



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Department of Development Services

DCM: Cassey Ogden

DATE: May 12, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding proposed Code amendments related to Landscape Standards.

BACKGROUND

On April 16, 2024, the City Council adopted an update to the Water Conservation Plan [7-0]. Development Services Staff participated in the preparation of the Water Conservation Plan and were tasked with examining the landscaping standards in the Denton Development Code (DDC) for opportunities to encourage water conservation in the City of Denton.

In addition to changes related to water conservation, Staff has identified areas within the landscape standards which could be revised to utilize best practices and improve clarity, simplifying implementation of the regulations for applicable development. Examples of these clarifications include elements within the landscape point table, alternative landscape regulations, and airport landscape standards.

At the February 24, 2025, Development Code Review Committee (DCRC) meeting, Staff introduced the current Landscape Code regulations in the DDC, provided an overview of the current standards, and discussed areas of the Code proposed to be amended. At the end of the discussion, Staff requested direction from the Committee regarding any additional areas related to the Landscape Code that may have not been included in Staff's presentation that DCRC would like to explore. Discussion amongst the Committee ranged from street tree requirements and barriers to achieving plantings along the right-of-way, balancing irrigation needs with water conservation goals, and utilizing plant material that is suited for the native environment.

At the March 3, 2025, DCRC meeting, Staff presented proposed amendments to Subsections 7.7.3-7.7.5.E of the Landscape Code regulations and Section 9.2 Definitions. These amendments focused on encouraging water-wise landscaping, adapting plantings to the native environment, and ensuring the City is up to date regarding industry best practices through the Denton Development Code. Amendments also incorporated feedback received from the Committee at the February 24, 2025, meeting. Following an overview of the proposed amendments, staff sought consensus and feedback from the Committee regarding the proposed edits to the DDC. Discussion during the meeting focused on landscape needs and requirements at the Denton Enterprise Airport, Low Impact Design, Xeriscaping and planting requirements for residential lots within the City. The Committee provided direction to move forward with the proposed amendments with recommendations to incorporate clarifying information regarding turf grass.

At the March 24, 2025, DCRC meeting, Staff presented proposed amendments to Subsection 7.7.5.F of the Landscape Code regulations and Section 9.2 Definitions. These amendments focused on revisions to the Landscape Plan and Point System requirements applicable to all developments except single-family detached dwelling, duplex, triplex, fourplex and townhome lots. These amendments are intended to support the overall goals of encouraging water-wise landscaping, adapting plantings to the native environment, and ensuring the City is up to date regarding industry best practices through the DDC. Amendments also incorporated feedback received from the committee at the February 24, 2025, and March 3, 2025, meetings. The Committee requested additional information on the Landscape Point System item removing credit for planting 4-inch caliper trees as well as various changes to proposed point items. Supporting documentation regarding why Staff is proposing to remove the credit for planting 4-inch caliper trees was emailed to the Committee on March 28, 2025.

At the April 14, 2025, DCRC meeting, Staff continued the discussion on proposed amendments to Subsections 7.7.5.F of the Landscape Code, focusing on the Landscape Point System item which provides credit for planting 4-inch caliper trees. Based on feedback received from the Committee at the March 24, 2025, meeting, Staff presented several options related to the Point System item, including: remove the point item from the Landscape Point System, lower the minimum caliper size of the item from 4-inches to 3-inches, reduce the points received for utilizing the item from 5 to 3 points, or make no change to the Point System item. The Committee opted to continue the item and directed staff to consider and bring back additional Landscape Area Point System Items related to larger, healthier tree plantings for consideration. The presentation from the April 24, 2025, DCRC meeting is attached as Exhibit 4.

At the April 28, 2025, DCRC meeting, Staff presented proposed amendments continuing discussion related to Subsections 7.7.5.G-7.7.5.J of the Landscape Code and Subsection 7.7.7, Street Tree Requirements. These amendments focused on revisions to the Landscape Installation and Maintenance and Irrigation requirements applicable to all developments except single-family detached dwelling, duplex, triplex, fourplex, and townhome lots. Additional amendments presented at this meeting were related to Street Tree requirements applicable to all developments. Amendments incorporated feedback received from the Committee, including a discussion of revised items requested in the April 14, 2025, meeting. Discussion centered on the point table item related to the planting of 4-inch caliper trees, with consensus reached by the Committee on reducing the point total provided and allowing 3-inch native plantings to qualify for this point item. Additionally, Street Tree standards were discussed; the conversation centered on the proposed reduction of Street Tree calculation rates and species diversity requirements.

At the May 12, 2025, DCRC meeting, Staff will present additional proposed amendments to Subsection 7.7.7, Street Tree Requirements and Section 9.2 Definitions. These amendments focus on Street Tree Planting and Maintenance, as well as Alternatives Authorized. As with the other amendments presented previously, these amendments are intended to support the overall goals of encouraging water-wise landscaping, adapting plantings to the native environment, and ensuring the City is up to date regarding industry best practices through the DDC. Amendments will also incorporate feedback received from the Committee, including a discussion of revised items discussed in the April 28, 2025, meeting. Following an overview of the proposed amendments, Staff will seek consensus and open the floor for additional feedback from the Committee regarding the proposed edits to the DDC.

A draft of Staff's presentation is provided as Exhibit 5. Please note that the presentation is still being refined, and a finalized version will be shared at the meeting.

EXHIBITS

1. Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet
2. Exhibit 2 - DDC Subsection 7.7.7.E-7.7.7.F
3. Exhibit 3 - Proposed Redline Markups (DDC Subsection 7.7.7.E- 7.7.7.F)

4. Exhibit 4 – April 28, 2025, Presentation
5. Exhibit 5 – Draft Presentation

Respectfully submitted:
Tina Firgens, AICP
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