

CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

ORDINANCE NO. 5283

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS OF THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT CODE (TITLE 21 OF THE GRAND JUNCTION MUNICIPAL CODE) REGARDING LANDSCAPING, BUFFERING, AND SCREENING AND DEFINITIONS

Recitals

The City Council recognizes the importance of maintaining effective zoning and development regulations that implement the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan while remaining compliant with applicable laws of the State of Colorado.

State legislation signed into law in 2024 and 2025 requires that local governments prohibit the installation of nonfunctional turf in new commercial, institutional, industrial, or common interest community property, any common interest element of a multi-unit residential property that includes more than twelve dwelling units, and in any street right-of-way, parking lot, median, or transportation corridor no later than January 1, 2026. During the course of reviewing the City of Grand Junction's landscape regulations to identify necessary revisions for compliance with state law, staff identified additional opportunities to clarify provisions or achieve greater consistency with other provisions of the Grand Junction Zoning and Development Code.

After public notice and public hearing as required by the Grand Junction Zoning and Development Code, the Grand Junction Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed amendment.

After public notice and public hearing, the Grand Junction City Council finds that the amendment to the Zoning & Development Code implements the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan, that the amendment provided in this Ordinance is responsive to the requirements of the laws of the State of Colorado, and that the amendment otherwise furthers and advances the public health, safety, and welfare of the City and its residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION THAT:

The following sections of the zoning and development code (Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code) are amended as follows (deletions struck through, added language underlined):

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21.07 LANDSCAPING, BUFFERING, AND SCREENING

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21.07.030. General landscape standards.

(a) Compliance.

(1) All landscaping ~~required by this Code~~ shall comply with the standards and requirements of this section.

(2) The landscaping requirements of this Code shall not apply to ~~a lot zoned for one or two dwelling units~~ individual-lot development of single-unit detached or duplex dwellings.

(3) Landscaping for new developments shall occur in buffer areas, all interior parking areas, along the perimeter of the property, ~~around new and existing structures,~~ and along street frontages and within any right-of-way not used nor planned to be used for infrastructure.

...

(c) Acceptable Plant Material.

(1) Suitable Plant List.

(i) Vegetation must be suitable for Grand Junction's climate and soils and shall be selected from the City of Grand Junction Suitable Plant List. ~~It~~ to be maintained by the Director. Applicants may petition the inclusion of plants not found on the Suitable Plant List and shall provide sufficient information about the proposed species to facilitate review. The Suitable Plant List identifies the anticipated water needs of each plant species. The Director may allow the use of any plant not otherwise prohibited if sufficient information is provided to show suitability including salt tolerance, sun and shade requirements based on planting locations, growth habitat, etc. Noxious or invasive species are not allowed to be planted in development but may be preserved in development.

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(iv) A minimum 90% of the proposed shrubs and ground cover shall be identified as xeric, xeric-low, xeric-medium, or low water on the Suitable Plants List.

...

(4) Turf not meeting the definition of functional turf shall not be installed on any commercial, industrial, or institutional property, any common interest element of a multi-unit residential property that includes more than twelve dwelling units, any common interest community property, or any street right-of-way, parking lot, median, or transportation corridor, except that grass seed or sod that is a native plant or has been hybridized for arid conditions is exempt from this prohibition. ~~exceed 15% of any required~~

landscaping area in the City of Grand Junction. Functional turf may exceed the 15% maximum.

(5) Artificial turf not meeting the definition of functional artificial turf shall not be installed on any commercial, industrial, or institutional property, any common interest element of a multi-unit residential property that includes more than twelve dwelling units, any common interest community property, or any street right-of-way, parking lot, median, or transportation corridor.

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(h) Irrigation.

All required vegetation and landscaped areas must be provided with a permanent irrigation system, which may include a system supplied by water from an approved graywater treatment works.

~~(5) Native grasses must have a permanent irrigation source that is zoned separately from higher water demand landscapes. Plants shall be irrigated by zones according to their water demand.~~ Once the grasses plants are established, irrigation to native grass areas can be reduced to a level that maintains coverage typical of the grass mix the plantings and to suppress weed growth.

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(i) Landscape Plans.

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(7) All landscape plans shall include an irrigation plan. Irrigation plans shall be certified by an irrigation design professional who has been certified through the Irrigation Association (CID), or a similar EPA WaterSense labeled certification program.

