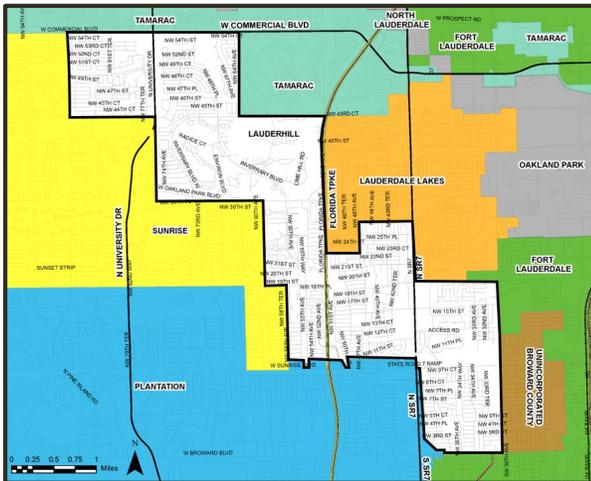




Artificial Turf

City Commission Workshop
Items for Consideration



Current Regulations

- ▶ Artificial Turf is referenced in the Code of Ordinances and Land Development Regulations in several places
 - ▶ Schedule J - Landscape Installation, Irrigation and Maintenance Standards and Requirements
 - ▶ *With approval of the Planning and Zoning Director, and the City Engineer, artificial turf may be permitted in place of grass or other ground cover.*
 - ▶ Article III - Zoning District Standards - definition of “artificial turf”
 - ▶ Chapter 10 - Garbage and Trash/ Unsanitary and Unsightly Conditions/ Abandoned Real Property - listed as an option for landscaping of residential properties
 - ▶ Chapter 15 - Parks and Recreation - acknowledged as a material for sports fields
- ▶ Schedule J also incorporates by reference the "Landscape Irrigation & Florida - Friendly Design Standards" and the "Florida Green Local Government Designation: Landscape Maintenance" Manual and shall be the minimum standard and requirement and shall apply to the incorporated area of the City of Lauderhill, Florida.

Florida-Friendly Landscaping

- ▶ **The Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program does not consider artificial turf to be a Florida-Friendly product.**
- ▶ Synthetic turf surfaces were found to have substantially higher surface temperatures than natural turfgrasses. Surface temperatures of synthetic turf can be 93°C (199.4°F) on a day when air temperature is 37°C (98.6°F). Heat transfer from the surface can contribute to physiological stress that may result in health-related problems (McNitt and Petrunak 2006). Especially when the synthetic turf fields were newer, rubber granules often contained polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) at levels above health-based soil standards. The levels of PAHs generally appeared to decline as the field aged. However, the decay trend may be complicated by adding new rubber granules to compensate for the loss of the material.
- ▶ Healthy lawns clean and cool the air by absorbing carbon dioxide, releasing oxygen, and collecting dust and dirt. They filter stormwater runoff, facilitate groundwater recharge, and reduce erosion, glare, and noise. (For more information about turfgrass, visit http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/professionals/GI-BMP_publications.htm.)

Florida Statutes - HB683

- ▶ HB683 became effective July 1, 2025. It seeks to standardize and streamline regulations related to construction, building permitting, and local government oversight – with a focus on synthetic turf installation, contractor payments, and private inspections.
 - ▶ A local government may not prohibit a property owner from installing synthetic turf that complies with DEP standards, or an ordinance inconsistent with the DEP standards.
- ▶ Florida Department of Environmental Protections (DEP) must adopt installation standards for synthetic turf on single-family residential properties less than 1 acre.
- ▶ DEP held a public workshop July 22, 2025 & prepared a draft rule July 28, 2025.

Proponents of Artificial Turf Will Say:

- ▶ Conserve significant amounts of water: Artificial turf eliminates the need for regular irrigation, a crucial benefit in our water-stressed region.
- ▶ Reduce the use of harmful chemicals: No fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides are required, protecting our local environment and water sources.
- ▶ Lower maintenance costs: Homeowners would save time and money on lawn care, including mowing, edging, and chemical treatments.
- ▶ Maintain an aesthetically pleasing landscape year-round: Artificial turf remains green and well-maintained regardless of weather conditions.

Rational for Regulation of Artificial Turf

- ▶ Living materials clean the air, clean water, recharge ground water supply, reduce heat, reduce stormwater water runoff.
- ▶ Synthetic turf systems may be permeable but are frequently installed on compacted subgrade reducing permeability.
- ▶ Synthetic turf systems may include drainage systems that would be required to be installed concurrent with the turf and require regular maintenance.

Examples of Installations:



Examples of Installations:



Examples of Xeriscape:



<https://www.earthworksjax.com/landscape/>



<https://www.marthastewart.com/8336571/xeriscaping-ideas>

Recommendations

- ▶ City must amend regulations to be consistent with Florida Statutes
- ▶ Limit use of turf to rear yards and establish a maximum amount that may be utilized on a property
- ▶ Adopt standards to encourage natural alternatives to turf (Florida Friendly Landscaping, etc.)
 - ▶ Mulch and rocks (for landscaping, not driveways)
 - ▶ Alternative grass/ ground covers
 - ▶ Drought resistant plant materials