

STAFF REPORT REGULAR MEETING

AGENDA DATE: October 6, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Community Sustainability

TITLE:

Ordinance No. 2026-10 – First Reading – amending multiple sections of Chapter 23 “Land Development Regulations” related to artificial turf, associated definitions, and installation standards.

SUMMARY:

The proposed ordinance amends Chapter 23 of the City's Land Development Regulations to establish definitions, permitting requirements, design standards, installation requirements, maintenance obligations, and review procedures for artificial turf installations. The amendments are intended to provide clear local standards that are consistent with Florida law while addressing site design, drainage, landscaping, tree protection, and aesthetic considerations within the City.

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION:

In 2024, the Florida Legislature adopted Section 125.572, Florida Statutes, limiting local regulation of synthetic turf on certain residential properties. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection subsequently adopted Rule 62-308.100, Florida Administrative Code, establishing minimum installation standards. The proposed ordinance is intended to implement local regulations that are consistent with these state requirements while addressing site-specific concerns unique to Lake Worth Beach.

The City currently does not have comprehensive regulations governing artificial turf installations. The proposed ordinance establishes a regulatory framework to provide consistency in permitting and installation while protecting the City's landscaping, drainage systems, tree canopy, and neighborhood character.

The proposed amendments include:

- Establishing a definition for Artificial Turf and revising the definition of Semi-Pervious Surface to clarify how artificial turf is regulated under the Land Development Regulations.
- Establishing standards governing where artificial turf may be installed, including limitations within front yards, required landscape areas, drainage features, utility easements, and public rights-of-way.
- Establishing minimum material specifications, permeability standards, installation requirements, maintenance obligations, and tree protection standards.
- Requiring City review, permitting, and inspection prior to installation to ensure compliance with adopted standards.

The **Planning & Zoning Board (PZB)** unanimously voted to recommend approval of the proposed text amendments at their meeting on July 1, 2026.

The **Historic Resources Preservation Board (HRPB)** voted 3-3 to not recommend approval of the proposed text amendments at their meeting on July 8, 2026. Concerns included environmental impacts (microplastics, runoff, drainage, heat island effect) and potential safety concerns for pets.

The **Tree and Landscape Board (TLB)** at its August 13, 2026, meeting did not vote to support the artificial turf ordinance.

Following the City Commission's September 1, 2026, discussion, the proposed ordinance was revised and is returning for first reading. On single-family residential properties of one acre or less, the ordinance applies the state installation standards and limits additional City requirements to treatment as a semi-pervious surface, specified location and water-quality restrictions, permeability, permitting, and inspections. Other properties remain subject to all proposed City standards. The revisions prohibit turf within ten feet of a waterbody unless a physical barrier separates it, or where installation would violate state water-quality standards or alter a permitted stormwater system. Permit plans must identify adjacent waterbodies and any barrier or buffer. Material and installation provisions also refer to the state rule.

MOTION:

Move to approve/disapprove Ordinance 2026-10 on first reading and schedule the second reading and public hearing for October 20, 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S):

Ordinance 2026-10
Section 125.572, Florida Statutes, Regulation of Synthetic Turf
Rule 62-308.100, Florida Administrative Code, Synthetic Turf
PZB/HRPB Staff Report
Presentation