

**CITY OF NEWPORT
RESOLUTION
OF THE
COUNCIL**

No2026-94

Landscaping Ordinance Resolution

- WHEREAS, the City of Newport recognizes that trees, green infrastructure, and landscaped public spaces are essential components of a healthy, resilient, and livable community; and
- WHEREAS, urban tree canopy coverage provides numerous public benefits, including improved air quality, stormwater mitigation, erosion control, shade, reduced urban heat island effects, enhanced public health, increased property values, and improved aesthetic character; and
- WHEREAS, Newport's historic streetscapes, neighborhoods, parks, and coastal environment are significantly enhanced by mature trees and landscaped open spaces; and
- WHEREAS, continued development, infrastructure expansion, severe weather events, disease, and aging tree stock may contribute to the loss of existing trees and reduction in overall canopy coverage throughout the City; and
- WHEREAS, municipalities across Rhode Island and the United States have adopted tree preservation and landscaping ordinances to establish standards for tree protection, replacement requirements, maintenance practices, and expanded planting initiatives; and
- WHEREAS, the Newport City Council finds that a comprehensive landscaping and tree protection ordinance would help preserve the environmental, historic, and visual character of the City while promoting long-term sustainability and climate resilience; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT
- RESOLVED, that the Newport City Council hereby requests and directs the City Administration, in consultation with the Planning Department, Department of Public Services, Tree and Open Space Commission, and City Solicitor's Office, to draft and present to the City Council a proposed Tree Preservation and Landscaping Ordinance; and BE IT FURTHER
- RESOLVED, that the proposed ordinance should consider, but not be limited to, the following components:

- Protections for significant, mature, and historic trees located on public property and, where legally appropriate, private property;
- Tree replacement requirements associated with development, redevelopment, or removal activities;
- Minimum landscaping and tree planting standards for new developments, parking lots, public rights-of-way, and municipal projects;
- Incentives and strategies to increase overall tree canopy coverage citywide;
 - Standards for maintenance, pruning, and removal of trees to ensure public safety and long-term tree health;
 - Coordination with climate resilience, stormwater management, and sustainability goals;
 - Recommendations regarding enforcement mechanisms, permitting requirements, penalties, and administrative oversight;
 - Consideration of native and climate-resilient tree species suitable for Newport's coastal environment;
 - Opportunities for public engagement, education, and partnerships related to urban forestry initiatives; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the City Administration shall present the draft ordinance and any related recommendations to the City Council within a reasonable timeframe for review, public discussion, and potential adoption.

STEPHANIE SMYTH
ELLEN PINNOCK

READ AND PASSED

JUNE 10, 2026



Laura C. Swistak, CMC
City Clerk