

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE THE
CITY AND COUNTY OF BROOMFIELD

DATE: January 13, 2026
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers, George Di Ciero City & County Building
One DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, Colorado 80020

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held before the City and County of Broomfield on

ORDINANCE NO. 2291

An ordinance to update the Landscape Code, Chapter 17-70 relating to turf and other related revisions

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City and County of Broomfield, Colorado:

Section 1.

Chapter 17-70, Landscape Code, of the Broomfield Municipal Code is amended as follows:

17-70-020 - Applicability.

(A) **General. Except as more particularly provided in BMC 17-70-140 (maintenance),** the landscaping requirements of this Chapter 17-70 shall apply to the following properties:

- (1) All new construction, including residential and non-residential, that are to be constructed by a developer or property owner;
- (2) All construction projects that cumulatively increase the gross floor area of the lot by sixty-five percent (65%) or more;
- (3) The total redevelopment of a parcel, including demolition and new construction;
 - (i) Redevelopment of a parcel means the demolition of an existing structure or building in anticipation of new development. ~~This chapter does not apply to modifications by a property owner or homeowner's association to existing landscaping only.~~
- (4) Construction of parking lots containing 10 or more spaces, or expansion of existing parking lots by more than i) 10 spaces, or (ii) 50% of the existing parking lot area, whichever is greater; and
- (5) All construction projects that result in a disturbance of more than fifty percent (50%) or more of the aggregate landscape area.**
- (6) All public land dedications as required by the Broomfield Municipal Code Chapter 16-28-120, shall comply with the provisions of this chapter unless such property is specifically exempted from these regulations based on the specific Open Space characteristics of the subject property and as approved by the city and county manager or their designee.

- (B) *Existing Plans or Approvals.* Except as provided in this chapter, all landscape plans approved prior to January 1, 2024, including but not limited to approved site development plans, planned unit development plans, and urban renewal site plans, are not required to comply with provisions of this code, but shall be maintained in compliance with the applicable regulations and requirements in place at the time they were originally installed. **Any landscape plans approved prior to January 31, 2026, shall not be required to comply with the revisions to the landscape code found in Ordinance No. 2291.**
- (C) *Landscape Plans and Water Budgets.* A landscape plan and water budget, as applicable and as provided in this chapter, is required for all development as set forth in BMC 17-70-020(A) above and shall be submitted with a site development plan/urban renewal site plan (SDP/URSP) or with a building permit if no SDP/URSP is required. The landscape plan shall be prepared and stamped by a Colorado licensed landscape architect, except for plans for a single-family unit dwelling detached or a manufactured home which do not need to be prepared and stamped by a Colorado licensed landscape architect.
- (D) *Conflicts.* If there is a conflict between the various landscaping standards, the more restrictive standard shall apply. Wherever the requirements for two or more landscaping standards overlap, the same plant material may be counted toward meeting the requirements of both standards.

17-70-030 - Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following words and terms shall have the meanings set forth in this section:

- (A) *Cool-Season Turfgrasses* means annual bluegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, red fescue, and tall fescue and similar varieties.
- (B) *Curbside Landscaping* means the property adjacent to right-of-way or the adjoining right-of-way itself that are used for the planting of street trees and other plant material.
- (C) *Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)* means the standard measurement used in forestry and tree studies to assess the size of a tree trunk. DBH is determined by measuring the diameter of the tree trunk at a standardized height, which is typically 4.5 feet (1.37 meters) above the ground level. This measurement is taken using a tape measure or calipers and is commonly used as an indicator of a tree's size, growth, and maturity.
- (D) *Evapotranspiration* means the quantity of water evaporated from adjacent soil surfaces and transpired by plants during a specific time.
- (E) *Functional Turf* means turf that is located in a recreational use area or other space that is regularly used for civic, community, or recreational purposes, which may include a playground; a sports field; a picnic ground; an amphitheater; a portion of a park; and the playing area of a golf course, such as a driving range, chipping and putting green, tee box, green, fairway, and rough.
- (F) ~~(E)~~ *Hydrozone* means a portion of the landscaped area having plants with similar water needs that are served by a valve or set of valves with the same schedule. A hydrozone may be irrigated or non-irrigated. For example, a naturalized area planted with native vegetation that will not need supplemental irrigation once established is a

non-irrigated hydrozone.

