



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**City Commission Agenda Memo**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**#15-0198**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**DATE:** February 17, 2015

**TITLE:** Ordinance Amending Landscaping and Tree Preservation Requirements.

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended the City Commission adopt an ordinance amending the Landscaping and Tree Preservation Requirements, of the City's Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) to incorporate Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ and sustainability principles.

**Background**

Current ULDR regulations are proposed to be modified to better address landscaping that is adapted to the local climate. The proposed amendment will increase the amount of trees and plants which are specifically adapted to the local climate through specific criteria, adding to the resilience of landscaping city-wide by reducing the amount of irrigation required to maintain healthy landscapes, and thus furthering the City's efforts to address water conservation.

On June 17, 2014 staff attended the City Commission Conference meeting to present a summary of regulatory aspects for water usage within the City of Fort Lauderdale and descriptions of the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles. Included as part of this presentation were examples of images depicting local, colorful Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ currently thriving in locations throughout the City. Discussion followed with questions from neighbors and the Commissioners resulting in direction from the City Commission for staff to host a public meeting to gain further input from landscape architects and the others from the local landscape community.

The Public Works Department, Sustainability Division (PW-Sustainability) with support from the Department of Sustainable Development, hosted a public Open House on October 14, 2014. Neighbors, landscape architects and industry professionals as well as neighborhood associations and members from the business community were invited to discuss proposed amendments in detail. One month in advance of the Open House meeting, proposed amendment documents were posted for public review, accessible on the City's website at:

<http://fortlauderdale.gov/departments-/public-works-/sustainability-division/florida-friendly-landscaping/florida-friendly-landscaping-ordinance>

Following the Open House, PW-Sustainability staff made a similar presentation to the Council of Civic Associations. In addition, staff presented the item to the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) on their October 27, 2014 agenda. The SAB sent a communication in support of the ordinance modifications, which was reviewed by the Commission on November 18, 2014.

Input and written recommendations were collectively obtained from neighbors, landscape architects, other local industry professionals and the National Wildlife Federation. Many of the written comments received were incorporated into the current, proposed amendments. The rest of the comments were recorded and will be used to further improve the Landscaping and Tree Preservation Requirements when the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) begins the process to draft the next incremental amendment.

### **Proposed Ordinance Criteria**

To further support sustainability principles, water conservation, and preservation of tree canopy, staff has analyzed criteria to identify ways to balance landscaping goals relative to provisions for low-water requirements, colorful landscaping, and native plants that support local wildlife and pollinators as well as visiting migratory bird species.

For a detailed description of the proposed amendments please see the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) staff report attached as Exhibit 1 and note the support of the Planning and Zoning Board Exhibit 2.

The Summary of Proposed Ordinance Amendments to Incorporate Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Principles is attached as Exhibit 3.

The proposed ordinance language is attached as Exhibit 4.

### **Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation**

This proposed ordinance item was on the November 19, 2014 Planning and Zoning Board meeting agenda. Due to Planning and Zoning Board meeting time constraints, this item was not discussed and it was deferred to the December 18, 2014 Planning and Zoning Board meeting. At the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, the proposed ordinance passed, recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board for approval by a vote of 5-2. The Planning and Zoning Board voted to send a Communication to City Commission referencing water-saving initiatives with further emphasis on reuse of water. In the proposed ordinance, irrigation and water conservation is addressed. Further opportunities to discuss additional options may be incorporated in the next phase of incremental amendments to the ordinance by the Department of Sustainable Development.

On February 3, 2015, the City Commission approved the item on first reading.

### **Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

### **Strategic Connections**

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan* initiative, included within the Public Places Cylinder of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- Goal 3: Be a community that finds opportunities and leverages partnerships to create unique, inviting, and connected gathering places that highlight our beaches, waterways, urban areas, and parks.
- Objective 2: Enhance the City's identity and appearance through well-maintained green space, parks, major corridors, gateways, and medians.
- Initiative 3: Continue Florida-friendly Landscaping™ and create wildlife gardens.

### **Attachments**

Exhibit 1 – PZB Staff Report Case Number: T14013

Exhibit 2 – December 18, 2014 PZB meeting minutes

Exhibit 3 – Amendments Summary

Exhibit 4 – Ordinance

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