



WATER-EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE  
Zoning Text Amendment, ZTA 2022-010046



# Background Information

- In 2021, the City Council asked staff to look at updating the landscaping ordinance to introduce water-efficient standards.
- Weber Basin Water Conservancy District is working with cities to establish water-efficient standards, and is offering a “flip your strip” rebate program for residents of qualifying cities.
- With regional drought conditions and significant projections of population growth, conservation is a key initiative of Weber Basin and for the state of Utah.
- The monetary cost of conservation is much less than finding new water sources and building new infrastructure
- **Purpose:**
  - Enhance the aesthetic quality of residential and commercial areas while promoting water-efficient landscaping.

# Applicability

- All new and rehabilitated landscaping for commercial, industrial, multi-family, and public facility projects.
- All new planned single-family residential developments
  - Planned Single-Family Residential- development with specific open space or amenity standards in which common open spaces will be maintained by a homeowner's association or organization.
  - Example: Wilcox Farms
- Model Homes
- **Single-Family Exemption:**
  - Owner/Resident installed landscapes are highly encouraged, but not required to meet all the standards of the ordinance
  - The park strip requirements will still apply (e.g., no turf in park strips)
- Form Based Code will need to be amended
  - FBC allows turf grass to cover up to 60% of the landscaped area

# Commercial, Industrial, Multi-Family, & Public Facility

- Open Space requirements to be the same as current code standards
  - Commercial – 10%, Industrial – 5 %, Public Facility – 15%, MF – 20 to 25%
- Turf area not to exceed 15% of the total landscaped area, outside of active recreation areas
- Park Strips Less than 8' Wide
  - No turf
  - Option to install just mulch allowed (no plant material)
  - Hardscape not to exceed 50% of park strip area, unless otherwise required by city code
- Plant Count Requirements and Ground Plane Coverage
  - Commercial, Multi-Family, & Public Facility: ~~1 tree/500 sf, 1 shrub/300 sf~~ 1 tree/400 sf, 1 shrub/200 sf
  - Industrial: To remain 1 tree/1,000 sf and 1 shrub/600 sf (recent amendment from 2021)
  - Ground Plane Coverage: at least 50% (Evergreen trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, perennials, turf grass)
    - Canopies of deciduous trees not calculated into ground plan coverage
- Mulch: non-turf areas to be covered with 3" minimum mulch layer to prevent weeds

# Commercial, Industrial, Multi-Family, & Public Facility

- Current Park Strip Examples



Sandridge Townhomes



South Clearfield Elementary



# Commercial, Industrial, Multi-Family, & Public Facility

- Plant Material Size at Installation
  - Deciduous Trees- 2” caliper measured 8” above the soil line (same as current code)
  - Evergreen Trees- minimum height of 6’ (same as current code)
  - Shrubs- 3 gallon minimum
  - Ornamental grasses and perennials- 1 gallon minimum
  - Groundcover- minimum height of 3 inches
- Plan Review, Construction Inspection, Post-Construction Monitoring
  - A copy of a landscape and irrigation plan shall be submitted to city for review and approval. List of what shall be included on the plans is detailed in the ordinance.
  - Site inspection may be performed by city during construction.
  - After installation and prior to occupancy, inspection required to verify compliance with the approved landscape plans.

# Single-Family Residential

- Intent is to establish an ordinance that will make significant progress toward water conservation in single-family developments. Recognizing the unique challenges that would come with the enforcement of new regulations, a single-family exemption for landscapes installed by homeowner/residents is provided.
- **Planned Single-Family Residential Developments and Model Homes**
  - All requirements of the Water-Efficient Landscape Design Standards shall apply. Planned Single-Family Residential Developments require development agreements, at which point landscape plans can be reviewed for compliance.
  - Any developments with the potential for Model Homes will be going through the subdivision process. Staff can communicate the landscaping requirements for any Model Homes that the developer may build.
- **Single-Family Standards**
  - Park strip standards apply to all new and fully rehabilitated single-family. No exemption
  - Park strips less than 8' wide not to have turf
  - Option for just mulch in park strips allowed (no plant material)
  - Hardscape in park strip to cover no more than 25% of park strip area
  - Turf area not to exceed 35% of the total landscaped area or 250 square feet, whichever is greater
  - Mulch: 3" layer required to inhibit weeds

