



Environmental Services
222 Laporte Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80521
970.221-6600
fcgov.com

MEMORANDUM

NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD

DATE: June 18, 2025
TO: Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Natural Resources Advisory Board
SUBJECT: Water Efficiency Plan

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

On May 21, 2025, Alice Conovitz (Water Conservation Specialist) presented to the Natural Resources Advisory Board regarding potential updates to the Water Efficiency Plan. The updated WEP sets two new goals and includes a number of strategies intended to reduce risk and impact of water shortages by (1) reaching a 4% annual reduction in water demand by 2040 and 2) improving water efficiency and building resilience on City-owned landscapes.

The Natural Resources Advisory Board would like to express its support for the proposed Water Efficiency Plan goals. As a Board dedicated to preserving natural resources for the benefit of future generations and grounded firmly in science, we are concerned about the future of water access and availability, not only in Fort Collins, but across the Western United States. We see this update, which took analysis of historical and projected future water use and efficiency savings under a range of climate and growth predictions, as being in alignment with the *Our Climate Future Big Move #3 - Climate Resilient Community* and *City Council Priority #7: Protect community systems in an integrated way to ensure resilient water resources and healthy watersheds*.

However, we do not believe the menu of strategies go far enough. Items we would like to see considered include:

- Given the support for regulatory strategies expressed in customer surveys, Utilities should consider pursuing more regulatory measures.
- Projects for turf-to-xeric conversions on City-owned property should be designed to maximize co-benefits such as insect and pollinator habitat and native plant restoration; water savings should not be the only selection/design criterion.

- On-bill financing should not be limited to high-cost projects and multi-year loans, but rather should be available to income-qualified customers for lower-cost equipment replacements and landscape/irrigation conversions.
- One survey theme was that it's critical to engage HOAs, landscaping professionals, and realtors; Utilities should explore more strategies targeted at these groups.
- Develop more educational materials pertaining to climate-based scenarios in reference to the "cost of inaction" to elevate the seriousness of water scarcity in the Northern Colorado landscape.
- Examine recognition programs at various scales (E.g., individual household, neighborhood, business, etc.) to promote conservation behavior change.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this policy decision that will have long-term impacts on future community resilience and health.

Very respectfully,

Kelly Stewart

Chair, Natural Resources Advisory Board

cc: Kelly DiMartino, City Manager
Jacob Castillo, Chief Sustainability Officer
Honore Depew, NRAB Staff Liaison and Climate Program Manager
Kelly Ohlson, City Council Liaison to the NRAB