

BLUE FOLDER ITEM

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 6, 2026

- N.1 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DRAFT ZONING AMENDMENTS RELATED TO REVITALIZATION OF THE ARTESIA AND AVIATION BOULEVARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE ELEMENT UPDATE AND THE ARTESIA AND AVIATION CORRIDORS AREA PLAN (AACAP)

CONTACT: MARC WIENER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

- **PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

From: [Laura MacMorran](#)
To: [CityClerk](#)
Cc: Marcweiner@redondo.org
Subject: CC Jan. 6, 2026 Item N.1.
Date: Sunday, January 4, 2026 9:16:59 PM
Attachments: [N.1. Jan.1.2026 AACAP Comment Letter.docx](#)
[Article 7 Proposed Landscaping Amendments jan4.2025.docx](#)

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Hello and Happy New Year,

Attached is a comment letter regarding Item N.1. and an attached proposed zone text amendment.

Would you please see that it is included in the public record? Thank you.

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Yours,

[Laura MacMorran](#)

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Article 7. Landscaping Regulations

§ 10-2.1900. Landscaping regulations.

(a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish standards for installation of landscaping in order to enhance the aesthetic appearance of properties within the City, ensure the quality, quantity, and appropriateness of landscape materials, effect a functional and attractive design, improve compatibility between land uses, conserve water, control soil erosion, and preserve the character of existing neighborhoods.

(b) Criteria. Planting areas within development projects for which a landscape plan is required pursuant to subsection (f) of this section shall comply with the following criteria:

(1) Plant location.

a. All required setbacks shall be landscaped with live plants except for walkways, driveways, parking areas and patio areas. Non-organic groundcover shall not be used in place of plant material in planter areas unless utilized as a decorative accent.

b. Plants shall be grouped according to similar water needs.

c. Plants shall not interfere with safe sight distances or otherwise block vehicular, bicycle or pedestrian traffic, or conflict with the installation, maintenance, or repair of any public utility.

d. A planting area a minimum of 18 inches in width shall separate a building from a driveway or parking area as feasible.

e. Parking lots shall be separated from street frontages and from abutting uses by a minimum of seven (7) foot-wide planting areas. In addition, planting areas no less than four (4) feet wide shall be interspersed among the parking stalls as feasible, including provision of trees for appearance and shade. A required parking space(s) may be converted to a landscape area or tree well in order to meet the minimum landscaping or tree requirement.

f. If feasible, trees shall be planted at least five feet from a public sidewalk, except that the Community Development Director may require a greater distance for species that may, over time, cause damage to the sidewalk or other public infrastructure. The Community Development Director may require installation of root control barriers where necessary to protect public sidewalks.

(2) Plant type.

a. Drought-tolerant plants shall be used where feasible. Recommended drought-tolerant plant species are listed in the City of Redondo Beach List of Recommended Trees and Water Conserving Plants maintained by the Superintendent Of Parks. Other plants consistent with the intent of this section, but not included in the List of Recommended Trees and Water Conserving Plants, may be approved by the Community Development Director. The Community Development Director may also permit limited use of tree, shrub, and groundcover species not adapted to the dry summer climate if it can be demonstrated that:

1. The plant species and landscape changes to provide for the plant species is compatible with the visual quality of the project and has no harmful impact to the surrounding area; and

2. The non-native/adapted plant is irrigated by runoff water from other landscape areas and/or turf area is reduced to compensate for the increased irrigation water required for the plant species.

b. Plants shall complement the architectural design of structures on the site, and shall be suitable for the soil and climatic conditions specific to the site.

c. Plants shall be compatible with the character of the neighborhood.

d. Plants shall be adaptable to Redondo Beach's Coastal Environment.

e. Trees that may, over time, cause damage to public and/or private sidewalks, sewer lines, and other infrastructure shall be avoided, unless the Community Development Director determines that the tree is located a sufficient distance from such infrastructure to prevent damage. Information on the suitability or lack of suitability of different tree species is contained in the City of Redondo Beach List of Recommended Trees and Water Conserving Plants maintained by the Superintendent of Parks. Trees not listed that are determined to be consistent with the criteria of this section may be approved by the Community Development Director.

f. Trees shall be planted to shade pavement to reduce surface temperatures, and to shade turf, groundcover, and shrub planting areas to reduce water evaporation from these areas.

g. Nonresidential developments. Turf (grass) area (excluding parkways between the public sidewalk and street) shall not exceed 20% of the total landscape area for nonresidential developments, except that higher percentages may be

permitted when turf is an essential part of the development such as for playing fields for schools or parks, or integral to the design of the project as determined through the applicable design review procedures.

