

1 CITY OF LITTLETON, COLORADO

2
3 PC RESOLUTION 10

4
5 Series, 2025

6
7 A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF
8 THE CITY OF LITTLETON, COLORADO
9 RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO CITY COUNCIL OF
10 AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 10, UNIFIED LAND USE CODE,
11 REGARDING THE PRESERVATION AND
12 ENHANCEMENT OF THE CITY'S TREE CANOPY AND
13 THE TREE CANOPY LOSS RATE
14

15 WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Littleton, Colorado passed Ordinance 24-2021
16 in October of 2021 which enacted Littleton City Code Title 10, the "Unified Land Use Code"
17 (ULUC); and
18

19 WHEREAS, in March of 2025, City Council discussed various updates to Littleton's tree
20 preservation policies, to enhance the protection of Littleton's urban forest and canopy.
21 Specifically, City Council emphasized the importance of maintaining and increase the tree canopy
22 in Littleton, and discussed an adjustment in the fee structure for tree removal; and
23

24 WHEREAS, staff conducted a study session with the planning commission regarding the
25 proposed code text amendments regarding canopy coverage and the fee structure for tree removal
26 on July 14th, 2025;
27

28 WHEREAS, on September 22, 2025, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to
29 consider recommendation to the Littleton City Council on the adoption of changes to the Unified
30 Land Use Code regarding tree preservation and the Tree Canopy Loss Rate.
31

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION
33 OF THE CITY OF LITTLETON, COLORADO THAT:
34

35 Section 1. Recommendation. The planning commission hereby recommends adoption of
36 this ordinance amending the Unified Land Use Code as referenced in Exhibit "A," attached hereto.
37

38 INTRODUCED, READ, AND ADOPTED at a regularly scheduled meeting of the
39 Planning Commission of the City of Littleton, Colorado on the 22nd day of September, 2025 at
40 6:30 p.m. at the Littleton Center, 2255 W. Berry Avenue, Littleton Colorado.
41

42

43

44 ATTEST:

45

46

47 _____
Wendy Shea-Tamag

48 Deputy City Clerk

49

50 APPROVED AS TO FORM

51

52

53

54 _____
Atasi Titlow

55 Sr. Assistant City Attorney

56

Jason Reynolds

Chair



EXHIBIT A

CITY OF LITTLETON, COLORADO

ORDINANCE NO. XX

Series, 2025

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LITTLETON,
COLORADO, APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 10,
UNIFIED LAND USE CODE REGARDING THE
PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE CITY'S
TREE CANOPY AND THE TREE CANOPY LOSS RATE**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Littleton, Colorado passed Ordinance 24-2021 in October of 2021 which enacted Littleton City Code Title 10, the “Unified Land Use Code” (ULUC); and

WHEREAS, Section 10-9-3.2.A.4. of the ULUC authorizes the director of community development to initiate a code text amendment; and

WHEREAS, since October 2021, staff, property owners, business owners, and applicants must comply with the ULUC with site-specific applications; and

WHEREAS, in March of 2025, City Council discussed various updates to Littleton’s tree preservation policies, aiming to enhance the protection of Littleton’s urban forest. Specifically, City Council emphasized the importance of maintaining a tree canopy in Littleton, and discussed an adjustment in the fee structure for tree removal; and

WHEREAS, staff conducted a study session with the planning commission regarding the proposed code text amendments regarding the fee structure for tree removal on July 14th, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on September 22, 2025, the planning commission held a public hearing to consider PC Resolution No. 10-2025, a recommendation on the adoption of the proposed code text amendment to the fee structure for tree removal within the ULUC; and

WHEREAS, that in order to improve and maintain the public health, safety, and welfare it is necessary to adopt certain standards and requirements for trees within our City; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LITTLETON, COLORADO, THAT:

100 **Section 1:** Littleton City Code, Section 10-1-3.6.A, is hereby amended, by adding
101 capitalized material and striking through deleted material, as follows. In this section, ellipses
102 indicate material not reproduced as the Littleton City Council intends to leave that material in
103 effect, as it now reads.
104

