

*We are a welcoming, active and business-friendly rural
foothill community built on California's rich gold rush history.*



City Manager's Report
November 14, 2023, City Council Meeting
Prepared by: Terry Zeller, Director of Community Services
Item #: 12.3

Subject: Consider approving 2 possible locations for the City Christmas Tree; west of the Bell Tower in the Southbound Turn Lane Centered on the Stairs, and an alternate location within the commercial loading zone to be installed November 18th through December 30th, 2023.

Recommendation: Approve the location and installation of a live cut Christmas tree to be either centered in the southbound left turn lane adjacent the Bell Tower's west face, aligned with the stairs or centered in the commercial loading zone on the Bell Tower's east face. City staff would excavate a hole in either location, install a PVC pipe at 6 feet depth, and backfill to provide vertical stability to the tree for the duration of its display from November 18th to December 30th, with the transport and installation of the tree undertaken by Doug Veerkamp Engineering as a donation to the City and the El Dorado Community Foundation.

Purpose: The purpose of this Council action is to resolve the issue of location for a temporary Christmas tree installation for 2023 by approving staff's recommended locations.

Strategic Plan Strategy: Maintain/Improve Quality of Life (3a.)

Background: The City has been working with the El Dorado Community Foundation, Sierra Pacific Industries and Doug Veerkamp Engineering to find a suitable location for the temporary display of a City Christmas tree for some months. Locations considered included having a live crated tree north of the Bell Tower, in the commercial loading zone adjacent the Bell Tower's east face, and in the east front landscape bed of the Superior Court Building at 495 Main Street.

Discussion: The initial location considered placing a live root crated tree on the westbound lane north of the Bell Tower, but this was met with resistance from shop owners close to the location as potentially blocking the visibility of their places of business. The second location considered was the commercial loading zone just to the east of the Bell Tower, but this was also set aside due to input that it would impact daily deliveries for merchants. The location in the east landscape bed of the Superior Court Building has created reservations to installation due to possible shrub and tree root damage from excavating a base hole for the tree in the landscape bed. This location also requires written approval from the Judicial Council of California Facilities Services Department. An application was submitted as soon as the location was scouted, but this Department requires 30 day's notice for review and staff is not confident approval will be granted by the mandatory install date of November 18th (a Saturday morning). There is also an electrical issue that will need to be sorted out for providing power to the tree in this Superior Court location.

The locations outlined in this staff report solve the concerns of store visibility, but the east and west locations are also a concern for some merchants. The tree location needs to be finalized. The

Courthouse location has the State approval issue and the electrical issue, which may be insurmountable in the time frame necessary.

Options: The Council can:

1. Approve the locations as presented.
2. Reject the locations and direct staff to take other actions.

Environmental: The temporary installation of a cut tree is not considered a “project” under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and therefore is not subject to environmental review.

Cost: The proposed costs will be absorbed by the CSD and PW operating budgets and donated tree, equipment and labor provided by Sierra Pacific Industries and Doug Veerkamp Engineering.

Budget Impact: This project was not included in the adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Operating Budget. Staff feels that any costs can be absorbed by this budget.



M. Cleve Morris, City Manager



Terry Zeller, Dir. of Community Services

Attachments:

Attachment A: Tree Location Images