



Red Lodge Parks, Trees and Recreation Board

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2016 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016)

The purpose of the Red Lodge Parks, Trees and Recreation Board is to establish, improve, care for, regulate and manage and system of public recreation and public trees. The Board is advisory to the City Council and the Mayor and consists of seven members, six area residents of which up to two may reside outside of the City limits but within five miles of the City limits, and a member of the City Council. Current Board members include:

Dan Seifert, Chairman, term expires December 2017

Bob Matter, Vice-Chair, non-City representative, term expires December 2018

Bill Foisy, Secretary, City Council representative

Rue Freeman, term expires December 2016

Paul Otsu, term expires December 2016

Corey Thompson, term expires December 2017

Kelly Heaton, term expires December 2018

The Board receives support from members of the City staff designated by the Mayor: **James Caniglia**, City Planner, and **Jim Bushnell**, Public Works Director.

Board functions are outlined in:

- Ordinance 918, Composition and Responsibilities of the Red Lodge, Parks, Trees and Regulations Board
- Ordinance 919, Regulations of Trees on City Owned Land and Public Rights-of-Way
- Information on these ordinances and Parks Board activities can be found at:
<http://cityofredlodge.net/departments/parks-board/>



Urban Forestry Tree Programs

For a third year 25 trees were planted along City streets, mostly in residential areas, under the Urban Forestry **cost-share tree program**. Three additional trees were planted along 8th Street between the curb and sidewalk at Lions Park, paid for by an **Arbor Day** grant received from the Montana Department of Natural Resources

Board member Bob Matter and his wife Liz are **watering** more than 50 trees on a weekly basis during the summer season, providing a total of 144 volunteer hours. Newly planted trees to include those in Lions Park are receiving extra watering. Water gators are placed on the trees during the summer and then removed and stored in the winter. Ten additional metal tree guards made by Back Alley Metals were also installed with Bob's assistance.

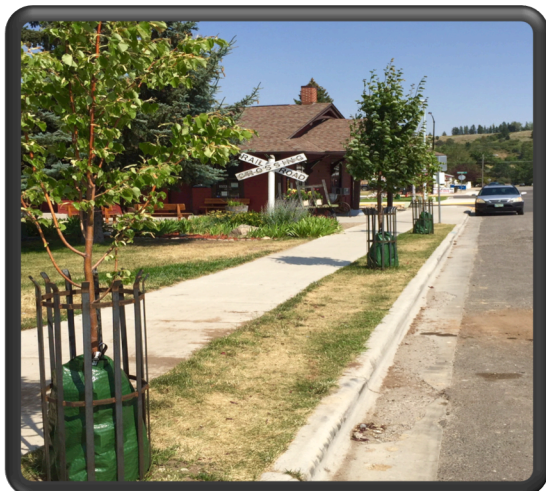
The City was recertified as a **Tree City USA** for achieving the standards set forth by the National Arbor Day Foundation for activities conducted by the Parks Board, to include a community tree ordinance, for conducting a Community Forestry Program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita and conducting an Arbor Day observation and proclamation. The City has been a Tree City USA for over a decade.

A supplemental **Tree City USA Growth Award** was awarded to the City for the second year in a row. Points were earned for an Arbor Day celebration, a tree care workshop, revised tree ordinances, a special tree project for fertilization and volunteer watering, and a dedicated tree maintenance budget.

Over 100 trees on City streets were **fertilized** in the summer of 2015 and again in June 2016 by a local contractor, primarily on the side streets along Broadway Avenue between 8th Street and 14th Street and in Coal Miners and Field School Parks. The fertilization included a root injection of special vitamins to promote root growth as well as a foliar fertilizer spray. The fertilization, along with the regular watering, has made a notable difference in the health of the trees.

Trees were **trimmed** or removed in Field School Park, Lions Park, Rotary Park, Coal Miners Park, Dog Park and Finn Park. **Spraying** for pine weevil was done for diseased spruce trees in Lions Park.

The Trees Committee is composed of Board members Bob Matter, Corey Thompson and Dan Seifert.



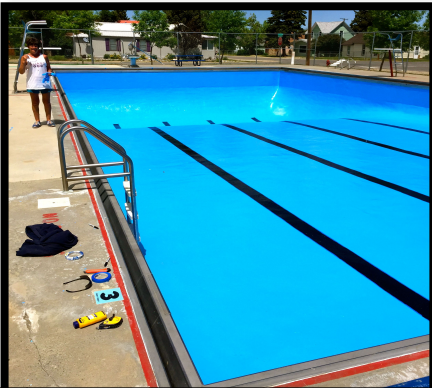
Parks Improvements and Maintenance



Thirty (30) custom made **benches** were manufactured by Back Alley Metals using funds from the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) and placed in multiple parks and public spaces, including Finn Park along Rock Creek.