105 **Subsec. 10-1-3.6.A Purpose, Applicability, and Design**
106

107 **A. Purpose.** Greenscaping in the form of site landscaping, screening of parking and vehicular use
108 and storage areas, and buffering within and between developments contributes to the character
109 and appearance of developments. TREES ARE AN ASSET THAT SHOULD BE PROPERLY
110 PROTECTED AND MAINTAINED. The greenscape requirements in this Section serve to
111 address the following:

- 112 1. *ENVIRONMENT.* PRESERVATION OF MATURE TREES AND PROMOTION OF
113 NEW TREES IS A PRIORITY FOR THE COMMUNITY. MATURE TREES PROVIDE
114 INNUMERABLE BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING IMPROVEMENT
115 TO AIR QUALITY AND SEQUESTRATION OF CARBON, REDUCTION OF NOISE
116 POLLUTION, REDUCTION TO HEAT ISLANDS, AND PROVIDING
117 IMPROVEMENT TO MENTAL WELLNESS;
- 118 2. *Appearance.* Improve the general appearance and aesthetic appeal of the city by creating
119 tree-lined streets with deciduous canopies, preserving urban tree cover, and softening the
120 impacts of development with landscaping;
- 121 3. *Character.* Establish an aesthetic that emphasizes the value and beauty of the natural
122 landscape and the visual enhancement of streetscapes, parking lots, service areas, building
123 foundations and façades, and utility improvements;
- 124 4. *Buffering.* Provide for landscaping and screening between zoning districts to
125 buffer adjacent land uses and their associated impacts;
- 126 5. *Green Function.* Enhance the various place types with provisions for pervious surfaces and
127 planting areas for trees, shrubs, and grasses;
- 128 6. *Conservation.* Conserve energy and water resources by encouraging the use of shade
129 and xeriscaping;
- 130 7. *Biodiversity.* Provide a diversity of species and native plant communities to ensure natural
131 sustainability, minimize the spread of disease and insect infestations, and limit the use of
132 species that cause negative impacts to native plant communities; and
- 133 8. *Water Quality.* Protect the quality of surface water and groundwater, reduce pollutants in
134 stormwater runoff, prevent stream channel erosion, preserve trees and other natural
135 vegetation, and encourage groundwater recharge.

136 **B. Applicability ...**

137 **C. DESIGN**

138 1. *Objectives.* In the review and approval of landscape plans, the Director may impose
139 additional requirements to fulfill the following sustainable design objectives:

- 140 a. Integration of drainage and pedestrian circulation systems into
- 141 the landscaping design.
- 142 b. Use of ground covers or other types of landscape materials that stabilize soils and
- 143 minimize erosion.
- 144 c. Protection during construction and preservation of existing native vegetation.
- 145 d. Use of landscape materials that achieve variety with respect to seasonal changes,
- 146 species of living material selected, textures, colors, and size at maturity.
- 147 e. Placing newly installed plants at intervals to ensure their health at maturity.
- 148 f. PLANTING OF NEW TREES SHALL BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
- 149 INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE STANDARDS.
- 150 g. Maximize shading of streets and parking areas.
- 151 h. Provision for native and drought-tolerant plant species.
- 152 i. Planting trees and shrubs in locations that will reduce energy consumption by shading
- 153 buildings and reducing the heat island effects of paved surfaces.
- 154 j. Protection of existing specimen trees and native vegetation to preserve intact natural
- 155 ecosystems.
- 156 k. Designing the landscape to complement building elevations and architecture through
- 157 use of color, texture, density, and form on both vertical and horizontal
- 158 planes. Landscaping should be in proportionate scale with adjacent buildings and be
- 159 of a size at maturity to accomplish intended goals. Ornamental, shrub, and ground
- 160 cover plantings should be designed to complement a building's architectural
- 161 character.
- 162 l. Landscape design should incorporate natural drainage features and the use of
- 163 pervious surfaces and areas that capture and minimize runoff.
- 164 m. Inclusion of pedestrian amenities such as, but not limited to, shade, benches, kiosks,
- 165 public art, shades, fountains, and other elements into the landscape design.

166 2. *Water Wise Landscaping (Xeriscape)*. ...

167 3. *Qualifications*.

