



Legislation Text

File #: ID#20-703, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION:

Receive an update from staff and consider referring the Sustainability Committee Strategic Initiative Ordinance changes for irrigation systems and turf grass requirements to the Planning and Zoning Commission, and provide direction to Staff.

Meeting date: November 4, 2020

Department: Public Services

Amount & Source of Funding

Funds Required: N/A

Account Number: N/A

Funds Available: N/A

Account Name: N/A

Fiscal Note:

Prior Council Action: Click or tap here to enter text.

City Council Strategic Initiative: [Please select from the dropdown menu below]

Sustainability

Choose an item.

Choose an item.

Comprehensive Plan Element (s): [Please select the Plan element(s) and Goal # from dropdown menu below]

☐ Economic Development - Choose an item.

☒ Environment & Resource Protection - Natural Resources necessary for community's health, well-being, and prosperity secured for future development

☐ Land Use - Choose an item.

☐ Neighborhoods & Housing - Choose an item.

☐ Parks, Public Spaces & Facilities - Choose an item.

☐ Transportation - Choose an item.

☐ Core Services

☐ Not Applicable

Master Plan: *[Please select the corresponding Master Plan from the dropdown menu below (if applicable)]*

Choose an item.

Background Information:

The Sustainability Committee has received information from staff regarding potential water conservation enhancements by modification of requirements for installation of new irrigation systems and turf grass. Irrigation use of water for lawns and landscaping comprises more than half of total seasonal water use, and represents a major opportunity for water savings going forward.

The attached ordinance changes would require a separate irrigation service and meter for new single-family residential properties, which matches the requirement for commercial and multi-family services that was adopted in 2006.

The other significant change is limiting the amount of irrigated turf grass that can be installed to 50% of the landscaped area in new single-family residential properties and 25% in all other new developments. The 25% limitation is currently a recommendation in the ordinance and the change simply requires that limit. The Austin Homebuilders Association was the source of the 50% limitation in single-family homes, and the Committee requested they review the proposed changes as a major stakeholder. The HBA indicated they supported the proposed changes and appreciated the outreach.

The changes would also add definitions for turf and turf grasses and other minor edits for clarity.

The proposed ordinance amendments will enable accurate metering of water for automatic irrigation use and create significant water savings with the reduction in lawn areas. Existing residential customers would be grandfathered and no retrofits would be required by these changes.

Council Committee, Board/Commission Action:

The Sustainability Committee is charged with advancing the strategic initiative of Sustainability and recommends council consider and approve referral of the proposed ordinance changes to the Planning and Zoning commission for consideration of approval.

Alternatives:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Recommendation:

Approve referral