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# Senate Bill 24-005 Made Simple: Streamlined Templates and Processes

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## Senate Bill 24-005 Made Simple: Streamlined Templates and Processes

**Colorado's Senate Bill 24-005 (SB5)** requires communities to prohibit the installation of nonfunctional turf, nonfunctional artificial turf<sup>1</sup>, and invasive plant species for **new development or redevelopment**<sup>2</sup> of:

- Commercial, institutional and industrial properties
- Common interest community property (e.g., homeowner association/HOA) common areas, and
- Street rights-of-way, parking lots, medians, and transportation corridors.

The primary intent of SB5 is to reduce outdoor water demands “without adversely impacting quality of life or landscape functionality” and to replace the practice of installing nonfunctional, high water use turfgrasses (turf) with “water-wise landscaping”



### Who Should Use This Guide

This guide provides a simple pathway for communities to follow to adhere to the requirements set forth by SB5. The guide may be useful for communities who:

- Are looking for bare-minimum, “plug-and-play” development code language to adhere to SB5 requirements, and/or
- Are interested in enforcement approaches that do not require substantial staff time or expertise.

For communities looking for more in-depth guidance, view the [\*\*SB24-005 Key Considerations Guide\*\*](#).

<sup>1</sup> In 2025, **House Bill 25-1113** passed, expanding the requirements of SB5. While SB5 prohibited all artificial turf except on playing fields, HB1113 changes that by adding definitions for functional artificial turf and nonfunctional artificial turf, and requires communities to adopt standards that prohibit nonfunctional artificial turf by the SB5 implementation date of January 1, 2026.

<sup>2</sup> According to Colorado Revised Statutes, redevelopment is defined as a construction project that: “(a) Requires a building or landscaping permit, plan check, or design review; and (b) Results in a disturbance of more than fifty percent of the aggregate landscape area.” Only the disturbed portion of landscaping on redeveloped parcels is required to conform with the nonfunctional turf, nonfunctional artificial turf, and invasive species provisions.

## What Is Included in This Guide?

This guide includes the following customizable templates and processes:

- **Draft development code language** that communities can customize and adopt in accordance with SB5
- **Recommendations for updating development review and inspection processes** to increase the likelihood that proposed and installed landscapes adhere to adopted regulations
- **Sample checklist** for developers to verify proposed landscape complies with adopted regulations
- **Sample self-attestation form** for developers to verify installed landscape complies with adopted regulations

## Draft Development Code Language

The following draft development code language was adapted from the **Department of Local Affairs Template Municipal Land Development Code**. Communities can use the draft language to inspire a standalone ordinance or to amend existing development codes. If a community has an existing landscape code, communities may consider adding the draft development code language to the end of the landscape code. Communities should customize the language to best suit their needs and to align with existing development code sections and standards.

## Tips for Customizing the Draft Code Language

- Text in **bold aqua** indicates **recommended minimum** terms or sections to be aligned with definitions or processes within existing code.
- Text in **bold marigold** indicates **optional** text to help tie the draft code language to the rest of your code.

## Draft Code Language

### **Prohibition of Nonfunctional Turf, Nonfunctional Artificial Turf, and Invasive Species**

1. ***Purpose.* The landscaped area for the development shall, to the maximum extent practicable, emphasize water conservation, landscape functionality, and community aesthetics.**
2. **Notwithstanding subsections [insert relevant landscape code subsections] above,** nonfunctional turf, nonfunctional artificial turf, and invasive species shall not be installed on:
  - a. Any property containing a principal use that is **listed as/**characterized as a **Public, Institutional, or Civic Use**, or a **Commercial** or an **Industrial Use**, in **Table [insert table number]: Permitted Use Table**; or
  - b. Any property within a **common interest community as defined in C.R.S. 38-33.3-103(8) that is owned and maintained by a unit owners association**, such as entryways, parks, and other common elements; or

- c. Any portion of a street right-of-way, median, transportation corridor, or parking lot **subject to this Code.**
3. Subsection (1) above shall apply to:
  - a. Each development of property that **requires a building permit or site plan approval;** and
  - b. Any redevelopment of property that **requires a building permit or site plan approval and that will result in the disturbance of more than 50 percent of existing landscaped area(s).**

### Key Definitions

Consider adopting the following definitions as part of your development code.

