



REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION CITY OF COLLINSVILLE

APPLICATION NUMBER(S)	TA 25-01
APPLICATION NAME:	Native Landscaping (Text Amendment)
APPLICANT NAME:	City of Collinsville 125 South Center Street Collinsville, IL 62234
APPLICANT'S REQUEST:	A City-initiated request for approval of amendments to Title 17 (Zoning) as it relates to the City's landscaping, screening and buffering requirements.
COMMISSION MEETING DATE:	April 3, 2025
CASE MANAGER:	Caitlin Rice, AICP, Senior Planner
RECOMMENDATION:	APPROVAL

REQUEST

The City of Collinsville has initiated a request to amend the following sections of *Title 17—Zoning of the City's Code of Ordinances* as it relates to irrigation requirements for native landscaping. The intent of this amendment is to provide exceptions to underground irrigation system requirements for landscaped areas that consist entirely of native plantings. The following section is proposed to be amended:

- *Section 17.080.120. Commercial landscaping requirements*
- *G. Irrigation*

BACKGROUND

The City is seeking to adopt a Text Amendment that will revise the Zoning ordinance to provide an exception to irrigation requirements for native landscapes. In 2020, the City adopted a revised Section 17.080. Landscaping, Screening and Buffering which included a point system for landscape credit that incentivizes native plants. Native plants have been increasingly utilized in formal landscapes as they are adapted and hardy to our climate, require less maintenance, and can be drought resistant. Native plants also provide habitat and food for local wildlife. Since the adoption of this ordinance, the City has received several landscape plans that are entirely native plants coupled with requests for waivers of irrigation. Staff currently does not have a mechanism to approve this request administratively, and requires Planning Commission.

[Grow Native](#), is a native plant education program of the Missouri Prairie Foundation, that helps protect and restore biodiversity through increasing conservation awareness on native plants and their effective use in urban, suburban and rural landscapes. Grow Native collaborates with reputable experts such as the Missouri Department of Conservation, Botanical Garden and Willoughby Farm. Grow Native's resources state that native plants do not need continuous irrigation, however, new plants need watering to become established in first few years. It is more important to tailor the maintenance and care to the needs of the species and plan landscaping materials that suit the characteristics of the site.

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With proper landscape techniques and choosing the “right plant for the right place” irrigation systems can be useless, or even detrimental to the native plants. Therefore, staff finds the proposed amendment a reasonable accommodation, and incentive to encourage more native landscaping in our formal environments, furthering the City’s sustainability goals.

ZONING ANALYSIS

Sec. 17.150.090. - Amendments to text.

When a proposed amendment would result in a change in the text of these regulations, but would not result in a change of zoning classification of any specific property, the recommendation of the Planning Commission shall contain a statement as to the nature and effect of such proposed amendment and determination as to the following items:

A. Whether such change is consistent with the intent and purpose of these regulations.

The proposed text amendment furthers the intent and purpose of the City’s Zoning Ordinance ([Section 17.010—Title and Intent](#)), specifically:

- *To promote the health, safety, quality of life, comfort and general welfare of the City and its planning area, which includes the area within the City corporate limits and unincorporated territory lying outside the City forming the total community of which Collinsville is a part;*
- *To preserve and protect property values throughout the City and its planning area;*
- *To serve as a tool in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.*

Staff finds that based on the above criteria, the proposed amendments to Title 17 Zoning will further the intent of the City’s Zoning Ordinance.

B. The areas which are most likely to be directly affected by such change and in what way they will be affected.

The proposed text amendment to Title 17 impacts landscape standards for properties throughout the city. Below is a summary of the substantive amendments proposed. The full ordinance can be seen in Exhibit A.

Summary of Substantive Amendments Proposed for Title 17:

Section 17.080.120. Commercial landscaping requirements.

The proposed amendment adds an exception to underground irrigation system for native landscapes. Below is the proposed amendment:

G. Irrigation. All lawn, vegetative cover, and plant material are to be automatically irrigated by an underground system providing one hundred (100) percent coverage to ensure the maintenance and vigor of landscaping. The entire irrigation system shall be designed and constructed in accordance with all local building code requirements. The Planning Commission may waive irrigation requirements contingent on the developer’s ability to provide alternative irrigation methods with the following exception(s):

- 1. Landscaped areas consisting solely of native plantings shall not require traditional underground irrigation systems. Irrigation plan shall instead be tailored to the needs of the native species. Lawn seed or sod shall be proven to be drought tolerant once established.*



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C. Whether the proposed amendment is made necessary because of changed or changing conditions in the areas and zoning districts affected, or in the area of jurisdiction of such changed or changing conditions.

Staff is pursuing the proposed text amendment to amend the City's Code of Ordinance to provide a reasonable accommodation for native landscapes that can be approved administratively. Requiring irrigation systems for native plants that don't need it is a wasteful expense for new business' and reduces the benefit of having drought tolerant plants.

Strategic Plan Goals Achieved by the Proposed Text Amendment:

Achieve Strategic Plan Goal #7: Support excellent municipal services

The proposed amendment will achieve this Strategic Plan goal by updating the zoning ordinance to make more contemporary, effective, and efficient.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed text amendments meets or exceeds the review criteria for zoning text amendments. Further, staff finds that the proposed text amendment advances the intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance. Based on these findings, staff recommends 'Approval' of Text Amendment Application TA 25-01 Native Landscaping.



EXHIBITS

A.DRAFT ORDINANCE



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EXHIBIT A: DRAFT ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING
TITLE 17 (ZONING) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES
OF THE CITY OF COLLINSVILLE, ILLINOIS AS IT RELATES TO
LANDSCAPING, SCREENING AND BUFFERING REQUIREMENTS**

WHEREAS, the City of Collinsville, Illinois, a home rule municipality (hereinafter the "City"), has enacted Municipal Code regulations for the purpose of improving and protecting the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of the people.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLLINSVILLE as follows:

Section 1. Section 17.080.120.G. Irrigation of Title 17 (Zoning) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Collinsville, Illinois, shall be repealed and replaced as follows:

Section 17.080.120.

G. Irrigation. All lawn, vegetative cover, and plant material are to be automatically irrigated by an underground system providing one hundred (100) percent coverage to ensure the maintenance and vigor of landscaping. The entire irrigation system shall be designed and constructed in accordance with all local building code requirements. The Planning Commission may waive irrigation requirements contingent on the developer's ability to provide alternative irrigation methods with the following exception(s):

1. Landscaped areas consisting solely of native plantings shall not require traditional underground irrigation systems. Irrigation plans shall be tailored to the needs of the native species. Lawn seed or sod shall be proven to be drought tolerant once established.

Section 4. In the event any section or provision of this Ordinance shall be held unconstitutional or invalid by any Court, in whole or in part, such holding shall not affect the validity of this Ordinance or any remaining part of this Ordinance, other than the part held unconstitutional or invalid.

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EXHIBIT A: DRAFT ORDINANCE

Section 6. Nothing contained herein shall in any manner be deemed or construed to alter, modify, supersede, supplant, or otherwise nullify any other ordinance of the City or the requirements thereof whether or not relating to or in any manner connected with the subject matter hereof, unless expressly set forth herein.

Section 7. This Ordinance is effective upon its passage by the City Council, approval by the Mayor, and publication according to law.

PASSED by the City Council and Approved by the Mayor this ___ day of _____ 2025.

Ayes: _____

Nays: _____

Absent: _____

Approved: _____

APPROVED: _____

JEFF STEHMAN, MAYOR

ATTEST: _____

KIM WASSER, CITY CLERK

RECORDED: _____ 2025.