- (G) ***Invasive plant species*** means plants that are not native to the state and that (i) are introduced into the state accidentally or intentionally; (ii) have no natural competitors or predators in the state because the state is outside of their competitors' or predators' range; and (iii) have harmful effects on the state's environment or economy or both.
- (H) ~~(F)~~ ***Irrigation efficiency*** means the measurement of the amount of water beneficially used divided by the amount of water applied.
- (I) ~~(G)~~ ***Landscape*** means any combination of living plants, such as trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, flowers or grass; natural features such as land and water forms, rock, stone, bark chips or shavings; and structural features, including, but not limited to, fountains, reflecting pools, outdoor artwork, screen walls, fences, or benches.
- (J) ~~(H)~~ ***Landscape buffer*** means a land area with landscape plantings and other components used to visibly separate one use from another or to shield or block noise, lights, or other nuisances.
- (K) ~~(I)~~ ***Landscaped area*** means the entire parcel, less the building footprint, driveways, non-irrigated portions of parking lots, hardscapes- such as decks and patios, and other non-porous areas. Water features are included in the calculation of the landscaped area. Areas dedicated to edible plants, such as orchards or vegetable gardens are not included.
- (L) ~~(J)~~ ***Landscaping and/or landscape improvements*** means plantings of grass, shrubs, trees or similar living plants, with minimal use of other ground surface treatment such as decorative rock, bark, or stone. These inert materials are allowed to be used in conjunction with live material in planting beds, but do not count toward the calculations of required landscaping and/or landscaping improvements.
- (M) ~~(K)~~ ***Mulch*** means any material such as leaves, bark, straw, gravel, or other materials left loose and applied to the soil surface for the beneficial purpose of reducing evaporation.
- (N) ~~(L)~~ ***Native plant*** means a species that is indigenous within the Colorado Front Range and naturally occurring in one or more plant communities.
- (O) ***Native seed mix as turf alternative*** means a native seed mix intended for residential lawns, parks, or areas where people walk/play that prioritizes low-growing, durable species that tolerate mowing or light traffic and is selected for aesthetics (uniform look, green cover).
- (P) ***Native seed mix for native areas*** means a native seed mix designed for open space, habitat, or naturalized zones that includes taller grasses and diverse forbs (flowers) to support pollinators and wildlife and emphasizes ecological resilience rather than uniform appearance.
- (Q) ***Nonfunctional Turf*** means turf that is not functional turf, including turf located in a street right-of-way, parking lot, median, or transportation corridor. It does not include turf that is designated to be part of a water quality treatment solution

required for compliance with federal, state, or local agency water quality permitting requirements that is not irrigated and does not have herbicides applied.

- (R) ~~(M)~~ *Open Space* means a parcel of land intentionally protected from development and set aside for unstructured passive recreation, and the appreciation of natural surroundings. Open Space may contain, but is not limited to, trailheads and trails, waterbodies, wetlands, wildlife viewing areas, agricultural lands, fishing facilities and other facilities that support uses compatible with the site's resources and conditions.
- (S) ~~(H)~~ *Ornamental tree* means a tree planted primarily for its decorative value, or for screening and that typically does not exceed a height of thirty feet (30').
- (T) ~~(O)~~ *Rain sensor or rain shutoff device* means a device connected to an irrigation controller that overrides scheduled irrigation when significant precipitation has been detected.
- (U) ~~(P)~~ *Shade tree* means a deciduous tree planted primarily for its high crown of foliage or overhead canopy.
- (V) ~~(Q)~~ *Shrub* means a self-supporting woody perennial plant of low to medium height characterized by multiple stems and branches continuous from the base, usually not more than twelve feet (12') in height at its maturity. It may be evergreen or deciduous.
- (W) ~~(R)~~ *Streetscape* means the landscape treatment of a street edge, including vegetation, sidewalks, streetlights, fencing, signs, utilities, and similar facilities.
- (X) *Transportation Corridor* means a geographical land area with a transportation system that includes all modes and facilities within the described area, having length and width.**
- (Y) ~~(S)~~ *Tree Maturity* means the point at which a deciduous tree achieves a diameter of six inches at breast height (DBH).
- (Z) ~~(T)~~ *Tree Opening* means box or rectangle open area where the tree sits when surrounded by a hard surface.
- (AA) ~~(U) *Turf or turfgrass* means a surface layer of earth containing mowed grass with its roots.~~ *Turf or turfgrass* means continuous plant coverage consisting of nonnative grasses or grasses that have not been hybridized for arid conditions and which, when regularly mowed, form a dense growth of leaf blades and roots.**
- (BB) ~~(V)~~ *Understory* means assemblages of natural low level woody, herbaceous, and ground cover plant species that exist in the area below the canopy of trees.
- (CC) ~~(W)~~ *Vegetable Garden* means a plot of ground or an elevated soil bed in which pollinator plants, flowers, vegetables, herbs, fruits, leafy greens, or other edible plants are cultivated.
- (DD) ~~(X)~~ *Xeriscape* means a water efficient landscape adapted to the local environment.

