



**Denver Resilient Landscapes  
Advisory Committee Meeting #2**  
09/03/2025 – 2-4 pm  
Virtual hosted via Teams

**ATTENDEES**

- Denver Dept of City Planning & Development (CPD): Michelle Teller (Project Manager), Alisa Childress (Project Manager), Jen Kim (Project Team), Kyle Dalton (Regulatory Manager)
- Superbloom (SPRB): Stacy Passmore, Diane Lipovsky, Christina Sohn Kaela Horton
- Community Language Coop: Raquel Medina
- Advisory Committee: Anna-Gray Anderson, Ayn Slavis, Brandon Johnson, Chris Woodburn, Deryn Davidson, Elise Bupp, Greg Fisher, Joshua Eldridge, Melissa Horn, Nick Emenhiser, Sarah Cawrse, Suzanne Serna, Tom Strobel, Victoria Bloom

**AGENDA**

- Introductions
- Recap from Meeting #1
- Project Updates
  - Best Practices
- Public Engagement
- Break out Rooms
  - From priorities to outcomes
- Share Outs
  - Agreement on a path forward
- Next Steps

**MEETING NOTES**

**Share Outs from Breakout Rooms**

- Representatives from the 3 groups shared back a summary of items discussed.
- Group 1 Share Out - from Christina Sohn
  - For trees, we should provide recommendations on what trees do best in specific site conditions / size of planted area / where they are coming from / appropriate soil volume (look at residential code).
  - For pollinators, we should make natives and grasses the rule and lawn/turf the exception.
  - For water savings, we should provide more guidance on establishing trees and the long-term benefits of maintaining them.

Planning Services  
Community Planning and Development  
201 W. Colfax Ave., Dept. 205 | Denver, CO 80202  
[www.denvergov.org/CPD](http://www.denvergov.org/CPD)  
p. (720) 865-2700

- There is a lack of understanding about selecting plant species and the amount of coverage you should be aiming for – many don't know that that higher coverage/more plants would mean less maintenance.
  - Maintenance expectation for native landscapes (establishment / long-term)
  - Keeping trees alive is difficult in Denver.
  - Community experience and health should be taken into consideration when looking at the success of these code changes.
  - What does community mean? (Residents versus. developer experience)
  - How do we make the people who are making “communities” take into consideration the community living there?
  - The “community” for this project needs to address the developers. How do we get buy in?
  - Consider a max percentage of rock/cobble/rock mulch landscapes.
- Group 2 Share Out – from Hayley Adair
    - For outcomes, there's often a lag in the results for many of these key metrics. For example, trees producing shade, water use to be reduced, invertebrates to increase, etc.
    - There are things we can do, like counting the square feet of turf grass removed, that then we can estimate the water reduction, and there's more immediate things that we can do to get these measurements,
    - There's also some legislation and policy recommendations:
      - How can we preserve our existing trees in the landscape? Can we mandate minimum soil volume to increase the survival of trees we're planting?
      - How can we align with programs that already exist, like via Smart Ash?
    - Highlighting not to focus just on affluent areas of bluegrass but also areas that don't have landscaping. Denver Water is currently trying to prioritize these areas as well.
    - How do we ensure the long-term success of these plantings? We don't want to be putting all of these trees and native vegetation in the ground for them just to die. A big piece of this is encouraging drought-tolerant plants and education on the care to increase survival.

- We talked about how many people in large apartment buildings may not realize that they need to water the tree in the tree lawn/amenity zone.
  - Discussed weeds as a huge issue. The transition from bluegrass to native visitation is often filled with weeds, and there's value in weeds and their role for pollinators and other invertebrates.
  - Measurements could include reduction in temperature. Measuring heat island was a key one that we discussed. Other measurements could include water reduction, which is something Denver Water can easily measure.
  - We discussed understanding where our plants are typically failing, so that we can change strategies if there's certain places where plants are not making it, or certain circumstances.
  - How can we support industries to increase production of native plants? What barriers do the community see to installing native plants? Cost, watering, education? What are people's current understandings of the rules? Many people don't know that you can't put rocks in the amenity zone.
- Group 3 Share Out - from Anna-Gray Anderson
    - Outcomes: An overall access to the outdoors and feeling connected to nature, whether that's seeing trees and having access to shade, or seeing bees and butterflies, and having a community that is educated on landscaping and native plants would be a good outcome.
    - Barriers include cost challenges and education challenges. For example, how to successfully plant and maintain a landscape or a tree or native plants.
    - Other barriers include that native plants can be tricky to find. Additionally, some people want a certain aesthetic with lawns. The overall survivability of native plants and trees can also be hard.
    - Metrics could include things like tree canopy percentage, also invertebrate percentage. How many bees and butterflies there are after the project versus before. Health improvements may also be worth measuring.
    - Additional Community input could be helpful on the following topic.
      - Equity: would people be interested in paying more for landscapes in areas that would be outside your neighborhood?



## Next Steps

- Using the information today to inform Survey #2
  - Related to design and outcomes for the community
- Next Meeting on 10/7 from 4-6 p.m.
  - Focused on design outcomes

Planning Services  
Community Planning and Development  
201 W. Colfax Ave., Dept. 205 | Denver, CO 80202  
[www.denvergov.org/CPD](http://www.denvergov.org/CPD)  
p. (720) 865-2700

**CONNECT WITH US | 311 | [DENVERGOV.ORG](http://DENVERGOV.ORG) | DENVER 8 TV**