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February 24, 2025

Natalie Birchak, Planner/Planning
City of Dickinson
38 1st St W
Dickinson, ND 58601

Dear Natalie:

Our goal at Dickinson Parks & Recreation is to bring new and unique offerings to all ages of the community. We currently have no community orchard in Dickinson and realize this would be a great opportunity to utilize one of our undeveloped properties. Our plan is to involve the schools, churches, social groups, and others from the community to use the community orchard not only for the produce, but for educational purposes and to help with care and maintenance as well. We also feel this is a great way to promote fruit production in North Dakota by educating the community on the wide variety of fruits and berries that are hardy enough to survive the winters in SW North Dakota.

The undeveloped property DPR would like to use for our community orchard is behind 13th St W, Nuhaven 2nd addition subdivision. We will be removing several tree species from the site that will have a negative impact on the orchard trees and fruit production. Our plan is to replace the trees that are removed with orchard friendly trees and add additional trees along the perimeter to aid in wind protection. Site prep would begin in late May with the removal of dying and diseased trees followed up with the planting of the first 20 fruit trees sometime in late spring or early summer. Our first planting will consist of several different varieties of apples, cherry, pear, and plum. Upon completion the orchard will consist of approximately 40+ fruit trees and several varieties of berries.

When the fruit is ready for harvest, normally in September/October, access to the orchard will be by appointment only to limit traffic flow in and out of the orchard. Traffic from our park maintenance staff is usually confined to the summer months when the property is mowed once per week and approximately 20 times per season on average. After the fruit trees are planted, our water truck will begin watering trees twice each week which in a normal season we anticipate around 30 total waterings. The orchard trees will need to be pruned one time annually in spring starting after the second or third year of growth.

Dickinson Parks & Recreation applied for and received a North Dakota Forest Service Community Family Forest Grant to help purchase trees for the community orchard. The purpose of the grant is to honor families in the state by planting trees in North Dakota communities and to strengthen the tradition of annual tree planting. We will be working closely with Joel Allen, a community forestry specialist from Bismarck. Joel will check in on the project periodically to provide any professional assistance we may need and to confirm we are following grant guidelines.

Sincerely,

Craig Pearson, Director Buildings/Grounds
Dickinson Parks & Recreation
(530) 616-0027