



Legislation Text

File #: Ord. 2021-05, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION:

Consider approval of Ordinance 2021-05, on the first of two readings, amending sections 7.2.4.1 and 7.2.4.2 and Chapter 8, Article 1 of the City's Development Code by, among other things, including limitations on turfgrass installed in new developments, requiring the use drought-tolerant turf grass species in new developments, requiring minimum soil depths in new developments, adding a definition for turfgrass, and making other minor edits for clarification; providing a savings clause; providing for the repeal of any conflicting provisions; and providing an effective date.

Meeting date: January 19, 2021

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: n/a

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 - Choose an item.

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, City Council and P&Z have received information from staff regarding potential water conservation enhancements by limiting the amount of turfgrass in new development. 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 proposed amendments would limit the amount of irrigated turfgrass 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. The Sustainability Committee requested they review the proposed changes as a major stakeholder, and the HBA indicated they supported the proposed changes and appreciated the outreach.

The proposed changes would also require use of drought-tolerant turfgrass species and minimum soil depths, which are currently recommendations in the LDC. Changes also include addition of a definition for turfgrass and other minor edits for clarity.

Council Committee, Board/Commission Action:

The Sustainability Committee referred this item to City Council on September 30th. City Council approved referral of this item to P&Z on November 4th. P&Z approved the proposed amendments on December 8th.

Alternatives:

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Recommendation:

The Sustainability Committee is charged with advancing the strategic initiative of Sustainability, and recommends approval of the proposed LDC changes. City staff concur with this recommendation.