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Planning Division



Landscape Code Amendments

CITY COUNCIL – December 19, 2023

City Staff Representative: Shannon McDowell, Senior Long Range Planner

1

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Landscape Code Amendments

- Article 5 – Neighborhood Design Standards
- Article 6 – Non-Residential Design Standards
- Article 7 – Access and Parking Standards
- Article 8 – Landscape & Site Design Standards
- Article 11 – Definitions & Terms

Goals

- Require sustainable landscaping
- Lessen water use due to landscaping in new development
- Allow existing landscaping to be retrofitted
- Address problematic provisions

2

1

2

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Terms

- SOD
 - Irrigated turf
- WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE
 - 50%+ living material (shrubs, ground covers, native seed)
 - Up to 50% rock or wood mulch
 - Variation of mulch required to break up large areas



3

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Single-Family, Duplex/Multi-Unit House, and Row House

- Front yard: Remove minimum requirement of sod
- Front yard: Maximum 40% or 1,000 sq ft sod
- Tree lawn: Water-wise landscape (50% living cover)
- Back yard: Sod, water-wise landscape, non-living landscape, or native seed (any combination)




Photo credit: www.waterwiseplants.org

4

3

4

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Photo credit: www.waterwiseplants.org

5

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Multi-Family, Commercial, & Industrial

- Front: water-wise landscape or native seed
- Tree lawn: water-wise landscape (50% living cover)
- Parking: water-wise landscape or native seed
- Buffers: water-wise landscape or native seed




Photo credit: www.waterwiseplants.org

6

5

6

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Multi-Family, Commercial, & Industrial

- Front: water-wise landscape or native seed
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Photo credit: waterwiseplants.org

7

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Existing Landscaping


- Allow retrofits for less water use
 - Sod replaced with a low water use alternative turf
 - Sod replaced with a water-wise landscape, native seed



Photo credit: waterwiseplants.org

8

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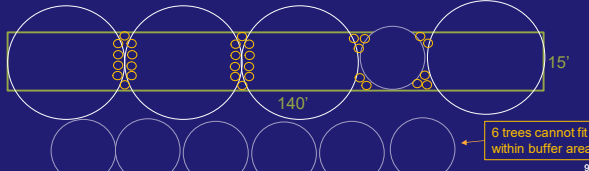


Problematic Provisions

- Buffer Landscaping

Current Type II Buffer


15' deep
1 large tree per 40' of width
1 shrub per 5' of width
1 evergreen tree per 20' of width



9

9

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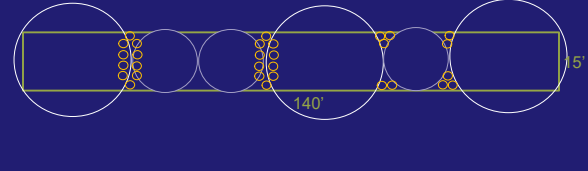


Problematic Provisions

- Buffer Landscaping

Proposed Type II Buffer


15' deep
1 large tree per 60' of width
1 shrub per 5' of width
1 evergreen tree per 60' of width



10

10

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Problematic Provisions and Other Adjustments

- Loosened very specific locational or size criteria
- Organized substitutions
- Added guidance for landscaping when site restrictions exist
- Defined water-wise landscape
- Aligned irrigation requirements and opportunities with our water management plan
- Small adjustments to make the code easier to enforce
- Added definitions to correspond with terms used in the landscape code

11

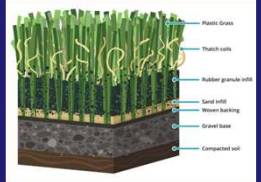
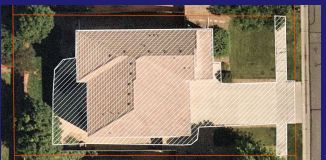
11

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Artificial Turf


- Subdivision drainage design assumes % permeable for each lot
- Mile High Flood District recommendations now known
- Artificial turf more impermeable than other landscaping
- Allow on athletic fields and designated recreation areas
- If desired, can incorporate additional applications prior to 2nd reading

12

12

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Code Amendment Review Criteria

In making its decision, the City Council shall use the following criteria (Section 2.10 B.):

1. The amendment furthers the purposes of these regulations in Section 1.10.C.
2. The amendment is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and has been considered for both its long-range affects as well as immediate impacts.
3. The amendment promotes the public safety, health and general welfare of the community in the City of Brighton.
4. The amendment improves the effectiveness and efficiency of administering the Land Use & Development Code.

13

13

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Public Notice and Comment

- Public Notice was provided in accordance with the Land Use & Development Code.
- On December 1:
 - ✓ Notice was published on the City's website.
- Planning Staff has not received any formal comments in advance of the hearing.
- City Staff posted information for the public hearing on social media.

14

14

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Summary of Findings

- The Development Review Committee has reviewed these code amendments and recommended approval.
- Staff finds the amendments to the landscaping code are in general compliance with the requirements for a code amendment as outlined in the *Land Use & Development Code*.

City Staff Recommendation

- Staff recommends approval of the amendments to the landscape code.

15

15

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Planning Commission Recommendation

- The Planning Commission heard the code amendment on October 26, 2023 and recommended approval with a 4-0 vote.

16

16

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Options for Consideration:

The City Council has the following options to consider:

- ❑ Approve the code amendment as drafted;
- ❑ Deny the code amendment;
- ❑ Approve the code amendment with modifications; or
- ❑ Continue the code amendment to be heard at a later specified date if the City Council finds it needs additional information to make a decision.

17

17