~~(i) This certification will be required on all irrigation plans no later than three years after December 21, 2022. The irrigation plan shall also comply with the standards in the Submittal Standards for Improvements and Development (SSID) manual.~~

...

(10) An equivalent species may be substituted in the field without prior written approval of the Director. Plants are "equivalent" if they have the same growth habit and rate, same cover, leafing, shade characteristics and function, have similar water requirements as identified as the City of Grand Junction Suitable Plants List, and thrive in the same microclimate, soils, and water conditions.

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(ii) Turf shall not be substituted without prior written approval from the Director.

(j) Protection of Landscape Areas.

All required landscape areas (except in the right-of-way where a street side curb does not exist) shall be protected from vehicles through the use of concrete curbing, large rocks, or other similar obstructions.

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(l) Sight Distance.

The owner shall maintain all vegetation, fences, walls, and berms so that there is no sight distance hazard nor road or pedestrian hazard. See GJMC 8.32.060 and TEDS (GJMC Title 29).

(m) Soil and Planting Beds.

Soil in required landscape areas must be amended and all vegetation planted in accordance with good horticultural practices.

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(n) Planting Standards.

(1) All required landscaping shall be installed, maintained, and protected as shown on the approved plan.

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(o) Maintenance.

(1) The owners, tenants, and occupants, including homeowners' associations, for all new and existing uses in the City must maintain required landscaping in a healthy, growing, neat and well-maintained condition:

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(ii) Any required plant that dies or is substantially damaged due to improper maintenance must be replaced with an equivalent live plant within 90 days of plant death or by the next April 1.

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21.07.060. Street frontage landscape.

(a) For all development, except construction of one or two dwelling units or development within the MU-3 zone district, the owner shall provide and maintain a minimum fourteen-foot-wide street frontage landscape adjacent to the public right-of-way.

(1) Where detached walks are provided, or where a building is constructed to a five-foot front setback, a minimum street frontage landscape of five feet is acceptable. Where a front setback is reduced to less than five feet, the minimum street frontage landscape

of five feet applies, and the equivalent area and plantings not installed within the frontage shall be provided in another location within the same development.

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21.07.070. Public right-of-way.

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(b) For the purpose of meeting minimum plant quantities, 50% of landscaping plantings on public right-of-way shall be counted toward the landscape or open space requirements of this Code, unless specifically provided otherwise in this Code.

(1) At least 75% of the unpaved adjacent right-of-way shall be covered by plant material at maturity, including tree canopy, shrubs, and groundcover. ~~No more than 15% of the right-of-way shall be landscaped with turf.~~

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21.14 MEASUREMENTS AND DEFINITIONS

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21.14.020. Definitions.

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(b) Terms Defined.

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Functional artificial turf means artificial turf that is:

(a) 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; or

(b) A component of a product designed and approved by a professional engineer for civic infrastructure projects, including but not limited to covers for solid waste facilities and brownfield sites and revetments for slopes, channels, levees, and dams.

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

playgrounds; sports fields; picnic grounds; amphitheaters; portions of parks; and the playing areas of golf courses, such as driving ranges, chipping and putting greens, tee boxes, greens, fairways, and roughs an area of turf measuring no less than 30 feet in width and length with a minimum area 1,500 square feet for the purposes of common recreational uses open to the public, members of a neighborhood, or clients and/or customers of a commercial or office use.

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INTRODUCED on first reading this 5th day of November 2025 and ordered published in pamphlet form.

ADOPTED on second reading this 3rd day of December 2025 and ordered published in pamphlet form.

ATTEST:



Cody Kennedy
President of the City Council



Selestina Sandoval
City Clerk



I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT the foregoing Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 5283 was introduced by the City Council of the City of Grand Junction, Colorado at a regular meeting of said body held on the 5th of November, 2025, and the same was published in The Daily Sentinel, a newspaper published and in general circulation in said City, in pamphlet form, at least ten days before its final passage.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT a Public Hearing was held on the day of the 3rd of December 2025, at which Ordinance No. 5283 was read, considered, adopted, and ordered published in pamphlet form by the Grand Junction City Council.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of said City this 8th day of December 2025.


Deputy City Clerk

Published: November 8, 2025
Published: December 6, 2025
Effective: January 5, 2025

