



# Alamosa Landscapes

## 2020 June Arbor Week Planting

*by Marilyn Loser*

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Early in 2020 Andy Rice, Director of Alamosa Parks and Recreation, and the Alamosa Tree Board learned they received a \$3,000 Colorado Tree Coalition/Xcel Vegetation Management grant. Every year since 2010 Alamosa has received a grant from the CTC for improving our community forest. The Xcel tie-in requires appropriate tree species be planted under power lines.

This year's project title is "Twin Peaks Loop Trail & Cattails Golf Course Entryway Aesthetic and Shade Improvement Project." Alamosa is known for folks enjoying biking, jogging, and walking -- especially in open areas and near the Rio Grande. A favorite route is along State Ave (North River Road) north from town crossing one of only two bridges that cross the Rio Grande in Alamosa.

Sadly, there are no trees along the stretch just north of town to provide summer shade. The road runs alongside the Cattails Golf Course and there is a fine pedestrian and bike lane on the west side with overhead power lines. Besides daily use of this lane, several citizen and school races include this stretch annually. The annual Stephanie Miner (breast cancer victim) Walk had more than 600 community participants in 2019. Trees along this corridor will help shade those in the non-vehicle lane and provide a pleasing tree view for auto travelers. Some even say it might protect them from stray golf balls! Many people take this scenic secondary Alamosa gateway to enjoy the majestic views of 14er Mt Blanca to the east, open areas to the west, and the Rio Grande River and Bosque.

One goal of the project included involving community volunteers to help plant trees -- especially those who enjoy outdoor Alamosa activities (school cross country teams, local golfers, and others interested in having shade along this portion of road). It would have been a wonderful opportunity to highlight the impact of trees in our community. Having trees along this hot pavement corridor could encourage more people to leave their cars behind and enjoy the benefits of trails in the Alamosa Ranch and will benefit those who still run along the roadway on hot summer days.

Sadly, due to the corona virus epidemic, community participation didn't happen this year and all planting was done by Alamosa City employees in early June. Thank you City crew for your excellent, hard work! Sorry we couldn't be there to help.

Total cost of the project was \$6,120. Funding above the grant portion came from the Conservation Trust Funds (State lottery proceeds to local governments) and City of Alamosa Community Recreation & General Funds. 18 trees were planted with some funds being used for irrigation drip lines, staking, and bracing materials.

The trees planted were hawthorn (*Crataegus species*), flowering crabapple (*Malus species*), Canada red chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana 'Schubert'*), Tatarian maple (*Acer Tatricum*), and amur maple (*Acer ginnala*). Trees were selected from the Xcel approved "Plant a Better Future" list that includes trees that do well in our climate. You can find the .pdf file by searching online for "Xcel Plant a Better Future Tree List" and then selecting the Colorado version. You can read more about these trees by selecting the Tree Lists/Tree Index tab at AlamosaTrees.net. It's never too early to plant for next year!

It's been almost a month since we had the crazy, damaging wind/snow storm of September 8. Since that time we've had beautiful Indian summer days. The forecast for the next week and a half calls for warm daily highs in the seventies with nighttime lows around freezing and no moisture. Make sure to keep your trees and shrubs watered. It's best to water earlier in the day so the water can soak in, be absorbed by roots, and distributed throughout the tree before nighttime freezing. You don't want to have water freeze in tree cells that can then potentially break and damage the tree.

Another tip. If you want to prune any trees, it's best to hold off (unless you have hazard situations) until trees drop their leaves and go dormant. Pruning now could spur new growth just when it's time for the trees to slow down and prepare for winter cold.

*"Of all the seasons, autumn offers the most to man and requires the least of him."* Hal Borland

*"In autumn, don't go to jewelers to see gold; go to the parks!"* Mehmet Murat ildan