

CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

ORDINANCE NO. 5340

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS OF THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT
CODE (TITLE 21 OF THE GRAND JUNCTION MUNICIPAL CODE) REGARDING
PRESERVATION OF SIGNIFICANT TREES**

Recitals

The City Council desires to maintain effective zoning and development regulations that implement the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan while being flexible and responsive to the community's desires and market conditions and has directed that the Code be reviewed and amended as necessary.

On August 6, 2025, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 47-25 appointing members to a Housing Affordability Code Task Force, which would provide recommendations to the city to reduce the regulatory burden of developing new affordable and workforce housing which would result in reducing housing costs.

The Housing Affordability Code Task Force has recommended that the City Council amend the Zoning and Development Code to remove provisions requiring the preservation of significant trees with development.

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 amendments.

After public notice and public hearing, the Grand Junction City Council finds that the amendments to the Zoning & Development Code implement the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan and that the amendments provided in this Ordinance are responsive to the community's desires, encourage orderly development of real property in the City, and otherwise advance and protect 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):**

21.07.040 — PRESERVATION OF SIGNIFICANT TREES.

(a) This section applies to the following:

(1) New residential, mixed-use, and commercial development;

(2) Redevelopment as follows:

(i) Preservation is required for all lots in MU-3.

(ii) Preservation is required for lots larger than one acre in all other zone districts unless otherwise exempt.

(3) All development in Industrial zone districts is exempt from this section.

(b) Existing landscape features such as escarpments, large trees or stands, heavy vegetative cover, ponds, and bluffs shall be identified by the applicant as part of the development review process.

(1) This identification shall include a surveyed inventory of significant trees. Prior to undertaking a survey, an applicant may have a landscape professional view the site and determine whether there are any potential significant trees on the site. If there are no potentially significant trees on the site, the applicant may request the Director waive the survey requirement.

(2) Any significant tree to be preserved during development shall be identified on the proposed landscaping plan.

(c) All trees, except those identified as 'excluded' on the Suitable Plants List, that meet all of the following criteria as determined by a certified arborist shall be considered significant:

(1) Are 15 inches or larger in DBH;

(2) Are in fair or better condition;

(3) Are free from irreparable structural defects; and

(4) Are not infested with a disease or pestilence that threatens the good health of other trees.

(d) Preservation Required.

(1) Where significant trees exist on a property, at least one and no less than 30% of significant trees shall be preserved during development.

(i) Significant trees may be preserved in individual lots or private common areas.

(ii) Significant trees may also be preserved in land dedicated for public use while still credited to the site tree preservation requirement. Where the value of the land dedication does not meet the minimum assessment requirement of GJMC § 21.05.030(a), the valuation of the significant tree shall not be considered separately from or added to the assessment total.

(iii) The developer may request review by the City Forester to determine if well-established, healthy trees under 15 inches in diameter may be approved for credit towards preservation at an equivalent DBH.

(2) If the 30% minimum preservation requirement impedes the proposed Primary Development of a site, then the Director may grant a 10% adjustment of the minimum setbacks, lot size, parking lot interior landscaping, and parking count requirements, or allow the use of cluster development.

(3) Furthermore, the City Forester may adjust the drip line protection standards described in Subsection (d)(6)(i) of this section so to allow for additional flexibility for the development to occur around the identified significant trees.

(4) If the provisions in Subsections (d)(2) and (3) do not provide a viable means of development the site with the preservation of the minimum required significant trees then, at the developer's discretion, the developer may remove significant trees present on the site. Tree replacement shall be required for all significant trees removed on a property at the following ratios:

Table 507.3 Tree Replacement Requirements	
Percent of Trees Preserved	Tree Replacement Ratio
Minimum 30% preservation	8 caliper inches per 6 inches DBH [c]
Above 30% minimum	10 caliper inches per 6 inches DBH [c]
Significant trees damaged or killed during construction	8 caliper inches per 6 inches DBH [c]

Note:

[c] If a developer cannot replace trees on site, they may pay a fee in-lieu according to CMTC 5.21.07.0-10(f).
[c] See CMTC 5.21.07.0-10(d)(1)(ii) for credit applied to preserved trees.

(e) Replacement of Significant Trees. Replacement trees may be planted in individual lots and private common areas.

(f) Fee in-lieu. The fee in-lieu shall be based on the value of the required replacement tree(s) not planted on site, along with the total cost of installation. The City shall use this payment to purchase the required replacement trees not planted on site and plant them on nearby public property.

(g) Features to be preserved shall be protected throughout site development. No person shall kill or damage a landscape feature required to be preserved by this section. The developer shall protect trees from compaction.

(1) During construction, existing plant material to be preserved shall be enclosed by a temporary fence at least five feet outside the canopy dripline. In no case shall vehicles be parked, or materials or equipment be stored or stockpiled within the enclosed area.

(2) Irrigation shall be provided to trees preserved during construction of sufficient quantity to ensure their health and survival.

21.07.100 SUBSTITUTIONS.

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~~(g) Existing significant trees preserved above the required 30% shall count toward the total tree requirement at a ratio of one inch of DBH of preserved significant tree is equivalent to three caliper inches of required tree plantings.~~

21.09.060 OPEN AND UNDEVELOPED SPACES.

(a) Sensitive Lands and Unique Site Features. Each subdivision plat shall include and protect as much of the following open space as the Director deems reasonable to protect public health and safety based on the anticipated size, use, and impacts of the proposed development:

(1) Stream beds and corridors, bluffs, ridges, steep slopes, mature trees and/or stands of native vegetation, rock outcroppings, wetlands, native upland ecosystems, riparian areas, and wildlife corridors;

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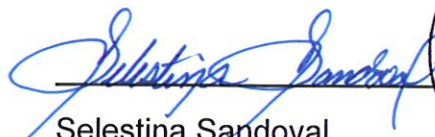
INTRODUCED on first reading this 5th day of August 2026 and ordered published in pamphlet form.

ADOPTED on second reading this 2nd day of September 2026 and ordered published in pamphlet form.

ATTEST:



Ben Van Dyke
President Pro-Tem of the City Council



Selestina Sandoval
City Clerk



I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT the foregoing Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 5340 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 August, 2026, 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 2nd September 2026, at which Ordinance No. 5340 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 September 2026.



Deputy City Clerk

Published: August 8, 2026
Published: September 5, 2026
Effective: October 5, 2026

