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Press Release

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The City of Clovis Takes Strategic Steps in Urban Forestry Management

CLOVIS, NM (November 14, 2023) – The City of Clovis Parks and Recreation Department is proactively addressing the health of the park network by initiating an inventory of dead, aging, and diseased trees.

In recent weeks, the Parks and Recreation Department, in collaboration with a marking crew, has placed "X's" on identified trees throughout City of Clovis parks. This marking process allows the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) Technician to locate and measure the caliper of each tree. The collected data will serve as the foundation for an urban forestry plan.

Once the quantity of affected trees is established, the Parks and Recreation Department will collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Board to develop a comprehensive urban forestry plan. As part of its commitment to the environment, the City Commission has allocated \$20,000.00 for the planting of new trees. Russell Hooper, Director of Parks and Recreation, has been actively engaging with the State of New Mexico Urban Forestry Division to explore funding opportunities and gain insights into the overall health of the identified trees.

"The presence of orange 'X's on trees doesn't necessarily mean they will be cut down. We are still in the identification and mapping phase of this plan," explained Hooper. "Our goal is to make informed decisions that balance preservation with the need for renewal."

The majority of the trees are Siberian elm trees, known for a life expectancy of around 60 years on the Great Plains. Historical photos of Hillcrest Park and surrounding neighborhoods indicate that these trees were planted before 1960. In recent years, the City of Clovis has invested in trimming efforts to enhance the health and longevity of these trees. However, challenges have arisen, with the elm trees being infested and damaged by elm leaf beetles in the past two summers.

For questions or for more information, please contact the Clovis City Manager's Office at 575-763-9653 or email administration@cityofclovis.org.