# Single-Family

- Current Park Strip Examples



Rock Mulch



Bark Mulch



# Single-Family

- Current Park Strip Examples



Rock Mulch with Plant Material



Rock Mulch with Decorative Boulders

# Single-Family

- Current Park Strip Examples



Hardscape with Planter Areas



All Hardscape



# Irrigation Design Standards

- Shall be designed to maximize irrigation efficiency
- Shall provide smart automatic irrigation controllers that adjust the frequency and/or duration of irrigation events in response to changing weather conditions
- Use design elements such as zones with similar plants and conditions, drip and bubblers for non-turf irrigation, check valves to stop drainage from lower elevation sprinkler heads, etc.
- Valves to be programmed for cycle soaks where necessary to reduce runoff, particularly on slopes and soils with slow infiltration rates

## Restrictive Covenants Requiring Turf

- HOA's not to require plant material that would conflict with the water-efficient ordinance

# Completion of Improvements

- Timeframes to remain the same as current code
  - Nonresidential: landscape installed prior to occupancy, or in inclement weather, 6 months from the date of initial occupancy
  - Multifamily: Same as nonresidential
  - Single Family: Front and side yards installed within 12 months of initial occupancy. Rear yard landscaped within 18 months of initial occupancy
- Bond/Escrow
  - In cases of inclement weather, landscape bond required if occupancy to be granted before landscape installation
  - Amount to be ~~125%~~110% of estimated cost (consistent with public improvement escrows)
  - Survivability Guarantee: Current code has the city hold 25% of the estimated cost of improvements for 1 year after installation to guarantee plant material survival. (Staff proposes removing the guarantee to be consistent with landscape installations done without inclement weather bonding)



# Tree Regulations for Public Ways and Places

- Clarification for maintenance duties
  - Duty of owner/occupant to maintain plant material between their property line and the curb line of the street
- Added language for street trees
  - To be selected based on growth characteristics
  - To contact City Arborist for a list of permitted street trees



# Supplementary Standards

- Current code regulations in Supplementary Standards to carry over
  - Fee in Lieu of Open Space
  - Modification of required landscaped open space
  - Preservation, Maintenance, and Ownership

## Waste of Water

- Regardless of age of development, waste of water prohibited

# Summary of Changes to Current Code

- Repeal Section 11-13-23 (Landscaping Standards and Requirements)
- Repeal Section 11-13-16 (Tree Regulations)
- Amend various sections of code referencing landscaping standards in Chapter ~~13~~ 22
- Amend Section 11-5-6 (Issuance of Permit) to remove Guarantee.
  - ~~B. Landscaping And Recreation Facility Guarantee: The installation of all landscaping and recreation facilities shall be guaranteed in accordance with the provisions of section 11-13-23 of this title. (Ord. 2018-22, 10-23-2018)~~
- Amend Section 11-18-4 and 11-18-6 (Commercial and Industrial Site Design Standards)
  - Drought resistant shrubs and trees ~~encouraged wherever possible~~ required in conjunction with efficient low water use smart automatic irrigation systems.
  - Drought tolerant plant materials are ~~encouraged~~ required.

# Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

	<b>Review Consideration</b>	<b>Staff Analysis</b>
1)	The proposed amendment is in accordance with the General Plan and Map; or	The proposed amendments are in accordance with the General Plan which encourages the preservation of the natural resources of the community.
2)	Changed conditions make the proposed amendment necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Title.	With changes related to population growth, water supply, and drought, the proposed ordinance changes are necessary to provide support for this Title.



# Staff Recommendation/Findings & Conclusion

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of **APPROVAL** for **ZTA 2022-010046** to the City Council, a zoning text amendment to adopt a water-efficient landscape ordinance. Staff's recommendation is based upon a review of the existing and proposed ordinance standards with following findings:

1. Clearfield City should be continually working to help with the regions efforts to use water resources efficiently and plan for future growth.
2. The proposed changes would benefit Clearfield residents by allowing participation in Weber Basin's "flip your strip" rebate program.
3. The proposed changes encourage the beautification of outdoor spaces and landscapes while supporting water conservation measures.

# Planning Commission Recommendation

1. Move to recommend approval of ZTA 2022-010046 to the City Council, a zoning text amendment to adopt a water-efficient landscape ordinance.
2. Move to recommend denial of ZTA 2022-010046 to the City Council, a zoning text amendment to adopt a water-efficient landscape ordinance.
3. Move to table ZTA 2022-010046 to request additional information for consideration.

The Planning Commission may also make a recommendation that is different than those listed above such as a modified recommendation of approval.

