



Transportation Systems Dept.

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February 17, 2023

Dear Property Owner or Resident,

The City of Helena has an important update to share regarding the Rodney Street Reconstruction project. The current project plans did not include replacement of all the boulevard trees that are located on City right-of-way. After consulting several Arborists from around Montana, along with the City's own Urban Forestry team, the City has determined the remaining boulevard trees within the construction zone must be replaced to ensure public safety. We appreciate concerns that have been expressed by residents of the neighborhood, which led City staff to conduct further analysis of the trees before coming to this final decision.

The City is working to have a contractor onsite the week of February 27 to remove the remaining trees before the ground thaws, which could be problematic for trees with compromised root systems. Stumps will be ground as soon as possible, with the replacement of trees likely occurring in April.

Attached is a snapshot of your property showing the expected tree specie[s] from the original plans (Bur Oak or Prairie Expedition American Elm). Red trees were planned to be removed and not replaced. Gray trees were not expected to be replaced but now will be. Alternating these two species along Rodney will contribute to urban forest diversity while still providing for a future arching canopy aesthetic desired on tree lined streets.

Through the public meetings held this winter, some members of the community expressed interest in planting more mature trees. The City will allow homeowners the opportunity to opt out of the replacement tree[s] provided by the City and instead purchase and plant a larger size of the approved specie[s] specified on the plans. The trees originally planned for replacement, at the start of the project, are not eligible to opt-out as they are part of the project contract. The maximum trunk size that would be allowed for resident-purchased replacement trees is 2.5" diameter (measured 6" above the ground). Property owners interested in pursuing this option can contact the project team to coordinate with the City Arborist. Please note that trees purchased by the property owner must be the approved species and planted in the designated location[s]. Trees not provided and planted by the City of Helena will not hold any guarantee.

Once we plant the trees, we must rely on adjacent landowners to assist us with care of the tree. In Helena's arid climate, it is vital that newly planted trees receive regular watering from you or they will not survive. Please review the enclosed basic tree care guidelines.

Helena Sand and Gravel's startup schedule is weather dependent, but they are tentatively planning to resume construction operations March 13. They will also be grinding some of the tree stumps that they removed last year and planting the new trees shown on the plans. The main road and utility construction work will be in and south of the 11th Avenue intersection. They hope to be wrapping up the project at the end of May, with the final chip seal and striping occurring later this summer during warmer temperatures.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Young, P.E.

Transportation Engineer, City of Helena