

MEMORANDUM



TO: JEFFREY HERCZEG, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
FROM: REBECCA RUNKEL, PROJECT ENGINEER
SUBJECT: 9 MILE ROAD TREE UPDATE
DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2024

Mayor and Council –

Below you'll find the completion of staff's efforts as it pertains to the trees on 9 mile Road.

- Victor

The City is receiving federal funding for obligation in 2024 through the Oakland County Federal Aid Committee (FAC) for the rehabilitation of 9 Mile Road between Meadowbrook Road and Haggerty Road, and Meadowbrook Road between 10 Mile Road and 11 Mile Road. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) agreement for cost participation for the projects will be on the November 12th City Council meeting agenda. The project is being bid through MDOT with a December 6th letting date. The City is expected to receive \$1,022,433 of the estimated \$3,129,000 total construction cost for 9 Mile Road.

The project scope for 9 Mile Road includes a center left turn lane addition from approximately 250 feet west of Heatherwoode Drive to 250 feet east of Cranbrooke Drive, with 125' tapers at each end. A passing flare will also be added to the north side of westbound 9 Mile Rd at Crosswinds Drive. Improvements will be made to the existing mid-block crossing at Sunrise Blvd, and a new mid-block crossing will be added at Heatherbrae Way. The center-left turn lane addition requires the removal of 12 trees west of Sunrise Blvd. An additional 12 trees located on the north side of 9 Mile Rd between Heatherwoode Drive and Trillium Drive will be removed for drainage and traffic safety improvements.

At City Council's request, staff reviewed the project design to determine if some of the trees could be saved. During the evaluation it was affirmed that **shortening road tapers and/or the length of the center-left turn lanes would not save the smaller trees impacting the road structure** and drainage conditions (via their root systems) or the larger trees that are not already in the **crash zone** (safe distance from back of curb).

Therefore, the attached tree replacement plans were developed by the City's Landscape Architect, Rick Meader, and include planting **35 trees** between Sunrise Blvd and Haggerty Road and **23 trees** west of Heatherwoode Drive. Bids for tree planting have not been solicited; the estimated cost is around \$25,000. The plans call for a mix of canopy and sub-canopy trees to give a multi-layered look. The sub-canopy trees will have white and pink flowers in the spring, and the larger canopy trees will provide the full spectrum of fall leaf colors. All the trees are native to Michigan and are beneficial to wildlife.

The Landscape Architect recommended the tree sizes to be 1.5"- 2" caliper (8'-10') which is the industry standard. At the City Council Meeting on March 18th, 2024, council expressed desire to install larger/mature trees, which can be done based on availability and for increased costs (likely double or ~\$50,000). It should be noted larger trees have a higher mortality rate when transplanted (especially in the right-of-way). Costs associated with tree

removals and replacements **are outside of the MDOT cost participation agreement** and will be paid for by the City per City Council's approval. These cost estimates have been incorporated into the overall project budget.

Road construction is expected to begin in spring of 2025 and last 2-3 months. Endangered species protections require the trees be removed prior to March 31, 2025, to avoid disturbing bat nesting areas. The City's tree contractor will remove the trees this winter. Tree replacements will be planted by a contractor in fall of 2025, with a required two-year warranty period.