The CTEP funds were also used to install an **irrigation system** in Field School Park and for **landscaping**. Lions Park, Pride Park and Rotary Park landscaping included trees, shrubs, weed fabric and perennial flowers.

Additional projects at **Lions Park** included safety features fixed at Moose Trails Playground, new sand at the volleyball court, aeration of the grounds and removal of dead trees. The Board also approved a plan by the Arts Guild to install removable picnic tables in order to have space for a larger tent.



Renovations started at the **Skate Park** to include the pouring of additional concrete for a larger pad and skate area. Special features are being made by Back Alley Metals.

The **City Pool** was newly painted and new mats to cover the pool were purchased.



Over 50 persons, including 11 high school and five elementary school students, participated in the **annual Earth Day parks cleanup** at 14 park locations. A five-yard dumpster was filled and six piles of lumber, couches and other trash was collected.

The Council passed **updated memorandum of understandings** for the maintenance of Rotary Park (Rotary Club), Lions Park (Lions Club), the ice skating rink at Lions Park (Red Lodge Ice) and maintenance of City trails

(Beartooth Recreational Trails Association). These MOUs define the role of the City and each organization in making improvements and maintaining these parks, reflected in the Parks Board budget.



The Recreational Facilities and Regulations Committee is composed of Board members Rue Freeman, Kelly Heaton and Bill Foisy.

Trails



A **Bicycle Skills Trail** has been constructed at Coal Miners Park coordinated by Board member Paul Otsu with assistance, mostly volunteer, from the International Mountain Bike Association and its local chapter Pedal United. The 1.2 mile single track trail is designed for beginner to intermediate bikers in hopes to build skills and to provide an addition to the multi-use trails in the City. Work continues on the trail to include berms on corners, wide banked switchbacks, easy gradient climbs, rollers on the downhill and one roll in hill for downhill.

The **Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)** made improvements on trails within the City limits, working for four and one-half days in the City in addition to the three weeks they worked on the new Nichols Creek Trail

off Ski Run and West Fork Roads. MCC worked for two days on the new mountain bike trail at Coal Miners Park, one day at Coal Miners Park digging out water bars, removing weeds and expanding trails along Rock Creek, one day on Airport Trail maintenance and one-half day on the McGillan Trail connector establishing water erosion control.



The Council passed **Ordinance 922, Trails**

Regulations, upon recommendation of the Parks Board that the identified City trails be designated for non-motorized uses.

Trail projects proposed during FY 2017 include extending the Wellness Trail to Diamond C Corner Park from its terminus on the west bench above Billings Clinic, establishing a trail on Beartooth Lane connecting the trails behind the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary along Rock Creek to the paved multi-use path along Highway 212, establishing a smaller scale bicycle skills course at the South end of Rotary Park and a new trail segment from City Lights Park on the west bench across the Lutheran Church/Red Lodge Ales/Flower Farm properties to Highway 212.

The Trails Committee is composed of Board members Kelly Heaton, Paul Otsu and Corey Thompson.

Weeds Control



Each year the Parks Board budgets for the spraying of noxious weeds in Coal Miners Park, Double Ditch Dog Park, Skate Park, Rotary Park and Lions Park.

Noxious weeds control on other public areas, including City property, and on private property are coordinated for the City by a contractor.

Expenditures

The Parks Board receives an annual allocation of resort tax funds for parks activities. The following are the expenditures for FY 2016:

Supplies	\$ 3,328
New Trail Construction	\$ 2,416
Maintenance Contractor	\$ 8,851
Community Transportation Enhancement Program Match	\$ 6,241
Active Transportation Plan Match	\$ 5,000
Tree Trimming	\$ 8,185
Urban Forestry Tree Program	\$ 12,484
Proud and Beautiful Flower Baskets	\$ 2,000
Skate Park Upgrade	\$ 14,617
Pool Repairs	\$ 8,436
TOTAL	\$ 71,558

FY 2017 Projects

Annual line items have been budgeted in FY 2017 for parks maintenance, tree plantings and park user groups financial assistance. New projects are to include Active Transportation Plan infrastructure, surveying for trail easements and park dedication, and new trail construction.