



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Community Development - NS

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: January 22, 2019

Re: Amending Chapter 11 of the City Code to revise the weed ordinance

Executive Summary

Over the last year, City staff has been exploring a change to the weed ordinance found in Chapter 11 of City Code. This bill proposes an amendment that changes this section of code to address vegetation management that may provide more flexibility to those planting native species.

Discussion

The process to revise the weed ordinance started with a report to Council in November 2017. A survey was distributed in January 2018 and received 265 responses. A public meeting was held on January 25, 2018 at the Columbia Public Library and was attended by more than 40 people.

Survey results showed that 88% of respondents supported an update to the weed ordinance to allow for native plantings and 73% agreed that the ordinance should focus on landscape maintenance instead of type of vegetation. Staff revised the draft ordinance and conducted another survey in November and December 2018 and feedback was received from 145 individuals. More than 69% of respondents supported an ordinance change in the second survey. The results from both surveys are attached.

Staff is proposing a revised ordinance that focuses on landscape management rather than the type of vegetation used in a landscape. Changing the focus of this ordinance to landscape management will allow for managed native landscapes, ornamental landscapes, agricultural crops, urban agricultural crops, community gardens, and vegetable gardens that exceed 12 inches in height. Many elements of our existing ordinance would continue: turf grass and turf weeds could not exceed 12 inches in height, nuisance plants, noxious weeds and vermin harborage would need to be controlled, vegetation could not create a safety issue for motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians, and vegetation cannot obstruct public right-of-way. The City's abatement process for properties in violation would continue.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: none

Long-Term Impact: none



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Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Social Equity, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Environmental Management, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
08/06/2001	The weed ordinance found in Chapter 11 of the City Code was adopted; Sec. 11-251 through 11-256.

Suggested Council Action

Approval of the proposed amendments to Chapter 11 to revise the weed ordinance.