authorized and directed to create, adopt and revise a Landscape Reference Manual containing policies, procedures, standards, maps, plant lists and other provisions necessary to implement the provisions of this Chapter 17-70. Prior to the preparation of a formal landscape plan submittal, designers shall consult the Landscape Reference Manual, which is available on the City's website, for specific requirements regarding plan setup, scale, notes, plant symbology, standard tables, and the water-wise plant list. The Landscape Reference Manual shall also provide examples to illustrate the requirements of this section.

17-70-050 - General Landscaping Standards.

...

(B) *Artificial Turf Standards or Non-Vegetative Turfgrass.* Where permitted, artificial turf shall comply with the following standards:

(1) *Allowed Use.*

- (i) Artificial turf may be used in sports field applications.
- (ii) Artificial turf may be used to replace sod or native seed areas in backyards of single-family unit (detached and attached) residential lots. If a property owner installs artificial turf, the property owner shall still meet the Residential Yard Landscape Requirements per Table 1.
- (iii) ~~Artificial turf may be used in non-residential and mixed-use developments.~~ **Artificial turf may be used as a component of a project designed and approved by a professional engineer for civil infrastructure projects, including but not limited to:**
 - (a) **Covers for solid water facilities and brownfield sites**
 - (b) **Revetments for slopes, channels, levees, and dams.**
- (iv) Artificial turf specifically designed for pet use may be used in dog parks.

(2) *Materials.* Artificial turf shall be a cut pile infill type and shall be manufactured from polypropylene, polyethylene, or a blend of polypropylene and polyethylene fibers stitched onto a polypropylene or polyurethane mesh or hole-punched backing. Hole-punched backings shall have holes spaced in a uniform grid pattern with spacing not to exceed four inches by six inches on center.

(3) *Installation.* Artificial turf shall be installed per the manufacturer's recommendations. Additional underground drainage will be required and may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis based on impacts to the existing drainage system.

- (i) *Slope Restrictions.* The installation of artificial turf on slopes greater than 6.6% shall require the applicant to consult with the manufacturer on recommendations for installation and use.

(4) *General Appearance.* Artificial turf shall be installed and maintained to effectively simulate the appearance of a well-maintained turfgrass.

(5) *Specific Prohibited Uses.*

- (i) Artificial turf may not be used within curbside landscape areas and medians in any zone district.
- (ii) Artificial turf may not be used to satisfy living plant material requirements.

- (iii) Where the use of artificial turf or natural turf is permitted, the use of indoor or outdoor plastic or nylon carpeting or other materials or combinations of materials as a replacement for artificial turf or natural turfgrass is prohibited.
- (iv) Artificial turf shall not be used in the right-of-way.

(C) *Turfgrass Requirements.* The design of all new turfgrass areas shall comply with the following requirements:

(1) *Residential Yard Turfgrass Requirements.* Residential yards shall meet the turfgrass and other requirements set forth in Table 1 below.

(2) *Turfgrass Area Limitations for All Other Development Areas Except Multi-Purpose Fields, ~~and~~ Golf Courses and Functional Turf Areas.* In all other development sites except multi-purpose fields, ~~and~~ golf courses, **and functional turf areas**, the use of cool-season turfgrass or sod, seed and seed mixtures that contain more than 20% of a mixture of cool-season grass species shall be prohibited, and turfgrass or sod, seed and seed mixtures shall be limited to not more than 30% of the site's total landscaped area. The area consisting of high-water using species of cool-season turfgrasses such as Kentucky Bluegrass shall be contiguous, and patches located throughout the site shall be avoided. For the purposes of these standards "contiguous" shall mean all abutting areas and areas that may be separated by a pedestrian walk or trail. Areas separated by pavement used for vehicular circulation are not considered contiguous.