- 168 a. ...
- 169 b. A professional shall certify that they are qualified to prepare the type of plan(s) that
- 170 they submit by verifying licensure or certification at the time of application
- 171 and providing professional qualifications, which may include:
 - 172 1. Licensed Landscape Architect;
 - 173 2. Licensed Architect;
 - 174 3. Licensed Professional Engineer; or
 - 175 4. Certified Irrigation Designer (CID);

176 INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE (ISA) CERTIFIED ARBORIST.

177 **Section 2:** Littleton City Code, Section 10-1-3.6.B, is hereby amended, by adding
178 capitalized material and striking through deleted material, as follows. In this section, ellipses

179 indicate material not reproduced as the Littleton City Council intends to leave that material in
180 effect, as it now reads.

181

182 **Subsec. 10-1-3.6.B Planting Requirements**

183

184 **A. Plant Materials Standards.**

185

1. *Plant Types.* ...

186

2. *Plant Variety.* All plants shall be of a type and species that are selected for the
187 climate, location, and soils on the site, as promulgated by the Colorado State
188 University Extension FRONT RANGE TREE RECOMMENDATION LIST. All
189 plant material shall be commercially produced and meet the minimum standards
190 recognized by landscape professionals. In order to reduce the threat and impact of
191 plant disease, a variety of plant types and species shall be utilized on each site. 
192 NEW PLANTINGS SHALL FOLLOW THE CITY'S 5-10-20 RULE OF
193 DIVERSITY STANDARDS, AS OUTLINED IN THE URBAN FORESTRY
194 MANAGEMENT PLAN, WHERE no more than 5% of the same species, no more
195 than 10% of the same genus, and no more than 20% of the same family war

196

3. *Living Materials.* ...

197

4. *Nonliving Materials.* ...

198

5. *Artificial Turf.* ...

199

i. *Prohibited.* Use of any plant species WHICH HAS BEEN DECLARED A
200 "NOXIOUS WEED" OR INVASIVE SPECIES BY THE LOCAL
201 ADVISORY BOARD UNDER TITLE 4, CHAPTER 4, OR THE STATE of
202 Colorado Noxious Weed Act, C.R.S. §§ 35-5.5-101 through 35-5.5-119 ET
203 SEQ., AS AMENDED, is prohibited.

204

6. *Sizes.* ...

205

206 **B. [RESERVED.]**

207 **C. Plant Locations and Timing.**

208

1. *Public Right-of-Way.* ...

209

2. *Sight Triangle.* ...

210

3. *Easements.* ...

211

4. *Spacing.* ...

212

5. *Timing of Landscape Installation.* Landscaping that is required by this Code shall be
213 installed between March 15 and October 15. If compliance with this timeframe is
214 impractical due to the time of year that work is completed, an applicant may provide a
215 financial performance guarantee in the form of a cash bond, letter of credit, certified
216 check, or similar instrument acceptable to the CITY ATTORNEY, in an amount equal
217 to 125 percent of the estimated cost of purchase and installation of required
218 landscaping.

219

D. Plant Substitutions.

220 1. *Approval.* Requested substitutions of plant material shall be submitted on a landscape plan
221 and shall be in accordance with the recommended plant lists promulgated by the Colorado
222 State University Extension'S FRONT RANGE RECOMMENDATION LIST and
223 approved by the Director.

224 2. *Substitution Ratios* ...

225

226 **Section 3:** Littleton City Code, Section 10-1-3.6.C, is hereby amended, by adding
227 capitalized material and striking through deleted material, as follows. In this section, ellipses
228 indicate material not reproduced as the Littleton City Council intends to leave that material in
229 effect, as it now reads.

230

231 **Subsec. 10-1-3.6.C Protection and Preservation**

232 A. Purpose ...

233 B. ...

234

235 E. Tree Protection.

236 1. *Distance from Utilities.* ...

237

238 7. *Mitigation Standards.* Damage or removal of trees within a tree protection zone, or
239 removal of trees required to be retained by this Subsection, shall require equivalent
240 replacement on the lot or development site.

241 a. *Removal or Damage in Violation.* ...

242 b. *Restoration Plan.* ...

243 c. *Replacement Requirements.* ...

