vitality of trees)
- **Arbor Day Proclamation and Celebration** – mandatory for Grant fulfillment/compliance  
Need Bill Larson's buy-in for Arbor Day Proclamation – Targeting 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in June as a Red Lodge standard moving forward (Must be May or June date)  
Rue and Theresa planning Arbor day event for June 30<sup>th</sup> this year
  - One of a kind trees in RL (touring map and fun facts)
  - Acknowledgement of volunteers
  - Mayor proclamation
  - Other? Tree related craft for kids/families or tree planting?