

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE WORKSHOP**

Call to Order

The City Council of the City of Katy, Texas, convened in special session Monday, August 25, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at Katy City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas the following City Officials were present:

William H. Thiele, Mayor
Chris Harris, Mayor Pro Tem
Janet Corte, Councilmember
Gina Hicks, Councilmember
Rory A. Robertson, Councilmember
Dan Smith, Councilmember
Bridgette Begle, Acting City Attorney
Andrew Vasquez, City Finance Director
Byron J. Hebert, City Administrator
Becky L. McGrew, City Secretary
Rachel Lazo, City Planner

The following City Officials were absent:

David Kasper, City Engineer

Public Comments

All were given the opportunity to be heard and the following spoke:

Alecia Pacheco with Trees for Katy expressed strong support for the proposed ordinance, emphasizing the historic and cultural importance of Katy's tree canopy and the need to protect the legacy of those who planted it. Shari Boothe, a property owner at 1514 Avenue D, raised questions and concerns about how the proposed changes could impact commercial properties with existing trees. She sought clarification on the boundaries of the Old Katy district, what qualifies as a legacy tree, and whether clearing permits would be required for commercial trees under the new ordinance.

LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

City Planner Rachel Lazo presented a draft landscape ordinance that the Community Development Department has been developing for approximately a year and a half. She explained the workshop was for discussion only, with no formal action to be taken, and provided an overview of current regulations. Residential properties currently have no minimum landscaping requirements, while commercial properties must meet parking lot, streetscaping, and site-wide landscaping standards. Lazo outlined the goals of the proposed ordinance as protecting and enhancing the city's existing tree canopy, improving stormwater drainage, encouraging drought-tolerant native plantings, and providing buffers for noise and light pollution. She then summarized major proposed changes across the ordinance: requiring landscape and tree protection plans, adding clearing and grading permit requirements, increasing minimum plant sizes, adding tree barricade protections during construction, expanding non-residential landscaping requirements (including more landscaped areas, streetscape plantings, and robust parking lot landscaping), and introducing new residential landscaping standards for new homes. The draft also adds visibility triangle requirements for safety, clarifies property owner responsibilities

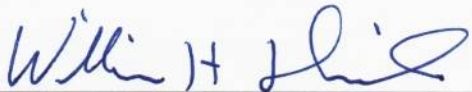
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LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE WORKSHOP PRESENTATION (cont'd)

for maintenance and irrigation and creates a new tree preservation framework that defines protected trees, requires surveys and mitigation for removals, and establishes a tree fund for replanting efforts. Existing compliance and appeal processes would remain in place. Lazo concluded the presentation by opening up the proposal for discussion. Councilmember Corte stressed the need to make the ordinance clearer by more distinctly separating residential and commercial requirements to prevent confusion. Councilmember Hicks expressed concern that the ordinance could become overly regulatory and burdensome, especially for small businesses and larger commercial developments. She raised issues about increased costs, water use during drought conditions, and the need to gather feedback from commercial property owners and developers. Mayor Pro Tem Harris noted that the ordinance could help preserve large trees when developers consolidate lots in older neighborhoods. In response to questions, Lazo clarified that Old Katy is bounded by Avenue A to Avenue D and First Street to George Bush Drive, and that Legacy Trees must be designated through an application to Keep Katy Beautiful, that there are currently no clearing permits required, and that the proposed ordinance would apply primarily to new commercial development, new subdivisions, and new single-family construction, not existing homes or properties. The workshop concluded with agreement that the draft ordinance represents a significant shift in City landscaping policy and will require further refinement before moving forward. The Council emphasized the importance of balancing environmental and economic considerations, ensuring clarity and enforceability, and preserving Katy's character and tree canopy while supporting future growth.

Adjourn

Mayor Thiele adjourned the Workshop at 6:25 p.m.



Mayor

ATTEST:


City Secretary