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City Council Gives Initial Approval to Artificial Turf in Front Yards

Beverly Hills, CA – Beverly Hills residents likely will soon be able to install artificial turf in their front yards, under the first reading of a new ordinance approved by the City Council on Tuesday. The second reading of the ordinance will be held on Oct. 6 and, if approved, applications can be submitted beginning on Nov. 5. However, artificial turf will still be banned from the parkways (the planters between the sidewalk and street).

Because of the historic drought, the City has reversed a long-standing ban on artificial turf in front yards so that property owners have more options for meeting the City's 30% water conservation goal. In order to preserve the City's garden-like atmosphere, the artificial turf ordinance includes detailed requirements for the quality of the turf, the percentage of the yard that can be covered in turf and how it can be installed.

Homeowners who wish to install artificial turf in their front yards must apply for a permit and submit a landscape plan that shows a maximum of 70% of the landscaped area in turf, with a buffer between the homes and front property lines. Among other requirements, it must be installed by a licensed installer who is trained to install that brand and the turf must come with at least an eight-year warrantee. In addition, the synthetic turf cannot be installed near heritage or protected trees on private property and can only be requested during a Stage D emergency water conservation declaration. Heritage trees are all trees 48 inches or more in circumference. For a list of protected trees, go to www.beverlyhills.org/protectedtrees.

Parkways must be filled with organic material, including plants and organic mulch. The City Council decided against allowing artificial turf in the parkways due to concern about the impact on street trees. Artificial turf continues to be allowed in back yards with no restrictions.

For more information on artificial turf, please call Associate Planner Timothea Tway at (310) 285-1122 or go to www.beverlyhills.org/turf.

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