City of Denton

City Hall
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Denton, Texas
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AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Department of Development Services

ACM: Kenneth Hedges

DATE: October 7, 2026

SUBJECT

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding the proposed Code amendments related to Landscape Standards and Tree Preservation.

BACKGROUND

This Work Session is intended to give the Planning and Zoning Commission an overview of proposed amendments to the Landscaping and Tree Preservation regulations within the Denton Development Code (DDC), which are the result of over two years' worth of work by Staff as well as the Development Code Review Committee (DCRC). At this Work Session discussion, Planning Staff will be presenting the proposed amendments to Section 7.7.4 and Subchapter 9.2 of the DDC related to tree preservation requirements as well as the proposed amendments to Sections 7.7.5-7.7.7 of the DDC related to landscape standards. The purpose of this Work Session is to review the proposed amendments and answer any questions the Commission may have in advance of this item being brought forward for public hearing.

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 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.

In late 2024, City Council prioritized a review of the Tree Preservation Code, and on December 9, 2024, the DCRC held a discussion regarding prioritizing future potential DDC amendment topics and similarly provided direction to staff regarding the prioritization of amendments to the DDC related to Tree Code. Staff were tasked with assessing the current DDC Tree Code standards and presenting amendments to the DDC where appropriate. The proposed amendments Staff has identified relate to industry best practices, improving clarity, and simplification of implementation of regulations for applicable development regarding tree preservation. Examples of sections that Staff is proposing to amend for clarifications include Tree Protection Requirements During Construction, Minimum Preservation Requirements, and Tree Replacement.

Between February 2025 and April 2026, Staff worked with the DCRC on proposed amendments related to both landscape standards and tree preservation requirements.

Topics to be included in the proposed DDC Amendment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Amendments to Landscape Standards, including:
  - Street tree requirements
  - Landscape Area Point System Table
  - Alternative landscape standards for Denton Municipal Airport properties
  - Turf grass restrictions and standards
  - Landscape maintenance and installation techniques that align with industry best practice
  - Encouraging the use of native plants and ground cover
- Amendments to Tree Preservation Standards, including:
  - Amendments to tree preservation, replacement, and mitigation rates that consider City canopy goals
  - Increasing standards for tree protection requirements during construction
  - Implementing tree survey expiration standards
  - Increase incentives for tree preservation
  - Amendments to tree preservation relief provisions
  - Relief measures and procedures for infill development and tree preservation
  - Revisions and additions to terms classifying trees by health, size, and species

In addition to discussing these topics with the DCRC, Staff engaged the community through tabling at local events and community facilities and hosting neighborhood meetings and developer town halls. Common elements which came up during engagement activities with the public were: general agreement with emphasis on tree preservation and enhanced protection measures proposed; concerns the amendments are "too late" and won't result in any change in conditions; dissatisfaction with parking lot tree placement; and agreeance with the Tree Preservation Plan expiration timeline.

The presentation slides from this Work Session will be shared with the Commission as a resource for future reference after the meeting.

EXHIBITS

1. Agenda Information Sheet

Respectfully submitted:
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