



DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENT CASE NUMBER WDCA20-0002 (Article 412, Landscaping)

**Washoe County Planning Commission
October 6, 2020**



Request

- a. Clarify where the standards of Article 412 apply
- b. Clarify the process for review of extenuating circumstances for modification of standards
- c. Clarify the requirements for landscaping plans
- d. Require water conservation measures
- e. Require preservation of Significant Trees
- f. Provide for greater flexibility in design of civic and commercial required landscaping
- g. Clarify that durable materials are required for screening fences
- h. Update standards for numbers of required trees, shrubs and ground cover
- i. Provide standards for revegetation of disturbed areas
- j. Update standards for financial assurances



Overview

- **Art 412 has not had a comprehensive update since the 1990's**
- **Some standards are difficult to evaluate in the field, which leads to subjective evaluation**
- **Current amendments are intended to reduce subjectivity and increase objectivity**
- **Proposed Code is included at Exhibit A-1**



Overview of Changes

Specific changes are summarized on pages 3-4 of the Staff Report.

Clarify where the standards of Article 412 apply:

- 412.10
- 412.40
- 412.67

Clarify the requirements for landscaping plans:

- 412.15

Require Water Conservation Measures:

- 412.20



Overview of Changes

Require preservation of Significant Trees:

- 412.25

Provide for greater flexibility in design of civic and commercial required landscaping & update standards for numbers of required trees, shrubs and ground cover:

- 412.40
- 412.60

Clarify that durable materials are required for screening fences:

- 412.40
- 412.45
- 412.55



Coverage

- (a) Coverage. A minimum twenty (20) percent of the total developed land area shall be landscaped. Any disturbance to undeveloped portions of a site shall be mitigated.
- I. Reduction in the total required landscaped area may be approved, subject to the approval of a Director's Modification of Standards, when the density of required plantings is increased proportionally. [For example: if the landscape area is decreased to seventeen (17) percent of the project area (a 15% reduction) then the number of required trees and shrubs must be increased by 15%.] The total required landscaped areas shall not be decreased to less than 15% of the developed land area.
 - II. Hardscape, such as paved plaza areas, may be approved as part of the required landscaping, subject to the approval of a Director's Modification of Standards, when the Director determines that the proposed hardscape area constitutes a public amenity. Hardscape is limited to a maximum of 20% of the required landscaped area.
 - III. Mitigation of undeveloped portions of a site shall consist of native plant materials and non-invasive plant species. Mitigation is complete when the previously-disturbed areas include plant density equal to 70% of the plant density of adjacent undisturbed areas.



Coverage

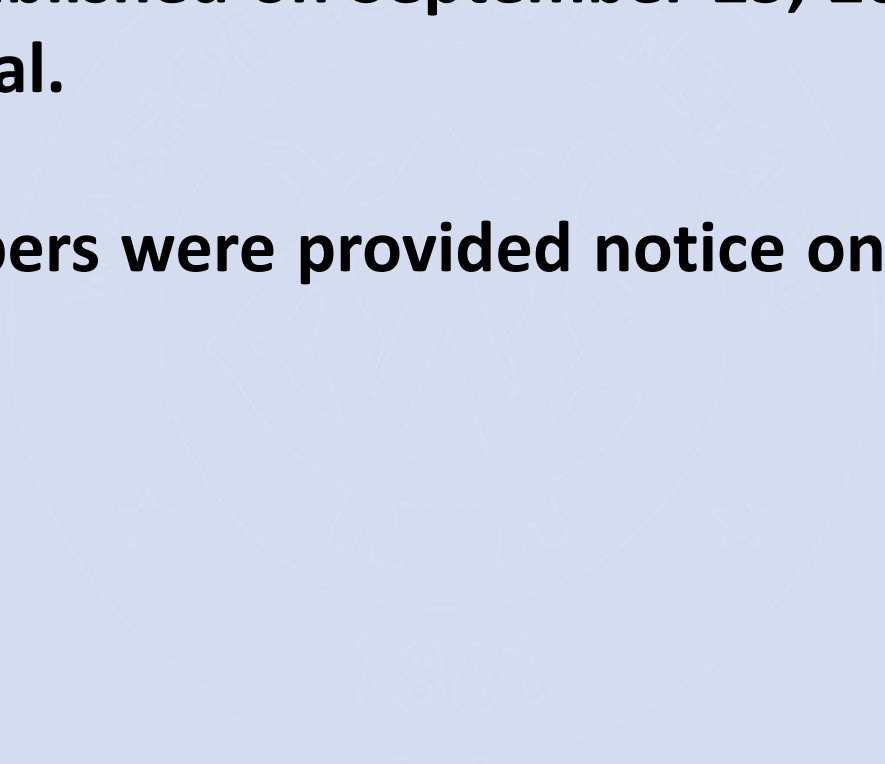
- (j) Ground Cover. New ground cover shall meet the following standards:
- ~~(1) Living ground cover shall be planted to achieve a minimum planting area coverage of fifty (50) percent within one (1) year of installation and shall achieve one hundred (100) percent coverage within three (3) years of installation;~~
 - ~~(2) Wood chips, bark, decorative rock or other appropriate inert materials may also be used provided it does not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total planting area; and~~
 - ~~(3) Plastic, steel or other appropriate edging material shall be provided around ground cover areas to retain loose materials.~~
 - (1) Rocks / boulders, at least 24 inches in diameter, may be substituted at a rate of two rocks / boulders for each required [110.412.60(g)(5)] shrub, up to 15% of the required number of shrubs.
 - (2) Wood chips, bark, decorative rock or other appropriate inert materials are required throughout all planting areas.
 - (3) Decomposed Granite (DG) is limited to a maximum of 50% of required planting areas and may not be placed in planting areas with slopes greater than 10%.
 - (4) Plastic, steel, concrete pavers, or other appropriate edging material shall be provided around ground cover areas to retain loose materials.



Public Notice

Notice was published on September 25, 2020 in the Reno Gazette-Journal.

All CAB members were provided notice on September 23, 2020.





Development Code Amendment Findings

1. Consistency with Master Plan. The proposed Development Code amendment is in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Washoe County Master Plan;
2. Promotes the Purpose of the Development Code. The proposed Development Code amendment will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare, and will promote the original purposes for the Development Code as expressed in Article 918, Adoption of Development Code;
3. Response to Changed Conditions. The proposed development code amendment responds to changed conditions or further studies that have occurred since the Development Code was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and the requested amendment allow for a more desirable utilization of land within the regulatory zones; and,
4. No Adverse Affects. The proposed development code amendment will not adversely affect the implementation of the policies and action programs of the Conservation Element or the Population Element of the Washoe County Master Plan.

Staff comments on each finding are included at pages 4-5 in the Planning Commission staff report.



Recommendation

(Page 5 of staff report)

It is recommended that the Washoe County Planning Commission recommend approval of WDCA20-0002, to amend Washoe County Chapter 110 (Development Code) within Article 412, Landscaping.



Possible Motion

I move that after giving reasoned consideration to the information contained in the staff report, the Planning Commission:

- (1) Adopt the resolution, attached as Exhibit A to the staff report, to amend Article 412, Landscaping of the Washoe County Development Code; and
- (2) Authorize the Chair to sign the resolution on behalf of the Planning Commission,

I further move to direct staff to bring the amendment to the Board of County Commissioners for a hearing within 60 days of the date of adoption. This recommendation for approval is based on all of the four findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.818.15(e)