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### INFORMATIONAL STAFF REPORT

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
**MEETING DATE:** NOVEMBER 4, 2024  
**FROM:** DAN LAFONTAINE, PUBLIC WORK DIRECTOR  
**SUBJECT:** UPDATE TO TREES IN DOWNTOWN AND MINERS BEND PROJECT

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff wants prioritization of resources to implement a design and investigate feasibility and cost of installation of trees on Main Street and Miners Bend.

**BACKGROUND:** Trees possess the ability to provide shade, control erosion, buffer noise, and help improve our air quality. Trees also have roots that infiltrate our storm drains and sewer mains and must be controlled to avoid costly repairs. Growing trees are a constant battle for the PW department that costs tens of thousands of dollars in trimming and root mitigation. The placement of future trees is paramount in ensuring that the City keep annual operation costs low.

**DISCUSSION:** Individual council members have proposed projects outside the budget cycle. Staff wants confirmation from a majority of Council Members that it should proceed and what should be de-prioritized.

Staff would like to know the council's appetite for the installation of trees in downtown and particularly on Main Street as a priority project. The project planning would entail the following:

- Design of project to include type, quantity, and placement of trees that would be installed on Main Street or other areas to maximize shade
- Determination of water sources and cost estimates to provide water to the trees
- Installation method to minimize root intrusion into storm drain and sewer mains and laterals
- Estimate maintenance associated with the tree installation.
- Whether staff should explore alternatives to provide shade other than trees (i.e. shade structures)

We have also had a request to look at shade trees at Miner's Bend. It would need some similar planning and prioritization. Council can provide feedback on one or both of these projects.

Tonight, we are simply asking for relative priorities between projects, not details of implementation. Staff will then shift resources as needed.

**BUDGET IMPACT:** This project was not included in the current fiscal year budget so tradeoffs will have to be made. The allocation of staff time would come at the detriment (either postponing or elimination) of other general plan projects. Not all of these projects are similar efforts, but with limited resources, we want to ensure we are working on the top priorities for the Council as a whole. Projects to deprioritize in favor of shade projects include:

- Park pavers – project needed to address erosion around Mini Provis park
- Main street Gopher flat intersection – modification of stop bar and crosswalk
- Creek cleaning project – removal of saplings in creek to reduce ongoing costs to clear creek
- Walking path from Sutter Crest – project to maximize walkability of residents
- Bryson bathroom – Allocate resources to making bathroom functional again

Tree planting may appear to be a simple project, but it does have installation and ongoing maintenance costs. Ongoing costs will vary but will include trimming of trees, additional cleaning of sewer and storm drains, and potential road closures to accomplish this ongoing maintenance on Main street.

Benefits include making the street more inviting aesthetically, cooler (trees provide nature cooling), and some CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration.

**UPDATE:** Possible locations of trees include the following locations around downtown Sutter Creek:

- Parking lot next to Post office. Currently there are four trees along Gopher Flat and could install two additional trees on Gopher flat parking lot. Cost estimates are around 3K to 5K to install two trees (depending on size of tree) and ongoing water costs.



- Miners Bend Parking Lot (pending power lines overhead). Cost estimates are 2.5K per tree (depending on size of tree).



- Eureka St. and Main St and Gopher flat and Main (pending line of sight issues). Costs estimates for these locations are around 5K to 7.5K per tree due to infrastructure work that needs to be undertaken (break through asphalt under planter box and installation of water lines). Ongoing water costs will also be incurred.