1. Lower water usage turf or warm season grasses are recommended for all turf areas.
2. Use of turf shall be avoided in landscape areas with a dimension of less than eight feet.
3. It is recommended that turf be separated from new trees to prevent over-watering of the tree, surface rooting, crown-rot, and damage of the tree trunk by grass trimming equipment.
4. If trees are to be planted in a turf area, only deep-rooted tree species should be used, turf irrigation and drainage should be directed away from the tree, and the tree should be irrigated by a combined bubbler/deep waterpipe fixture.

(3) Plant size.

- a. Plants shall be sized and spaced to achieve immediate effect and shall normally not be less than a 15 gallon container for trees, five gallon container for shrubs, and a one-gallon container for mass planting. Groundcover coverage must be 100 percent in one year, with rooted cuttings from flats planted no more than 12 inches on center, and containerized woody, shrub groundcover planted no more than three feet on center.
- b. Landscape plans shall incorporate existing mature trees with trunk diameters of six inches or greater that are compatible with the proposed grades, structures and hardscape. Specimen trees, 36 inch box, or larger may be used to replace an existing mature tree that cannot feasibly be saved.

(4) Planting areas.

- a. All planting areas shall be served by a permanent underground clock-operated water-efficient irrigation system. a drip irrigation system or other water conserving irrigation system may be required where feasible.
- b. All sloped planting areas abutting hardscape shall be surrounded with a minimum six inch high concrete curb where necessary to prevent erosion.

(5) Parking lots. New surface parking lots containing 10 or more parking spaces shall provide a minimum of one shade tree for every six spaces. The Planning Commission

may also require provision of trees and other landscaping in parking lots in conjunction with any project subject to Planning Commission Design Review.

(c) Maintenance of landscape. Planting areas shall be permanently maintained, including watering, weeding, pruning, trimming, edging, fertilizing, insect control, and replacement of plant materials and irrigation equipment as needed to preserve the health and appearance of plant materials. All trees, shrubs, and plants which, due to accident, damage, disease, or other cause, fail to show a healthy growth shall be replaced. Replacement plants shall conform to all the standards which govern the original planting installation.

(d) Street tree requirements. Street tree species, size, spacing, and planting standards, not provided herein, shall be subject to approval of the Superintendent of Parks. The Superintendent of Parks shall select street trees taking into consideration the following criteria: that the selected tree as proposed to be located will not harm public sidewalks, streets, and infrastructure; that the tree is consistent with water conservation objectives; that the tree requires low maintenance and no pesticides; that the tree will enhance the visual character and identity of City streets; that the tree will shade paved surfaces; and that the tree complements appropriate existing street trees. Appropriate street trees include, but are not necessarily limited to, trees included in the City of Redondo Beach List of Recommended Trees and Water Conserving Plants.

(1) No permit applied for in connection with any construction on any lot or parcel of land which requires a building permit under the building code, where such new construction is more than 800 square feet, shall be finalized until the applicant has planted a street tree or paid a street tree in-lieu-of-fee.

(2) A street tree shall be required for each fifty (50) feet or a fraction thereof of frontage including side frontage. Tree wells shall be required where the parkway width between the sidewalk and curb is less than thirty (30) inches.

(3) Such street trees shall be planted in the public right-of-way (parkway strip) between the curbing and the property line of such lot or parcel as determined by the county assessor's book. If a sidewalk exists in such parkway strip without provisions for street trees, tree wells and trees shall be provided as part of such street tree requirements, provided there remains not less than four (4) feet of clear and unobstructed sidewalk after the tree wells are in place.

(4) Exemption. Street trees will not be required when adequate trees for the lot or parcel of land already exist in the parkway or in a tree well.

(5) Exception. For a nonR-1 zoned lot or parcel as determined by the county assessor's book that lacks at least three (3) feet of space to plant a street tree, a tree shall be planted in the front yard for each forty (40) or fraction thereof of primary frontage.

(6) No existing street tree shall be removed without the approval of the City in accordance with Title 5 Chapter 11

(e) Tree Requirements.

(1)R-1 zone, areas with no parkways. In the R-1 zone, in areas with no parkways, in conjunction with the construction of new homes, existing mature trees in the front yard that are compatible with the proposed development shall be preserved. A specimen tree, 24 inch box, or larger shall be planted in the front yard where there are no existing mature trees or to replace existing mature trees that cannot feasibly be saved.