244 d. *PAYMENT IN LIEU OF MITIGATION.*

245 1. WHERE EXISTING CONDITIONS MAKE IT IMPRACTICAL TO
246 COMPLY WITH THE MITIGATION STANDARDS HEREIN, THE
247 APPLICANT SHALL PAY A FEE-IN-LIEU IN ACCORDANCE WITH
248 THE FOLLOWING:

249 1. THE CANOPY LOSS FEE RATE SHALL BE \$250 PER INCH
250 PER REPLACEMENT TREE.

251 2. THE CANOPY LOSS FEE FORMULA SHALL BE *CANOPY*
252 *LOSS FEE (\$)* = [(*DIAMETER PER STANDARD HEIGHT*

253 *REMOVED*) - (*DIAMETER PER STANDARD HEIGHT*

254 *REPLACED*)] X (*CANOPY LOSS FEE RATE*).

255 2. IN-LIEU FEES SHALL BE DEPOSITED INTO THE TREE EQUITY
256 FUND TO BE USED TO INCREASE THE TREE CANOPY WITHIN
257 THE CITY OF LITTLETON.

258 3. REDUCTIONS IN CANOPY LOSS FEE RATE:

259 1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS SHALL
260 QUALIFY FOR A REDUCTION TO AN AMOUNT OF \$75.00
261 TOTAL PER REPLACEMENT TREE.

262 2. NO PAYMENT IN LIEU OF MITIGATION SHALL BE
 263 REQUIRED FOR PROPERTY OWNERS THAT RECEIVE
 264 VERIFIED, ESTABLISHED FORMS OF FINANCIAL
 265 ASSISTANCE FROM LOCAL, STATE, OR FEDERAL
 266 ENTITIES.

267 8. *Tree Preservation Credit ...*

268
 269 **Section 4:** Littleton City Code, Section 10-1-3.6.E, is hereby amended, by adding
 270 capitalized material and striking through deleted material, as follows. In this section, ellipses
 271 indicate material not reproduced as the Littleton City Council intends to leave that material in
 272 effect, as it now reads.

273
 274 **Subsec. 10-1-3.6.E Tree Canopy Coverage Requirements**

275 **A. Applicability. ...**

276 **B. Minimum Standards.** The tree canopy coverage requirements for the applicable districts are set out in
 277 Table 10-1-3.6.E, *Canopy Coverage Requirements*.

Table 10-1-3.6.E Canopy Coverage Requirements	
Zoning District	Minimum Tree Canopy Coverage
MFR, Multi-Family Residential	20 30%
NC, Neighborhood Commercial	15 20%
CM, Corridor Mixed	15 20%
BC, Business Commercial	10 20%
Table Notes: 1. The minimum canopy coverage requirements are based on gross lot area.	

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 280
 281 **Section 5:** Severability. If any part, section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of
 282 this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the validity of
 283 the remaining sections of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have
 284 passed this ordinance, including each part, section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase hereof,
 285 irrespective of the fact that one or more parts, sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases
 286 may be declared invalid.

287
 288 **Section 6:** Repealer. All ordinances or resolutions, or parts thereof, in conflict with
 289 this ordinance are hereby repealed, provided that this repealer shall not repeal the repealer clauses
 290 of such ordinance nor revive any ordinance thereby.

291
 292
 293 INTRODUCED AS A BILL at a regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council

294 of the City of Littleton on the ___ day of _____, 2025, passed on first reading by a vote of

295 ___ FOR and ___ AGAINST; and ordered published by posting at Littleton Center, Bemis
296 Library, the Municipal Courthouse and on the City of Littleton Website.

297 PUBLIC HEARING on the Ordinance to take place on the ___ day of
298 _____, 2025, in the Council Chamber, Littleton Center, 2255 West Berry Avenue,
299 Littleton, Colorado, at the hour of 6:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as it may be heard.

300

301 PASSED on second and final reading, following public hearing, by a vote of ___ FOR and
302 ___ AGAINST on the ___ day of _____, 2025 and ordered published by posting at Littleton
303 Center, Bemis Library, the Municipal Courthouse and on the City of Littleton Website.

304 ATTEST:

305 _____
306 Colleen L. Norton
307 CITY CLERK

Kyle Schlachter
MAYOR

308
309 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

310
311 _____
312 Reid Betzing
313 CITY ATTORNEY

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