

# Missoula County Courthouse Renovation Project

## Phase 5 FAQs

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### Why did you cut down the beautiful trees and when will they be replaced?

The trees were removed earlier this summer for a number of reasons:

- 🌳 The Norway Maple trees, believed to have been planted in the nineteen-teens were nearing the end of their lifespan;
- 🌳 The County's Risk Manager raised serious public safety and liability concerns after wind storms broke large branches over the previous several years;
- 🌳 The trees' roots were not guided with barriers, causing them to grow into and damage the lawn sprinkler system and adjacent sidewalks; and
- 🌳 The particular species, Norway Maple, is considered non-native invasive species and is not included in the City's approved tree list.
- 🌳 Several trees had been removed by the County due to wind damage and age which left gaps in the landscape design and dignity of the grounds.
- 🌳 Several trees had been pruned to such an extent that future growth and balance of the trees had been compromised.
- 🌳 Two trees were removed to coordinate removal and replacement of root damaged sewer and water lines conducted in earlier phases of work.

The original Phase 5 project scope in the courthouse renovation project, included removing the short concrete curb or wall around the courthouse lawn. This would have required the lawn to be re-graded which would have killed the trees. Due to budget constraints, removing the concrete wall and re-grading the lawn was eliminated from the project. However, the initial public safety concerns were not addressed by eliminating this portion of work from Phase 5. With the landscaping, new lawn sprinkler system, and earthwork already underway, the decision to replace the trees remained. The project team recognized and took this opportunity to coordinate new sod and the new lawn sprinkler system with the removal and replacement of trees in addition to the installation of a root barrier system to prevent tree root systems from growing under and damaging adjacent sidewalks.

Initially, the replacement trees were quarantined by the supplier over the summer, prompting Missoula County to cancel the initial order and reorder new trees of a different species. These trees (Red Sunset Maple, minimum 2" caliper) are set to arrive and be planted at the beginning of November. Red Sunset Maples are a cultivar of the species. Interestingly, cultivars are created to perform better in the built environment than pure species. So, while the red maple species is native to North America, the Red Sunset cultivar does not exist in nature. The trees will be shipped once they are dormant, once they are better equipped to withstand transport and replanting. The dormant trees will not have leaves and will be planted at the end of the season, ensuring that come spring, healthy trees will bring the courthouse landscape back to life. Red Sunset Maple trees will now grace the lawn. This species is native to North America and is on the City's approved tree list. The trees will be two inches in diameter, providing the community with many years to enjoy their foliage and return original design order and dignity to landscaping surrounding the courthouse.

### Why not provide for tree biodiversity?

The decision to maintain the monoculture of trees is rooted in the original design intent and history evident in the monoculture of Norway Maples that once graced the courthouse. The monoculture of Red Sunset Maple trees adds fall and spring color, definition and order to the architecture of the building, unlike biodiversity. A mix of trees, similar to a park, would lessen the courthouse's historic design intent and dignity, made evident in the original Norway Maple monoculture landscaping.

### When will the lawn be restored?

Re-sodding of the courthouse lawn will happen in October, 2017. The lawn will, like the trees, go dormant over the winter. With protection from fencing scheduled to remain in place over the winter, the new sod will have the opportunity to root-in prior to removal of the fence.

### How long will the fencing be up?

The fence will remain in place through spring of 2018 to protect rooting-in of the new sod lawn. This will also allow the new trees to take root and grow without interference.

### Why was the 9/11 memorial tree removed?

After much consideration by the project team, the memorial tree was removed for several reasons. The coniferous tree's shallow root system was growing into and had damaged the lawn sprinkler system. The shallow root system caused potential public safety concerns should we experience high winds. Installation of the new lawn sprinkler system would have irreparably damaged the tree and compromised its growth. Lastly, the coniferous tree was fast growing and growing toward the courthouse. The renovation project team has been working with the Missoula County employees' council to find a suitable alternative memorial.

### What's going to happen with the Doughboy statue?

Originally the Doughboy statue was a part of the Phase 5 scope of work. That work included lowering the grade surrounding the statue to the level of the adjacent sidewalk to meet ADA access, cleaning and re-pointing the granite base and cleaning and treating the statuary bronze memorial plaques and statue. That scope of work was eliminated along with the removal of the concrete curb wall and re-grading the lawn from the project. Missoula County received a \$2,000 grant to help restore the statue. More information is included in the [media release](#) announcing the grant award. The design team is going through the exercise of budget estimating a limited scope of work that would lower the grade specific to an area surrounding the statue to meet ADA access to the Doughboy statue and memorial plaques.

### How much did this cost?

The Phase 5 budget is \$790,778.

### Who comprises the project team?

The project team includes CAO Vickie Zeier; CFO Andrew Czorny; Communications & Projects Director, Anne Hughes; Facilities Director, Larry Farnes; staff from Jackson Contractor Group; staff from A&E Architects; staff from Paris Design Group; and City of Missoula staff provide assistance with LEED certification.

### What will the project look like upon completion?

