

# Council Agenda Summary

February 16, 2021

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## Title:

Public hearing and final reading of an ordinance repealing Chapter 18.44 and Appendix D in their entirety, adding a new Chapter 18.44, amending portions of Chapter 18.04.110, 18.42.030, and amending Appendix 18-B of the City of Greeley Municipal Code, all regarding Landscaping, Irrigation, Buffers, and Screening Standards

## Summary:

*This item supports City Council's 3-Year Priorities item, Greeley Water: Priority 4 – "Increase water conservation efforts and build a culture of conservation."*

As discussed with Council at its December 8, 2020, worksession, the Community Development Department is updating the Landscape Code, Title 18.44. While complementary to the overall Development Code update, this initiative pre-dates that larger update initiative and is the fulfillment of earlier goals related to water efficiency.

The landscaping code was last updated in 2009 (Ordinance No. 2009-20). Although the last rewrite added language that supports water-wise landscaping methods and objectives, it has become outdated. In the last five years, Greeley has experienced exponential growth, and, since 2009, the City has introduced new programs such as the Water Efficiency Audits, Water Restrictions, and Water Budgets to reflect how the community uses water. The City has also introduced the "Life after Lawn" program and a pilot program through the Water & Sewer Department that encourages water-wise subdivision design. As the result of these and other changes over time, the Landscape Code is being updated to better align with these current programs and efforts.

The proposed Landscape Code Update language includes updated and modernized water conservation language designed to influence and encourage water-reducing planting practices. The language better aligns with the water conservation goals established in the *Imagine Greeley: Comprehensive Plan*, the *City Council's Vision for 2040*, and the *Landscape Policy Plan for Water Efficiency*, adopted in 2015 (Ordinance No. 2015-40).

A summary of changes to Chapter 18.44 is as follows:

- The Purpose and Intent Section gives prominence to land use compatibility and water efficiency. It promotes energy and ecological benefits at the regional, the community, and neighborhood level, while upholding the City's agricultural tradition and the Tree City USA designation.
- Single-family and two-family lots would only be required to have 50% live plantings in yards visible from adjacent rights-of-way.

- Buffer yards would not be required along the entire length of an adjoining lot, and the most intense buffer width requirement would be decreased by 60%, reducing the amount of land needed for buffer yards.
- Perimeter treatment materials would be reduced, although differences by street classifications remain. Revised code language has clarified the maintenance responsibility for perimeter treatments (i.e., an owners' association, metropolitan district, property owner, or a tenant).
- Parking lots would be exempt from perimeter screening, as they already require parking lot screening. Screening for parking lots would be reduced from ten feet to eight feet. Medians would be required when there are more than 100 parking spaces, with a minimum of two medians for every two bays.
- Technical irrigation design and equipment standards would be moved from the Landscape Code to a stand-alone policy document. The policy document can be updated more frequently to align with industry practices regarding matters such as for rain sensors, automatic irrigation systems, subsurface and drip irrigation, irrigation audits, and temporary irrigation and hydrazones. These requirements would be in a separate landscape & irrigation policy manual developed primarily by the Water & Sewer Department.

City Council discussed this update in a worksession on December 8, 2020. Following that, the Planning Commission considered this request on December 15, 2020, with a continuance to January 12, 2021. Planning Commission recommends approval of the Landscape Code Update to the City Council (4-1). This ordinance was introduced at the January 19, 2021 Council meeting.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

Does this item create a fiscal impact on the City of Greeley?	No
If yes, what is the initial, or, onetime impact?	
What is the annual impact?	
What fund of the City will provide Funding?	
What is the source of revenue within the fund?	
Is there grant funding for this item?	N/A
If yes, does this grant require a match?	
Is this grant onetime or ongoing?	
Additional Comments:	

#### **Legal Issues:**

Consideration of this matter is a legislative process which includes the following public hearing steps:

- 1) City staff presentation (if requested)
- 2) Council questions of staff
- 3) Public input (hearing opened, testimony - up to three minutes per person, hearing closed)

- 4) Council discussion
- 5) Council decision

**Other Issues and Considerations:**

None.

**Applicable Council Priorities and Goal:**

The primary goals of the Landscape Code Update are the following:

1. Implement City Council's Vision for 2040, and the corresponding 3-Year Priorities, including:
  - a. Greeley Water: History, Heritage, Innovation
  - b. A Dynamic and Resilient Economy
  - c. Your Home is Here
  - d. We Are Greeley Proud
  - e. Operational Excellence
2. Implement the Comprehensive Plan (Imagine Greeley)
3. Support the Landscape Policy Plan for Water Efficiency (Ordinance No. 40, 2015)
4. Include user-friendly language that clarifies processes and standards and minimizes the potential for confusion
5. Revise infill development standards to encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings and minimize requirements for minor site improvements
6. Simplify landscape provisions for residential properties by requiring improvements only in areas that are visible from public rights-of-way
7. Encourage holistic design alternatives, reduce the amount of landscape material in buffers to ensure the long-term viability of plant material, and allow for creative solutions by providing options for landscape enhancements (including hardscape, walls, and berms).

**Decision Options:**

- 1) Adopt the ordinance as presented; or
- 2) Amend the ordinance and adopt as amended; or
- 3) Deny the ordinance; or
- 4) Continue consideration of the ordinance to a date certain.

**Council's Recommended Action:**

A motion to adopt the ordinance and publish by reference to title only.

**Attachments:**

Ordinance

Planning Commission Summary (Staff Report) (December 15, 2020)

Memorandum to Planning Commission (January 12, 2021)

Planning Commission Minutes-Signed (December 15, 2020)

Planning Commission Minutes-Draft (January 12, 2021)

PowerPoint Presentation