

# Landscape Code Update

Supporting Water Conservation Efforts while Honoring  
Greeley's Landscaping & Tree Planting Traditions

City Council Hearing – February 16, 2021

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- **Landscape Code Update – 2021**
  1. City Council's Priorities and Objectives
  2. Comprehensive Plan (Imagine Greeley) (Water Conservation)
  3. Landscape Policy for Water Efficiency (Ordinance NO. 40, 2015)
  4. Reduce the amount of landscape material and water to be used for landscaping
  5. Provide a user-friendly language
  6. Revise infill development standards
  7. Simplify landscape provisions for residential properties
  8. Encourage holistic design alternatives
- **Landscape & Irrigation Manual – TBD future project (W&S)**
  1. Requirements for irrigation system design
  2. Irrigation installation guidelines
  3. Performance audits
  4. Water-efficient planting guide
  5. Best management practices



# Public Outreach

- **Advisory Committee met 4 times**
  - Citizens, staff, and landscape industry professionals
  - Discussions started August 28, 2020
  - Worksheet/review of Landscape Code Update drafts
- **Public Survey (English & Spanish)**
  - 85 responses
  - Public Correspondence



# Current

## - **Purpose and Intent**

- Has eight sections
- Promote compatibility
- Promote tree-lined streets, Tree City USA
- Reduce heat island effect from inadequate landscaping

## - **Single-family and two-family lots**

- 50% of ALL yards (front, side, back) must be landscaped
- 50% of parkway/tree lawn must be live plantings

# Revision

## - **Purpose and Intent**

- Five topical sections
- Land use compatibility & water efficiency
- Uphold agriculture & Tree City USA tradition
- Promote energy & ecological benefits at the regional, community, and lot level

## - **Single-family and two-family lots**

- Only front yards/any yard visible from adjacent rights-of-way must have 50% live plantings
- Properties still may not have weeds or bare dirt as an acceptable ground cover
- Clarified that trees in parkways are required every 35 feet

# Current

- **Buffer Yards (applies to non-residential only)**
  - Buffering required along entire length of adjoining lot lines
  - Requires buffers for both differing uses and zoning districts
  - Three tables:
    1. Land Use Intensity
    2. Required Buffer Yards
    3. Buffer Yard Types
  - There are 7 buffer types, each one increasing in width and number plantings
  - Options to reduce the material if the width increases, but only as the width gets wider
  - Options to reduce the material if a berm, wall, or fence is installed

# Revision

- **Buffer Yards (non-residential)**
  - Does not require buffering along the entire length of adjoining lot, but only where the most intense and differing land-uses exist
  - Requires buffer against differing uses, not differing zoning districts. Like-for-like uses would not be required to have buffering.
  - Reduces the amount of tables to two:
    1. Land use intensity table
    2. Minimum buffer yard material and width
  - Reduces the number of buffer yards to 4, and reduces width from 50 to 20 feet (60% reduction)
  - Increases options, such as hardscape designs in infill areas
  - Requires a 60/40 mix of non-deciduous to deciduous materials, respectively (creates year-round screening)

# Current

## - **Perimeter Treatment**

- Applies at the subdivision and major development scale
- Requires that a number of plantings be installed based on the classification of streets
- Maintained in perpetuity by an owner's association

## - **Parking Lot Standards**

- Parking lots must be screened from the view of adjacent properties and adjacent rights-of-way
- Unclear when medians are required, but standards apply (i.e., shall contain 1 shade tree for every three 3 parking space)

# Revision

## - **Perimeter Treatment**

- Still applies to all major development (e.g., preliminary subdivision, USR, or PUD)
- Classification of streets remains, but plantings are reduced
- Maintained in perpetuity by an owners' association, metro district, property owner, or tenant
- Exempts parking lot areas, when parking lot screening is already required

## - **Parking Lot Standards**

- Screening area reduced from 10 to 8 feet wide (20% reduction), perimeter treatment not required
- Medians are required for parking lots with more than 100 parking spaces, and requires a minimum of 2 parking bays

# Current

## - **Water Conservation & Irrigation**

- Sprinklers shall be placed so as not to throw water onto adjacent paved or hardscaped surfaces
- All multi-family, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and institutional properties must install rain sensors
- Green Industry Best Management Practices

# Revision

## - **Water Conservation & Irrigation**

- Best management practices can change somewhat frequently. As such, these are removed from the Code, and will instead be included in a separate landscape & irrigation policy manual, developed primarily by Water & Sewer Dept.
- Examples include: rain sensors, automatic irrigation, subsurface and drip irrigation, irrigation audits, and temporary irrigation allowances.
- Other aspects will be successful through education and incentives (not Code). Examples include: using hydrozones when designing irrigation, promoting xeric landscaping and native grass in lieu of traditional turf-grass, bioretention facilities



# Summary

- **Landscape code updates are part of a continuous improvement initiative**
- **Water efficiency continues to drive updates, and will continue to change with new tools and technology**
- **Greeley has a proud history of water acquisition and stewardship**
- **Always a balance of aesthetics, personal choice, environmental benefits, and water resources**





# Recommendation

- **December 8 Council Worksession – background & context**
- **December 15 & January 12 Planning Commission**
  - **Recommend APPROVAL**

