



Council Communication File Number: Pres 23-496

Agenda Date: 10/9/2023

Version: 1

Status: Agenda Ready

In Control: City Council

File Type: Presentation

Continued Xeriscaping Discussion

Summary and Background Information:

On July 10, staff debriefed Council on the Growing Water Smart Workshop and held a preliminary xeriscaping discussion with Council. As a result of that presentation, Council approved a motion seeking to pause review and approval of all landscaping permits that pertain to xeriscaping for a period of 90-days until regulations could be established. Over the past three months, staff has looked at xeriscaping regulations in other municipalities to prepare suggested improvements to the current regulations around xeriscaping in Commerce City. Suggestions for improvement include increased standards for xeriscaping ranging from plant and layout standards to irrigation standards, setting processes for approval and inspections, forming an incentive program for turf replacement, and designing a xeriscape example garden on City-owned property. Staff has several policy questions for Council that will finalize the direction taken to establish City-wide xeriscaping regulations.

The policy questions for Council are as follows:

Does Council support code allowing the conversion of front yards and tree lawns to xeriscape?

Does Council support a Code requirement for new development to include a certain percentage of xeriscaping?

Multi-family and commercial inclusion?

Does Council wish to allow artificial turf for residential use?

If yes, should standards be set?

Is Council supportive of the approved plant list?

Does Council support a residential xeriscape incentive program?

Is Council supportive of using grant money for a sample xeriscape design garden?

Does Council support non-functional turf conversion of City-owned land utilizing grant funds until this can be budgeted for?

Staff Responsible (Department Head): Jim Tolbert, Assistant City Manager

Staff Member Presenting: Jim Tolbert, Assistant City Manager

Financial Impact: None at this time

Funding Source: N/A

Staff Recommendation: Provide staff with direction on the policy areas presented in the presentation regarding xeriscaping regulations and incentives

Suggested Motion: N/A