

La Veta Park & Tree Board -2020 Overview

La Veta's Park & Tree Board continues to work diligently on adding to the visual impact of La Veta's greenery in the park, trails and along the streets. The Board's activities include obtaining and fulfilling grants, requests for tree work, visual inspections and advice for the community. The Board members are also actively involved with the physical labor of pruning trees from the ground, planting trees and tree care such as watering and mulching new trees.

Colorado Tree Coalition Grant

The Town of La Veta received a \$2,000 grant from the Colorado Tree Coalition, a state wide program for local communities, to plant 16 trees for the beautification of the town. On May 30, 2020, the Town completed planting the last of the 16 trees. These trees include a variety of species appropriate for the local area: Japanese Tree Lilac, Russian Hawthorn, Western Catalpa, Sycamore, Thornless Honey Locust, Golden Rain Tree, Ponderosa Pine, One-Seed Juniper, Plains Cottonwood, Colorado Blue Spruce, Wild Plum, and Saskatoon Serviceberry. The trees were planted over a two-week time period with the assistance of four Town of La Veta employees and 16 volunteers, including members of the La Veta Park & Tree Board and La Veta Trails. These trees were planted in the Town of La Veta Park, at the Nature Trail (located on Birch St and E Garland St), and along W Ryus Ave and Field St. The Park & Tree Board filed for the \$2,000 grant reimbursement request as of June 30 to close out the grant. The Town received a check for \$2,000 in early July.

LaSR Teaming Up for Trees Grant

In 2017, the Town of La Veta received a \$10,000 grant from the CO State Forest Service to remove and replace trees. The grant was extended to September 30, 2020 due to the Spring Fire in 2018. Seven trees were removed in December, 2017 and April, 2018. Reimbursement of \$1,360 was received for the tree removals at the end of 2018. The Park & Tree Board completed planting seven replacement trees as of May 29, 2020. These trees include a variety of species appropriate for the local area: Japanese Tree Lilac, Colorado Hawthorn, Sycamore, Thornless Honey Locust, and Golden Rain Tree. The trees were planted over a two-week time period with the assistance of four Town of La Veta employees and 6 volunteers, including members of the La Veta Park & Tree Board. These trees were planted in the Town of La Veta Park, on W Garland, E Francisco, W Francisco, E Ryus, and E Field. The Park & Tree Board filed for a \$1,789.42 grant reimbursement request on Aug 24, 2020.

In September, the Park & Tree Board submitted a request to the CO State Forest Service to extend this grant until June 30, 2021. The tree survey identified 18 dead or dying trees which were confirmed by Jared Fleming of the CO State Forest Survey. The Park & Tree Board would like to remove and replace as many of the trees identified as possible within the constraints of the Park & Tree Board 2021 budget and the unused grant funds of \$6,850.58

Town of La Veta Tree Survey

On August 4, 2020, Keith Hauber and Linda Lacy conducted a survey of the trees in the Town of La Veta to identify dead/dying trees, trees that could be pruned by the Park & Tree Board, and trees that would need to be pruned by contractors. The following was identified:

- 18 dead or dying trees
- 28 trees to be pruned by the Park & Tree Board
- 24 trees to be pruned by contractors

The Park & Tree Board intends for this tree survey to be completed annually.

Tree Maintenance

The Park & Tree Board began watering the 24 trees planted in May as of June and continues to water the trees based on weather conditions through this winter. Wire fencing was installed shortly after the trees were planted to protect the trees from injury by deer. These trees were mulched in August to minimize water loss.

The Park & Tree Board pruned 28 trees in three work sessions from September to November.

Tree City USA Application

In November, the Park & Tree Board prepared the 2020 application for continued Tree City USA status. The application and signature form were sent to the Town Administrator for signature by the Town's Mayor which was received on November 30. The application was submitted at the beginning of December. Due to Covid-19, the requirement to plant an Arbor Day tree, have an Arbor Day Proclamation, and complete an Arbor Day Observance was waived for 2020.

Town of La Veta Resident Education

The Park & Tree Board would like to enhance resident education by adding the following information to the Town of La Veta website:

- The best times of the year to plant trees as well as tree maintenance information
- Recommended trees for the area
- Watering recommendations from CO state forest service
- Recommended nurseries for ordering trees
- Ordering from the CO State Forest Service nursery
- Pruning work sessions – learn about how to participate and inform work completed in 2020

The Park & Tree Board will work on preparing the material this winter and submitting for publication on the website in spring 2021.

Park & Tree Board Membership

In April, Jillian McCleary resigned from the Board due to work conflicts. The Park & Tree Board discussed Board member recruitment ideas. The Board will place an article in the World Journal in early 2021 advertising the opening to residents of La Veta.

Forecast of 2021 Activities

The Park & Tree Board plans the following activities for 2021:

- Remove identified dead trees and replant new trees by June 30 as budgets permit and LaSR Grant funds are available
- Complete a survey of Town of La Veta trees to identify dead/dying trees for removal and to be pruned
- Continue maintenance of Town of La Veta trees, including water new or relatively new trees until established (under the guidance of Town water restrictions), mulching trees as needed, and pruning existing trees for tree health and resident safety
- Engage residents for pruning work sessions for educational purposes through one or more articles in the World Journal as well as on the Town of La Veta website
- Maintain the Tree City USA designation which will include planting an Arbor Day Tree, receiving an Arbor Day Proclamation from the Town and completing an Arbor Day Observance
- Provide educational materials to the residents on the Town of La Veta website
- Recruit an additional Board member