

Water Wise Landscapes

A cost-effective HOA investment in resilience

Roughly 40 to 50% of all municipal water used in Colorado is applied outdoors, with much of this going to water thirsty turfgrass. Non-native turfgrass requires extensive, and increasingly expensive, irrigation water to stay green in the dry Colorado summer. As drought and rising temperatures strain Colorado's water supplies, communities across the state are transitioning from non-functional turf to water wise landscaping to save both water and money.

Homeowners Associations (HOAs) have an important role to play in this transition. Many HOAs maintain landscaped areas, much of which is non-functional turf, in community entryways, medians, and unused common spaces.



Unlike a well-loved sports field, non-functional turf is only walked on when it's mowed.

How HOAs can benefit from waterwise landscaping



Beautifying neighborhoods

Well-designed and maintained water wise landscapes have been shown to increase property values by up to 15%.



Lowering water and maintenance costs

Established water wise landscapes typically require less time, fertilizer, and water to maintain compared to turfgrass.



Reducing air pollution from mowing

Removing turfgrass reduces the need to use gas-powered lawn mowers, which release harmful pollutants.



Creating pollinator habitat

Native and water wise plants provide habitat for hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, and other pollinators.



Saving Water

Replacing turf with water wise, climate-appropriate landscaping has been shown to save 30-70% of water applied to outdoor landscapes.



Building resilience

Water wise landscapes can withstand outdoor watering restrictions and thrive during dry summers.

Funding Water Wise Landscaping

There are several ways that HOAs can pay for turf replacement including through city and water provider financial incentives, accumulated financial reserves, special assessments, and debt financing.

By combining two or more of these mechanisms, Colorado HOAs have invested in large scale projects that yield significant cost and water savings.

Depending on the funding mechanism, HOAs could see a return on their investment just a few years after replacing turfgrass with water wise landscaping thanks to reduced water and maintenance costs.

Cherry Creek III

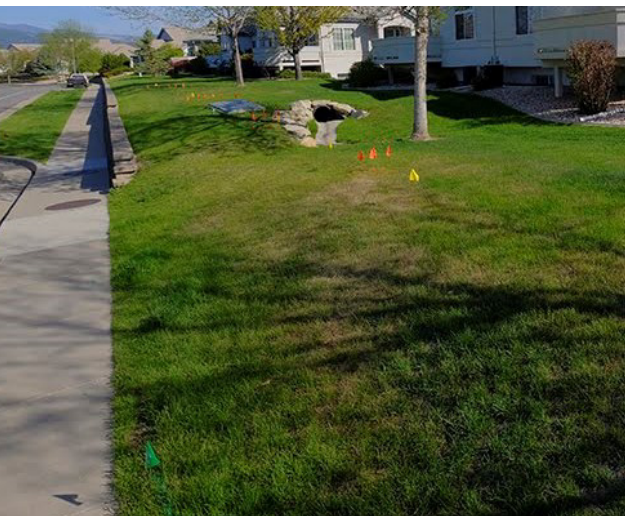
Leveraged cost savings from an indoor water conservation project, the HOA's capital budget, and a Denver Water rebate program to fund water wise landscaping throughout the community.



A Cherry Creek III side yard before turf conversion



A Cherry Creek III side yard after turf conversion
Photo courtesy of HaveyPro Cinema



Fairway Ridge site before turf conversion



Fairway Ridge site after turf conversion

Fairway Ridge

Used funds in the HOA operating budget, received funding through Northern Water's grant program, and worked with community volunteers to replace turf on four sites.

For more information

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