- **Turf:** Continuous plant coverage consisting of nonnative grasses or grasses that have not been hybridized for arid conditions and which, when regularly mowed, form a dense growth of leaf blades and roots.
- **Artificial Turf:** An installation of synthetic materials developed to resemble natural grass.
- **Functional Turf:** Turf that is located in a recreational use area or other space that is regularly used for civic, community, or recreational purposes, **which may include a playground, a sports field, a picnic ground, an amphitheater, a portion of park, and the playing area of a golf course, such as a driving range, chipping and putting green, tee box, green, fairway, and rough.**
- **Functional Artificial Turf:** Artificial turf that is
  - Located in a recreational use area or other space that is regularly used for civic, community, or recreational purposes, **which may include a playground, a sports field, a picnic ground, an amphitheater, a portion of a park, and the playing area of a golf course, such as a driving range, chipping and putting green, tee box, green, fairway, and rough;** or
  - A component of a product designed and approved by a professional engineer for civil infrastructure projects, including but not limited to:
    - Covers for solid waste facilities and brownfield sites; and
    - Revetments for slopes, channels, levees, and dams.
- **Nonfunctional Turf:** Turf that is not functional turf. Nonfunctional turf includes turf located in a street right-of-way, parking lot, median, or transportation corridor. Nonfunctional turf does not include turf that is designated to be part of a water quality treatment solution required for compliance with federal, state, or local agency water quality permitting requirements that is not irrigated and does not have herbicides applied.
- **Nonfunctional Artificial Turf:** Artificial turf that is not functional artificial turf.
- **Invasive Species:** Plants that are not native to the state and that: (I) Are introduced into the state accidentally or intentionally; (II) Have no natural competitors or predators in the state because the state is outside of their competitors' or predators' range; and (III) Have harmful effects on the state's environment or economy or both.

## Recommendations for Development Plan Review and Landscape Inspection

The following recommendations aim to increase the likelihood that applicants adhere to adopted regulations, without requiring substantial staff time or technical knowledge. Communities can implement recommendations in isolation or in combination.

### Recommendations for Development Plan Review

- Require applicants to self-attest that proposed plans are compliant with new regulations. For example, communities can require developers to complete, sign, and submit a compliance checklist as part of the development review process. See the sample **Self-Attestation Form for Landscape Compliance During Plan Review** below.
- If landscape plans are required, consider requiring applicants to label functional turf and functional artificial turf areas and describe the proposed functional use.

### Recommendations for Post-Landscape Installation

- Require applicants to self-certify that installed landscape matches what was approved and/or that installed landscape meets adopted regulations. See the sample **Self-Certification Form for Landscape Compliance Post Landscape Installation** below.
- Reserve the right to audit installations randomly or in response to complaints.
- Require photo documentation once landscaping is installed to demonstrate adherence to approved plans.

## Sample Forms

The forms on the following pages can be leveraged to support plan review and inspection — they can be customized to suit your community’s needs. Text in **bold marigold** represents suggested language for your community to customize.

## Self-Attestation Form for [insert reference to relevant community regulation] Compliance During Plan Review

**Project Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Submission:** \_\_\_\_\_

As part of our commitment to reducing outdoor water use and in alignment with **Colorado requirements set forth in C.R.S. 37-60-135 [and/or relevant community code section]**, all projects must comply with the following landscape standards. Please complete this checklist and sign the self-certification below.

Requirement	Yes	Notes (if applicable)
1. All turf/artificial turf areas are <b>functional</b> (e.g., for civic gathering, community gathering, or recreational purposes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	Describe turf use:
2. No <b>nonfunctional turf/nonfunctional artificial turf</b> is proposed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. No <b>invasive plant species (per the county's noxious weeds list)</b> are proposed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. The plant palette includes a mix of <b>native and/or climate-adaptive</b> species suited to the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

I, the undersigned, hereby attest that the proposed plan for the above-named project fully complies with the landscape requirements outlined in this checklist. **I understand that the project may be subject to inspection or review by the community or its representatives, and that failure to comply may result in delays, penalties, or the requirement to revise the landscape installation.**

**Applicant Representative Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Self-Certification Form for [insert reference to relevant community regulation] Compliance Post-Landscape Installation

**Project Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Submission:** \_\_\_\_\_

I, the undersigned, hereby affirm that the landscape installed at the above-referenced project has been completed such that:

- All plant species, turf, and artificial turf areas match the approved plan.
- No nonfunctional turf or nonfunctional artificial turf has been installed.
- No invasive plant species are present.
- All turf and artificial turf use is functional and aligns with the stated purpose in the approved plan.
- Installed plants include native and/or climate-adaptive species, as required.

I certify that the information provided above is accurate. I understand that any misrepresentation **may result in enforcement action, including the potential withholding of Certificates of Occupancy and/or imposition of penalties.**

**Applicant Representative Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Optional Community Provisions

Communities can opt to include one or both of these additional provisions:

#### Photo Documentation Required

The applicant must submit dated photo documentation clearly showing completed landscape, including plant installation and turf areas. **Photos must confirm compliance with the approved plan/compliance checklist and Self-Attestation Form**

#### Audit Rights Reserved

The community reserves the right to conduct **random or complaint-driven audits** of installed landscape to verify compliance.