(2) All non-R-1 zone areas

a. Any existing tree greater than 25 inches or more in circumference (eight inches in diameter as measured four and one-half feet above mean natural grade shall be preserved. Where existing tree(s) cannot feasibly be preserved two 24 inch box, or larger shade trees shall be planted. If the property does not have sufficient physical space for the required replacement trees, then a \$650 tree in-lieu of fee or an amount amended by City Council shall be paid per tree. The tree in-lieu fee shall be deposited into the tree planting and tree maintenance fund.

b. A specimen tree, 24 inch box, or larger shall be planted in the front yard setback per 40 feet of primary frontage. If the property does not have at least a eight (8) feet in all directions for the required tree(s), then a \$650 tree in-lieu of fee or an amount amended by City Council shall be paid per tree. The tree in-lieu fee shall be deposited into the tree planting and tree maintenance fund.

c. Green Roof

(1) Any building with a roof top use and more than a .75 floor area ratio shall have a green roof over 25% of the rooftop's useable area.

(2) Any building with a floor area ratio greater than .75 that does not provide a green roof at 25% of the rooftop useable area, shall not be entitled to a rooftop use.

(f) Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

(1) Adoption by reference. The California State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, codified at Chapter 2.7 of Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations, and any amendments thereto, is hereby adopted and incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth below, and shall be known and may be cited as the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance of the City of Redondo Beach. One copy of the California State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance shall be maintained on file in City Hall.

(2) Conflicts of law. The development standards relating to landscaping found in this Section 10-2.1900 shall apply in addition to the applicable requirements of the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. In the event of any conflict between provisions of the California State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and a provision of this Section 10-2.1900, the provision that contains the more stringent landscaping water efficiency requirement(s) shall control.

(Ord. 2756 c.s., eff. January 18, 1996, as amended by § 11, Ord. 2917, eff. October 21, 2003, § 2, Ord. 2946 c.s., eff. November 4, 2004, § 1, Ord. 3107 c.s., eff. February 8, 2013, and § 1, Ord. 3191, eff. November 14, 2019)

January 6, 2026

Item N.1.

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

Zoning and development standards are a balancing act between leniency and harm on one side and suffocation and disinvestment on the other side of the scale. When reasonably balanced standards are implemented, the private sector enjoys a fair return on investment, and the public sector receives perpetual tangible and intangible benefits.

The draft Artesia and Aviation Corridors Area Plan zoning amendment with a proposed 1.5 FAR from a .6 FAR will ignite redevelopment and cause tree loss without replacement. In my opinion, it is completely lopsided towards concrete, stone, stucco, and steel. Where are the provisions for public health, public good, public safety and the environment? Inclusion of the following six ideas evens out the public benefit's side of the scale.

1. Ensure greenery by specifying tree requirements. Update Article 7 Landscaping see attached non-R-1 zone changes.
2. Reduce urban heat island. Require green roofs in exchange for rooftop use and amend Article 7 as proposed to provide shade.
3. Protect the bird population. Bird migration is affected by light pollution and bright white lights. Specify that lighting shall be downward and specify bird-friendly light colors. And update Article 7 as proposed to provide habitat.
4. Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Explicitly state that lines-of-sight shall not be obstructed.

Consider:

Where a building, wall, fence or similar improvement is located within 10 feet of any driveway, alley, street, parkway, or highway and would interfere with the line-of-sight of the driver of a motor vehicle leaving the property on a driveway, or moving past a corner at the intersection of two streets or highways, said structure shall be setback, height reduced, or made 90% transparent.

A maximum 42-inch high wall, fence, or hedge, or a five-foot wide landscaped area shall be established along the outside eating, drinking, and assembly area adjoining any driveway, public sidewalk, street, or highway.

5. Establish reciprocal driveway and aisle requirements for safer circulation.
6. Include building design standards that consider window, eave, awning's sizes and locations relative to the sun and reflective paint colors.

Land is a scarce resource and with many items competing for a footprint. In particular, trees are being removed by bigger and bigger building footprints. Restore the balance so that there is more reciprocity. Tomorrow and 100 years from now shade, filtered light, reduced noise, cool air, beauty, and biodiversity will remain key to livability, and our standards can't be silent.

Kindly,

Laura MacMorran

District 1 Resident