



City of Kansas City, Missouri

Docket Memo

Ordinance/Resolution #: 250637

Submitted Department/Preparer: Neighborhoods

Revised 6/10/24

Docket memos are required on all ordinances initiated by a Department Director. More information can be found in [Administrative Regulation \(AR\) 4-1](#).

Executive Summary

Amending Chapter 48, Code of Ordinances, entitled "Nuisances," by repealing Section 48-1, Definitions, and Section 48-30, Rank weeds and noxious plants; amending Chapter 56, Code of Ordinances, entitled "Property Maintenance Code," by repealing Section 56-433, Noxious weeds and enacting new sections of like number and subject matter; amending Chapter 34, Code of Ordinances, entitled "Health and Sanitation," by repealing Article VII, Weeds and noxious plants; amending Chapter 62, Code of Ordinances, entitled "Solid Waste," by repealing Article VIII, Nuisances; and recognizing this ordinance as having an accelerated effective date.

Discussion

Currently, any plant over ten inches in height is considered a "rank weed" per the City's Nuisance Code (Chapter 48) and similar chapters. However, many native plants exceed ten inches when allowed to grow to their natural height and form. These native plants are beneficial to the environment and community by providing stormwater retention, increased water quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, increased biodiversity, and increased habitats for wildlife.

The proposed amendments to the City's codes would expand allowances for native plants in "managed natural landscapes," meaning a premise, lot, tract, or parcel of land that consists of intentionally and continuously maintained vegetation allowing growth to its natural height for the purpose of benefiting the city's natural environment. In order for these managed natural landscapes to maintain their appearance, they must also meet additional requirements including no turfgrass ten inches or more in height, noxious plants, invasive plants, or rank weeds. The defined landscape area must have defined boundaries, no vegetation may encroach onto neighboring property or the right-of-way, and at least one unobstructed safety corridor three feet in width and seven and a half feet in height must be present.

These requirements help to maintain the aesthetics associated with life in a large urban metro area, while still allowing for native plant yards and gardens so long as they are intentionally maintained.

Fiscal Impact

1. Is this legislation included in the adopted budget? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. What is the funding source?
None/not applicable. Code update.
3. How does the legislation affect the current fiscal year?
It does not impact the budget.
4. Does the legislation have a fiscal impact in future fiscal years? Please notate the difference between one-time and recurring costs.
No
5. Does the legislation generate revenue, leverage outside funding, or deliver a return on investment?
No

Office of Management and Budget Review

(OMB Staff will complete this section.)

1. This legislation is supported by the general fund. ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. This fund has a structural imbalance. ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. Account string has been verified/confirmed. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Additional Discussion (if needed)

This ordinance has no fiscal impact.

Citywide Business Plan (CWBP) Impact

1. View the [Adopted 2025-2029 Citywide Business Plan](#)
2. Which CWBP goal is most impacted by this legislation?
Infrastructure and Accessibility (Press tab after selecting.)
3. Which objectives are impacted by this legislation (select all that apply):

- ☐ Engage in thoughtful planning and redesign of existing road networks to ensure safety, access, and mobility of users of all ages and abilities.
- ☐ Enhance the City's connectivity, resiliency, and equity through a better-connected multi-modal transportation system for all users.
- ☐ Build on existing strengths while developing a comprehensive transportation plan for the future.
- ☒ Develop environmentally sustainable infrastructure strategies that improve quality of life and foster economic growth.
- ☒ Ensure adequate resources are provided for continued maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- ☐ Focus on delivery of safe connections to schools.

Prior Legislation

49861, 971346, 991334, 000199, 050191, 050676, 190537, 190718

Service Level Impacts

These amendments for the allowance of native plants will allow residents to have additional plants in their yards without defying the City's code. Additionally, the public and the Neighborhood Services Department Community Engagement Officers will benefit from educational native plant training provided by a local contractor and funded through a cooperative agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation. Residents will be able to engage with native plant landscaping and explore the environmental benefits of ecosystem health, biodiversity, and sustainability when planting native plants.

As part of the public trainings, the general public will also receive vouchers for native plants from a local nursery and have the opportunity to sign up for free consultation appointments with an expert to help them determine the best plants for their yard.

Other Impacts

1. What will be the potential health impacts to any affected groups?
Amending the Nuisance Code to include native plants for managed natural landscapes will aid in improving air and water quality. Native plants can absorb carbon dioxide, filter air pollutants, filter and reduce stormwater runoff, and the low maintenance of native plants will reduce the number of emissions from lawn maintenance equipment. Native plants will also contribute to the sustainability and resilience of the City.

2. How have those groups been engaged and involved in the development of this ordinance?

Yes, a local stakeholder group was convened to discuss potential updates to the code and has made comments on the various versions proposed.

3. How does this legislation contribute to a sustainable Kansas City?

Making amendments to the Nuisance Code to allow the growth of native plants in managed natural landscapes aligns with the short-term and long-term goals and strategies in the Natural Systems section of the City's Climate Protection & Resiliency Plan. Some specifically touched on include:

N-1.3: Promote and incentivize the use of native plants, grasses, shrubs, groundcover, and trees.

N-2.1: Maintain healthy ecosystems supportive of biodiversity.

N-2.3: Promote urban- and landscape-scale sequestration projects.

N-2.5: Revise policies for City operations to protect ecological health for City-managed landscapes and encourage other public and private entities to do the same.

N-4.3: Educate and advocate for the value of healthy soil to infiltrate stormwater on all surfaces

4. Does this legislation create or preserve new housing units?

No (Press tab after selecting)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

5. Department staff certifies the submission of any application Affirmative Action Plans or Certificates of Compliance, Contractor Utilization Plans (CUPs), and Letters of Intent to Subcontract (LOIs) to CREO prior to, or simultaneously with, the legislation entry request in Legistar.

No - CREO's review is not applicable (Press tab after selecting)

Please provide reasoning why not:

Not applicable; just updating code.

6. Does this legislation seek to approve a contract resulting from an Invitation for Bid?

No(Press tab after selecting)

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. Does this legislation seek to approve a contract resulting from a Request for Proposal/Qualification (RFP/Q)?
No(Press tab after selecting)