



Staff Report

August 7, 2023 Council Workshop Meeting

Downtown Tree Succession Plan

Presenter: Steve Wall, Public Works Director

Time Estimate: 10 minutes

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BACKGROUND: To staff's knowledge, most of the mature trees located in the Downtown core were likely planted in the 1960s. They provide a tremendous canopy that provide shade, add to the "small town charm" and is commented on by visitors and patrons. However, the trees have also grown much larger than a typical "street tree" and bring with them many concerns such as lifting of sidewalks and asphalt, limbs overhanging buildings, significant foliage/leaf drops, etc. Staff has struggled through the years keeping up with the overall maintenance associated with the trees and have acknowledged publicly that many of them need to be replaced.

SUMMARY: Based on the community's overall sentiment towards trees in general and the significance trees play in Downtown, Staff contracted with Greenworks, a landscape architecture design firm, in 2022 to provide assistance in developing a plan that can be used to guide removal and replanting of trees in the Downtown core. Greenworks combined information from the previously completed inventory and tree condition assessment with recommendations from their landscape architects and arborists on staff to develop the attached Downtown Tree Succession Plan. The Plan generally identifies which trees should be prioritized for replacement, ways to remove and replant trees to maintain the overall canopy and feel of Downtown, potential opportunities for different ways to replant new trees, and potential species of new trees to plant, among other things. The final Downtown Tree Succession Plan is attached for Council's information.

BUDGET IMPACT: The Plan does not have a direct budget impact. However, the Plan essentially recommends continuous implementation (annually) and will ultimately take significant budget to complete the physical work to remove the trees, prepare the soil, replant, etc. Council has approved some funds in the past for tree replacement and staff would recommend that Council continue authorizing an annual budget for Downtown Tree Replacements.

RECOMMENDATION: This item is for Council's information only.