

Council Communication

February 17, 2015, Business Meeting

Information on Hanging Flower Baskets on Downtown Light Poles

FROM:

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SUMMARY

At its December 16, 2014 meeting, the Council requested information about possible locations and costs for hanging flower baskets on the large overhead cobra lights in the downtown core. Hanging baskets in Phoenix and Central Point are provided and maintained by Four Seasons Nursery of Central Point, which is willing to provide the same service to Ashland at a cost of approximately \$300 per basket. Staff has identified 28 light poles in the downtown core that could accommodate hanging baskets. This information is provided for Council discussion and direction.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

As part of the 2012-13 Plaza remodel, irrigation for hanging baskets was added to the pedestrian light posts. The Downtown Beautification Committee in 2014 discussed the feasibility/desirability of adding such irrigation to other pedestrian lights in the downtown core as those light posts are replaced over time. This prompted a discussion at the December 16, 2014 Council business meeting, at which Councilor Marsh requested information about the availability of funding for hanging baskets on downtown light posts in the current budget. Council gave direction to staff to provide information on hanging flower baskets at a future Council meeting.

Four Season Nursery in Central Point provides hanging flower baskets to a number of communities in the Rogue Valley. The service includes installing brackets, growing and hanging flower baskets, watering the baskets daily and providing maintenance of the flowers.

The following information is provided by Four Seasons Nursery:

1. The cost per basket is \$300 - \$330 depending on the participation of other communities. This price includes the cost and installation of the brackets. If the City chooses to purchase and install the brackets separately the cost would drop \$50 per basket during the first year. In subsequent years the cost per basket would go back up to either \$300 - \$330 per basket. If Four Seasons purchases the brackets and the City decides not to continue the program in subsequent years, Four Season can re-sell/re-use the brackets for other customers.
2. The baskets are planted with cascading petunias.
3. The baskets get watered daily including weekends. A 300-gallon water truck is filled each day with water from a local fire hydrant near the beginning of the route.
4. Flowers are fertilized and deadheaded/trimmed every week.
5. The same style of bracket (band clamp) can be used on utility poles.
6. The recommended height for the brackets is between 12 and 15 feet.



7. The vertical measurement from the top of the bracket to the bottom of the flowers is approximately four feet.
8. The program lasts from early May through October.

The City has identified 28 cobra light poles (56 baskets) in the downtown core that would be suitable for hanging baskets. Twenty-two other light poles are not considered suitable for a variety of reasons, but primarily because of existing signage on the poles that cannot be blocked by hanging baskets.

State law and the City's procurement rules require a competitive process before awarding a contract for this service. This would be an intermediate procurement, which can be done quickly and does not require formal bids. In order to allow time for baskets to be started and flowering by the time they're hung in May, a decision on whether to proceed needs to be made in short order.

COUNCIL GOALS SUPPORTED:

N/A

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost per year for the program would be \$16,800 to \$18,400 depending on the cost per basket. There is no money appropriated for this purpose in the current budget. Should the Council wish to proceed with this, staff recommends a transfer from General Fund contingency to Administration/General Fund (Economic Development Program) to cover the cost.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:

N/A

SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

N/A. This item is presented for information only. Council may wish to provide additional information to staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

Map showing location of suitable poles for hanging baskets in the downtown core



COBRA-STYLE LIGHT INSTALLATIONS in the Downtown Corridor