- (i) *Exceptions and Exemptions.* Tot lots and recreational areas that benefit from the durability of cool-season turfgrasses are exempt from contiguity requirements of this section. All other requirements shall apply.

...

17-70-070 Curbside and Urban Street Frontage Landscaping.

(A) *Curbside Landscaping.* Curbside landscaping shall include requirements for detached walks, street trees, plantings, and mulches.

(1) *General.*

- (i) Street trees and curbside landscaping are required whether on a public or private street or right-of-way. Evergreen trees shall not be used as street trees. Existing deciduous street trees in good health and condition may be used to satisfy the street tree requirement if they are part of the curbside landscaping.
- (ii) Streets with detached walks shall have curbside landscapes that include the area within the right-of-way as measured between the back of the curb and face of the walk. The curb is not counted as part of the curbside landscape.
- (iii) Street trees shall be centered within the curbside landscape area. The uniform placement of street trees is intended to create a continuous street edge. Trees may be grouped to achieve a specific aesthetic; however, the intent is to avoid large areas without street trees. No gap between groupings of street trees shall exceed 120 feet, and no trees shall be

- placed in easements unless permitted by the easement holder.
- (iv) Street trees shall be deciduous, thornless, fruitless canopy trees of species that mature to heights of between 30 and 60 feet and with canopies that mature to at least 25 feet wide.
 - (v) Street trees shall be set back at least 50 feet from the face of a stop sign in order to maintain the sight distance area and shall comply with the design specifications outlined in the Broomfield Standards and Specifications, including Section 700 for sight distance area design parameters.
 - (vi) If an easement conflicts with the installation of street trees, applicants shall provide shrub equivalents. **Shrub and perennial equivalents shall comply with the Landscape Reference Manual.** If vegetation of any type, other than grass is prohibited by the easement holder, then the applicant shall be required to provide the required trees elsewhere on site. Relocated street trees shall not be used to satisfy other required landscaping requirements.
 - (vii) The property owner adjacent to the public or private street shall maintain any street trees. The sight distance area shall be maintained at all roadway intersections, crossings, and parking areas by keeping all bushes and shrubs at a height of 36 inches or lower above pavement surface and trim all trees and hanging branches to a minimum height of 8 feet above pavement surface including sidewalks, and 14 feet above the vehicular traveled right-of-way. When located within a sight distance area, plant materials shall comply with the design specifications outlined in the Broomfield Standards and Specifications, including Section 700 for sight distance area design parameters.
 - (viii) Living materials shall include water-wise deciduous or evergreen shrubs, ornamental grasses, perennials, ground covers, sod, and/or native seed consistent with this chapter.

(2) Curbside Landscaping Detached Walks.

(i) General Requirements.

- (1) Cool-season turfgrass is prohibited within any size of detached curbside landscape areas.
- (2) Curbside landscape areas that are less than three feet in width shall be mulched with rock mulch, no white quartz rock, or decorative hardscape. Rock shall be a minimum of 1.5 inch diameter.
- (3) Curbside landscape areas that are between three and six feet in width shall be planted at a minimum with shrubs and shall include mulch. Ornamental grasses are optional.
- (4) Curbside landscape areas that are between six and 10 feet in width shall be planted with shrubs and street trees at a minimum. Ornamental grasses are optional.
- (5) Curbside landscape areas that are 10 feet in width or wider may be planted entirely with either water conserving (xeric) vegetation and required street trees. A combination of shrubs and ornamental grass beds may be incorporated within the

curbside landscape area.

