



Alachua County Landscaping Code Request to Advertise Public Hearing

Board of County Commissioners
May 28, 2024

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner, Growth Management

OBJECTIVES

- Review staff recommended amendments to the Alachua County Code Landscaping requirements for new development
- Request Board authorization to advertise a Public Hearing on amendments

BACKGROUND

- 2006** Last Major Update
- 2021** Update to Tree Code
- 2023** Update to Landscape Irrigation Design Code (Water Quality Code)
- 2023** Staff began review and stakeholder meetings on Landscaping Code
- 2024** March 5th Board Workshop reviewed and directed staff to move forward with recommended changes

TIMELINE





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public

- Builders Assoc. of North Central Florida (BANCF) April 2023
- Local Development community May 2023
- Local Landscape Architects June, July 2023, March 2024
- Citizen Climate Advisory Committee Nov 2023
- Environmental Protection Advisory Committee Dec 2023
- Builders Assoc. of North Central Florida (BANCF) Feb 2024

Academic

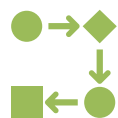
- Drs. Bean, Dukes, Klein, Lindsey – soil amendments 2023-2024
- Dr. Ryan Klein – tree planting best practices Feb 2024
- Dr. Brian Bahder – Lethal Bronzing Disease in palms Feb 2024

ALACHUA COUNTY LANDSCAPING CODE

- Applies to new development and redevelopment in unincorporated County
- Minimum requirements for landscape design, plant selection, installation, and maintenance
- Landscaping requirements for
 - Street trees
 - Stormwater basins
 - Parking areas
 - Buffers
 - Pedestrian paths
 - Overall site tree canopy



UPDATE TOPIC AREAS



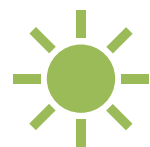
Process



Resilient Landscapes



Compact Development



Urban Heat Island



Urban Forest



PROCESS

Recommendations:

- **Overall Landscaping Code** – reorganize
- **TND and Stormwater Management landscaping** – move to Landscaping Code
- **Landscape inspection and certification** – clarify process
- **Plant species substitution** – clarify process
- **Exemptions** – revise for de minimis and add historical developments
- **Plan submittal** – add minimum criteria
- **FDOT sight triangles** – clarify requirements



RESILIENT LANDSCAPES

Recommendations:

- **Resilient Landscapes** – new subsection
- **Soil amendments** – encourage with recommended standards
- **Irrigation** – encourage temporary as outlined in Temporary Irrigation Guidance Document; reference and consistency with new Irrigation code; require leak detection for permanent systems
- **Tree soil volumes and specifications** – add minimum requirements
- **Tree planting strips** – require in parking areas for greater planting area
- **Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater** – require as part of landscaping in parking areas consistent with Stormwater Treatment Code

Outside Collaborative





Recommendations:

- **Turf** – Specify irrigated for functional uses only (pedestrian traffic, recreation, erosion control); prohibit all in parking islands and in strips less than 4 feet wide
- **Groundcovers** – encourage as alternative to turf, provide new plant list
- **Buffers** – clarify use of existing vegetation; allow placement at a distance from parcel boundary; eliminate new shrubs where other screening is provided
- **Tree installation** – require trunk protectors, biodegradable stakes and guywires
- **Sod netting** – require certified biodegradable within 3 months

Outside Collaborative



COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Recommendations:

- **Stormwater basins** – allow for square, deep, walled, fenced when designed with usable human scale public space
- **Trees in built areas** – require consistent minimum planting areas and reduced planting areas with “alternative planting systems” (root barriers, structural soil, etc.)
- **Trees in relation to utilities** – clarify
- **Street trees** – clarify priority over on-street parking





URBAN HEAT ISLAND

Recommendations:



- **Solar facilities on covered parking** – allow flexibility in location requirements of adjacent trees
- **Paved areas tree canopy coverage** – simplify requirement for vehicular areas; reduce requirement for Industrial loading and storage areas; add requirement for paved pedestrian gathering areas
- **Shading of buildings** – emphasize concentration of tree canopy along southern and western exposures where possible



URBAN FOREST



Recommendations:

- **Species/genus diversity** – thresholds for trees to meet current requirement, new requirement for shrubs, groundcovers
- **Edible species** – add additional native and non-native to tree list, incentivize
- **Low quality and invasive species** – update tree list to remove
- **Buffers** – clarify materials distribution, require evergreen shrubs, require wildlife connections through walls or fences



URBAN FOREST



City of Hutchinson, KS

Recommendations:

- **Lethal Bronzing Disease in Palms** – limit Palms to 10% of new trees, require LBD-free certification, allow as street trees only for visibility
- **Native species** – require minimum 75% for trees, shrubs, groundcovers
- **Minimum tree size** – reduce for street trees, parking islands, specimen trees for greater species diversity, better establishment
- **Maximum tree size** – add to help reduce irrigation/establishment requirements, with limited exceptions for specimen trees

TIMELINE



STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Direct staff to advertise a Public Hearing on proposed amendments to the Unified Land Development Code:

Chapter 407

- Article IV Landscaping Code
- Article VIII Subdivision Regulations
- Article IX Stormwater Management Code

Chapter 410

- Article III Definitions