

ORDINANCE NO. 2022- _____

A BILL

FOR AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO, ENACTING SECTION 138-191 OF THE CITY CODE PERTAINING TO THE USE OF TURF AND ORNAMENTAL WATER FEATURES

WHEREAS, Aurora Water is responsible for providing water for the residents of the City of Aurora; and

WHEREAS, water scarcity in the arid west is compounded by water availability and population growth; and

WHEREAS, water used in irrigation and ornamental water features severely limits the amount of water that can be recaptured by Aurora Water's Prairie Waters potable reuse system; and

WHEREAS, low water-use landscapes are attractive, require less maintenance, save water and better withstand drought. Eliminating high water use turf in nonfunctional and aesthetic areas maximizes the amount of available reusable water, a primary goal of Aurora Water.

WHEREAS, the intent of section 138-191 is to help Aurora Water meet future water needs and is in the interest of the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of Aurora.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO:

Section 1. Section 138-191 of the City Code of the City of Aurora, Colorado, is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 138-191 Use of turf and ornamental water features.

(1) Definitions. As used in this section 138-191 the following words and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed to them below:

***Turf* means any cool season turf species, variety or blend, including but not limited to Kentucky bluegrass and Fescue.**

***Aesthetic Turf* means turf areas designed for aesthetic appeal only and are not conducive to active or programmed recreation.**

Water-wise landscape means landscapes designed with shrubs, perennials and warm-season grasses with an annual irrigation water requirement of less than 15” (9.345 gallons per square foot).

Median means the landscaped area between opposing directions street traffic lanes.

Curbside Landscape means the landscaped area between a sidewalk and curb.

Residential development perimeter or common landscape means any landscaped area within a residential development not irrigated by a residential water meter and not dedicated as a park per the City of Aurora’s Parks Recreation and Open Space Dedication and Development Criteria Manual.

Commercial development means any development that meets the commercial user definition in section 138-221.

Landscaped common area means areas within a private community designed for community use in section 138-151.

Multi-family residential development means developments that meet the multi-family user development definition in section 138-221.

Active or Programmed recreation area means an area with a primary function of sport field but can also accommodate secondary functions including but not limited to non-organized sporting events, cultural activities and organized social gatherings.

Ornamental water feature means any exterior decorative fountains, waterfalls, basins, ponds, lakes, waterways or other similar aesthetic structures unless required under Chapter 138, Article VIII – Stormwater of the City Code.

(2) The intent of this section 138-191 is to assist the City in meeting future water needs.

(3) Use of turf and ornamental water features. The provisions of this section 138-191 apply to all development and redevelopment within the City.

(a) Exemptions. Developments with complete Site Plan application submitted to the City prior to the date of September 30, 2022 are exempt from this section.

(b) An exemption may be granted for consistency within developments when a Site Plan approved prior to January 1, 2023 is adjacent to a Site Plan without approval prior to January 1, 2023 and a net water savings can be accomplished beyond what is minimally required under this section 138-191.

An exemption under this section 139-191(3)(b) must be approved by both the General Manager of Aurora Water and the City of Aurora Director of Planning.

- (4) Turf that serves primarily an aesthetic purpose shall not be permitted.**
- (5) The installation of new turf shall be restricted as follows:**
 - (a) Turf shall not be installed in the front or side yards of any single-family dwelling except as specified in section 138-191(5)(b).**
 - (b) The installation of new turf in alley load residential front yards where backyard size prohibits the installation of turf shall not exceed the lesser of: forty-five percent (45%) or five hundred (500) square feet.**
 - (c) The installation of new turf in residential backyards shall not exceed the lesser of: forty-five percent (45%) of the backyard area as defined by the Unified Development Ordinance; or five hundred (500) square feet.**
 - (d) The removal of water-wise landscaping for the purpose of installing turf is prohibited, regardless of building permit issue date.**
 - (e) Turf shall not be installed in medians or curbside landscapes.**
- (6) The installation of turf in the following developments shall be allowed only in active or programmed recreation areas:**
 - (a) Multi-family developments;**
 - (b) Commercial developments;**
 - (c) Public and private schools;**
 - (d) Interior landscaped common areas on a common irrigation meter designed for recreation and conforming to the City's Unified Development Ordinance, as modified from time to time; and**
 - (e) Formal sports fields, informal play areas, active and reflective recreation areas only as defined in the City's Parks and Recreation and Open Space Dedication and Development Criteria Manual.**
- (7) Turf shall not be installed for the development of golf courses.**
- (8) Ornamental water features. The use of water in all public and private exterior ornamental water features and ponds is prohibited.**
- (9) Median and Curbside landscape. The installation of new spray and/or sprinkler irrigation systems in median and curbside landscaping is prohibited.**
- (10) Except as indicated in section 138-191(3)(a) and (b) above, there shall be no waivers or variances to this section 138-191 permitted.**
- (11) Three years after the effective date of this ordinance, the City Manager shall have a third party economic study conducted to include at least the following elements: impact of this ordinance on water usage in the City of Aurora; impact of this ordinance on household water rates in the City of Aurora; impact of this ordinance on home values and prices in the City of Aurora; impacts of this ordinance on new home construction in the City of Aurora; and adoption of similar ordinances by other jurisdictions within the Denver metropolitan area.**
 - (a) The results of this economic study shall be presented to City Council within thirty-nine (39) months of the effective date of this ordinance.**

Section 2. Severability. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any section, paragraph, clause, or provision of this Ordinance shall, for any reason, be held to be invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity or

unenforceability of such section, paragraph, clause, or provision shall not affect any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance.

Section 3. Penalty. City employees violating the terms, directives, or mandates of this Code are not subject to the general penalty provisions contained in Section 1-13 of this City Code.

Section 4. Pursuant to Section 5-5 of the Charter of the City of Aurora, Colorado, the second publication of this Ordinance shall be by reference, utilizing the ordinance title. Copies of this Ordinance are available at the Office of the City Clerk.

Section 5. Repealer. All orders, resolutions, or ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance or with any of the documents hereby approved, are hereby repealed only to the extent of such conflict. This repealer shall not be construed as reviving any resolution, ordinance, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.

INTRODUCED, READ AND ORDERED PUBLISHED this _____ day of _____, 2022.

PASSED AND ORDERED PUBLISHED this _____ day of _____, 2022.

MIKE COFFMAN, Mayor

ATTEST:

KADEE RODRIGUEZ, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Ian J Best ^{RLA}

Ian Best, Assistant City Attorney