

Red Lodge Parks, Trees and Recreation Board

Tree Committee Report – July 2018

Committee members: Rue Freeman & Theresa Whistler

City Staff: James Caniglia

Respectfully submitted by Theresa Whistler

The Tree Committee and City Staff met with both MDT and Billings DNRC during the week of June 25th regarding RL Forestry matters and did not meet formally as a committee.

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.

RL FORESTRY MAINTENANCE

1. Address Critical Concerns – Jeff Hermanns, DNRC in Billings, visited with James and Theresa in Red Lodge the week of June 25th to check out the Cottonwood in Finn Park that's of critical concern. We walked to Finn Park with Jeff and upon his inspection of the tree with the deepest cavity, he expressed his opinion that the tree should come down. Jeff inspected many of the other cottonwoods in Finn Park and believes many of them should come down due to risk of public safety. There have been issues in other MT cities where threat of downed limbs is causing more anxiety due to the case in Billings.
 - Most of the Cottonwoods in Finn Park have compromised structures caused by leaning, trunk cavities, trunk scarring, storms where limbs up high remain lodged and could fall, etc.
 - Jeff commented that it could be as expensive to have canopies cleaned up as to have the greatest offenders taken down.
 - We need to put together a plan for treating the trees in Finn Park for public safety purposes and to replace the trees in a manner that does not cause harm to remaining trees, erosion of soil or embankment of rock creek, flooding or other. Poplars are large interceptors and/or reducers of storm run-off and removing them all at once could be detrimental.
 - Jeff recommended that the City or Board reach out to Jamie Kirby to see if there is a Grant that may be applicable to such a project as Park/Tree rehabilitation.
 - Jeff also mentioned he may be able to save the City the cost of removal of the trees by using the location and cutting trees as part of a DNRC training exercise.
2. Pruning – No change / done until Fall unless critical matter and/or Public Works addresses reported concerns
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
 - **Others** expected turned up per agreement with City – **status unknown at this time**
4. Watering Plan for Core Business District (8th to 14th)

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

 - contractor is using trailer bed to carry water tank and distribute the water
 - Gator bags were placed around trees for watering (City stored)
 - **Contract for watering core business district public trees drafted (ready for June), James C. discussed with Mike Taylor and he has accepted the contract to water the trees during July and August**
 - **James C. obtained a grant from RLCF to cover the cost of tree watering July/August**
5. Cage, Trunk guard adjustments – no change / need to have contractor adjust cages and/or replace along HWY 212 Robinson to 8th. 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 change / no budget this year to cover cost
7. Pest Control – No change / 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 and agreed to help conduct an assessment with us.
 - Jeff visited with James and Theresa in RL week June 25th, but will need to reschedule the assessment of rock creek trees when Jeff has more time
9. Replace or remove topped, dying or inappropriately placed trees
- Former 4th Street Meats location (3 maples topped)
 - New tenant there to ensure tree care,
 - thought we'd need to replant but looks like trees are making a comeback. Late Fall pruning could help shape them into less awkward canopies.
 - 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
 - Discussed removal with MDT during their visit week of June 25th and were told we could certainly pull them out and do whatever we desired with them. Agreed they were inappropriately placed.
 - Field School Park Trees North End
 - Cut last summer due to wire conflict
 - Contractor finished planting 4 Flame Amur Maples (multi-stems) this month (trees purchased with NWE funds).

RL FORESTRY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH

Arbor Day and Cost-Share Trees: The goal this past month was to ensure applications were processed and managed to completion with planting 10 cost share trees. Arbor Day planning did not occur.

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 – 2 potential sites at Lights over Broadway and few between 10th and 8th identified during walk-through with MDT week of 6/25
- Multiple tree price quotes obtained for City of RL (Baldwins and ProCuts) – 5/30
 - Amendments to price quotes:
 - Baldwin's Green Mtn Maple is \$185
 - ProCuts will offer 10% off its price listings for the City tree programs
- 2018 Cost share application updated and posted to public (urban forestry web page) – 6/3
- Locations/applications for 10 finalized end of June - application submissions still coming in after end of June
- 10 New Cost-share trees were ordered, delivered and planted by Mike Taylor by 6/30:

10 Cost-share Trees - 2018

Count	Common Name	Tree spp.	Location
2	Flowering Crabapple, Prairie fire	Malus 'prairie fire'	519 S Broadway Ave (front of Old Roosevelt)
2	Green Mountain Maple	Acer saccharum 'Green Mountain'	1000 Coutts Ave (corner of 1 st and Coutts on 1 st west)
1	Green Mountain Maple	Acer saccharum 'Green Mountain'	8 N Platt Ave
1	Flowering Crabapple, spring snow	Malus 'spring snow'	8 N Platt Ave
3	Canada Red Chokecherry	Prunus virginiana 'canada red'	308 S Broadway Ave
1	Canada Red Chokecherry	Prunus virginiana 'canada red'	602 S Broadway Ave

- Arbor Day tree planting –
 - still need to be planned based on responses to proposed locations
 - MDT met with City to discuss proposals and limitations – not definitive answers
 - DNRC POC Jeff Hermanns mentioned availability of 30 Limber pine seedlings he could give us for the event or City Arbor day planting, but was unavailable on pick up date and has not replied to inquiries (believed called out to field)

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 3rd 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" – as of 6/14
- Theresa spoke with SS to discuss responses and SS is formalizing revisions from landscape arch.: 4 foot width cages accepted, setbacks on evergreens understood, substitute for box elders in discussion

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** – no change / 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** – no change / mandatory for Grant fulfillment/compliance Need Bill Larson's buy-in for Arbor Day Proclamation – Targeting 2nd Saturday in June as a Red Lodge standard moving forward (Must be May or June date) – Theresa will discuss moving date out to Sept. if possible since there was no time/resource to help line this up as quickly as anticipated. Rue and Theresa planning Arbor day event for June 30th this year (date TBD)
 - One of a kind trees in RL (touring map and fun facts)
 - Acknowledgement of volunteers (pruning and watering)
 - Mayor proclamation
 - Other? Tree related craft for kids/families or tree plantings