(ii) *Minimum Plant Material.*

- (1) Trees. Where trees are required per 17-70-070.A.2, one tree per 40 linear feet of street frontage shall be provided.
- (2) Shrubs and Ornamental Grass. When shrub and ornamental grasses are used, per 17-70-070.A.2 the following requirements shall be met:
 - (a) No less than one shrub per 40 square feet or shrub equivalents may be installed within the curbside landscape area and no more than 30 percent of the shrub count can be ornamental grasses provided as shrub equivalents. Shrubs are assumed to be an average of four feet wide at maturity.
 - (b) No more than 15% of perennials may be provided as shrub equivalents. Calculations for the plant quantities shall be done first.
 - (c) **Shrub and perennial equivalents shall comply with the Landscape Reference Manual.**
- (3) Any area within the curbside landscape bed that is remaining shall be completed with either wood or rock mulch, or native seed depending upon the width of the curbside landscape.
- (4) Provide a variety of shrub species that differ in height, color and width for visual interest, and to avoid monocultures, throughout the seasons.
- (5) Shrubs and ornamental grasses shall be three gallon size at time of installation and perennials shall be provided at a ratio of three one-gallon perennials to one three-gallon shrub.
- (6) Additional trees may not be provided in the curbside landscape area as a substitute for the living ground cover treatment such as shrubs, ornamental grasses, or perennials.

...

17-70-110 Additional landscape and irrigation requirements for non-residential districts, multi-familyunit, single-familyunit attached properties and manufactured home parks. The following additional landscape and irrigation requirements shall apply to all non-residential properties, multi-familyunit, single-familyunit attached properties and manufactured home park common areas, unless specifically excluded.

- (A) Areas required to be landscaped. All portions of these properties which are not occupied by structures, water bodies, surfaced by streets, roads, driveways, sidewalks, parking areas, other vehicle use areas, or city approved trails are required to be landscaped in accordance with the provisions of this section. Designated areas shall be maintained free of weeds at all times throughout the year.
- (B) The landscaping required in this section shall not exceed the moderate water-demand landscape standard as described in the Landscape Reference Manual.

- (C) Turfgrass, sod and seed mixtures shall be in conformance with Table 1. **Nonfunctional turf areas are to be minimized. Native seed as a turf alternative or hybridized sod only. No cool-season turfgrass is permitted in nonfunctional turf areas.**
- (D) All properties shall feature landscape areas in the front, rear, side and perimeters that separate parking areas, other vehicular use areas, or buildings from adjacent property lines according to the following provision:
- (1) Unless otherwise specified in the zoning district requirements or planned unit development plan for a property, along the sides or rear of any non-residential development project that directly abuts a residential zoning district, there shall be a landscape buffer at least 25 feet in depth.
- (E) For properties adjacent to roads with detached sidewalks, the property owner shall install landscaping and irrigation within the area between the sidewalk and curb within 12 months of the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This area does not count in calculating compliance with the provisions of this section.
- (F) The city shall not be responsible for constructing or maintaining landscaped areas within a development that incorporates publicly owned and accessible trails, parks, detention areas or drainage channels unless otherwise specified during the site review process or through a separate ownership and maintenance agreement approved by the city council.
- (G) Development projects adjacent to an arterial or collector street shall be required to landscape the right-of-way adjoining the development site and the nearest one-half of the median subject to the following:
- (1) Environmental concerns, including shade and winter ice, shall be addressed in the design of medians and right-of-way areas.
- (2) Unless otherwise specified, the city shall maintain arterial street medians.
- (H) Any landscaping around a fire hydrant shall be designed with a three-foot clear zone of mulch or ground cover height plant material.
- (I) *Drive-Through Screening Adjacent to Street Frontages.* A wall between 42 and 48 inches in height shall be provided to mitigate noise and minimize the visual impacts associated with on-site signs with speakers as well as screen drive-through aisles, service areas and stacking lanes from abutting public or private rights-of-way. The wall shall match or complement the colors, materials and aesthetic theming of the main structure. Landscaping consisting of low shrubs shall be provided along the exterior or street side to soften the appearance of the wall. Screen walls may be located within any required buffer setbacks.

...

Section 2.

This ordinance shall be effective January 31, 2026.

Section 3.

Introduced and approved after first reading on December 9, 2025 and ordered published in full.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

/s/ Nancy Rodgers

City and County Attorney

*Bold type indicates new material to be added to the Broomfield Municipal Code.
Dashes through words indicate deletions from the Broomfield Municipal Code.*

Published by title in the Broomfield Enterprise on Sunday, December 14, 2025
Published in full on the Broomfield Website Wednesday, December 10, 2025