

La Veta Park & Tree Board 2021 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 includes 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.

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 a second time to June 30, 2021 due to extended drought conditions. Seventeen trees were removed by Park & Tree Board members and one volunteer by May 12. The Park & Tree Board completed planting seventeen replacement trees as of June 22. These trees include a variety of species appropriate for the local area: Thornless Honey Locust, Western Catalpa, Russian Hawthorn, Golden Rain Tree, and Japanese Lilac Tree. The trees were planted over a four week time period with the assistance of four Town of La Veta employees and three volunteers, including members of the Park & Tree Board. These trees were planted in the Town of La Veta Park, on E Ryus, E Francisco along Poplar, E Virginia, W Field, S Oak and S Main. The Park & Tree Board filed for a \$3,709.92 grant reimbursement request by June 30 and the check was received late July. This activity completed the grant.

Town of La Veta Tree Survey

On August 11, 2021, 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:

- 22 dead or dying trees that can be removed by the Park & Tree Board and 23 dead or dying trees that will need to be removed by contractors
- 196 trees to be pruned by the Park & Tree Board
- 56 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 continued watering trees planted in 2020 starting in late April. Throughout the summer and into fall, the trees planted in 2020 were watered once a week and the trees planted in 2021 were watered twice a week. Because of continuing drought conditions, the Park & Tree Board continued to water the trees once a week through December 31.

Wire fencing was installed shortly after the trees were planted to protect the trees from injury by deer. These trees were also mulched to minimize water loss. The wire fencing was removed from trees planted in 2020 and black irrigation tubing was installed on the tree trunks to protect the trees from injury by deer.

The Park & Tree Board pruned 43 trees and removed 10 dead trees in seven work sessions from July to December.

Tree City USA Application

On June 22, the Park & Tree Board with two residents planted a Japanese Lilac Tree as the Town's Arbor Day Tree near the corner of E Ryus and Main Street. The Mayor issued a proclamation announcing June 22 as Arbor Day.

In December, the Park & Tree Board prepared the 2021 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 December 10. The application was submitted December 12.

Town of La Veta Resident Education

The Park & Tree Board sought to enhance resident education by adding the following information to the Town of La Veta website in partnership with Erica St. Giles:

- Tree Selection
- Site Considerations
- Tree Considerations
- Trees to Avoid
- Selecting Trees at the Nursery
- CO State Forest Service Nursery – residents are able to order from a list of trees and shrubs once a year
- Tree Planting Tips
- Tree Watering
- Tree Pruning

The link to the page is <https://townoflaveta-co.gov/parks-trees/>

Park & Tree Board Membership

The Park & Tree Board filled the open board position November 16 with the addition of George Orlowski. This position had been open for approximately 18 months. The Board placed numerous recruitment articles in the World Journal and on the Town's website advertising the open Board position to residents of La Veta.

Comer Crawford's Park & Tree Board term ended February 28. Comer sent a letter to the Town Board requesting the opportunity to serve another term. Her application to continue serving on the Park & Tree Board was approved April 20.

Colorado Tree Coalition Grant

The Park & Tree Board submitted a grant application to the Colorado Tree Coalition on December 17 to continue our tree canopy renewal. The grant application was written by the newest Park & Tree Board member, George Orlowski who is an experienced grant writer. The grant application was for \$1,975 with the Town to provide \$2,212 of matching funds to plant 13 trees and purchase tools to prune & plant trees. The Colorado Tree Coalition indicated that it would be approximately 60 days from the application due date before grant recipients were notified.

Forecast of 2022 Activities

The Park & Tree Board plans the following activities for 2022:

- if the Colorado Tree Coalition grant application is approved, remove 13 trees and plant replacements by September 30, as budgets permit
- 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
- attempt to engage residents for pruning work sessions for educational purposes through one or more articles in the World Journal, the Huerfano Community Facebook page and 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
- hold an education session with interested residents at the Arbor Day tree planting
- provide educational materials to the residents on the Town of La Veta website