

## Municipal Landscaping/Native Plant Policy



### 1. PURPOSE

To ensure that, in addition to pleasing aesthetics, landscaping and planting on Town-owned municipal land provides meaningful ecological support. Using native, non-cultivar plants in landscaping benefits the environment by supporting vital insects and wildlife, promoting biodiversity, reducing the need for fertilizers and pesticides, conserving water through native species' adaptation to local conditions, and enhancing soil health, all of which contribute to a more sustainable and resilient ecosystem.

### 2. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all new landscaping and any alterations to existing landscaping on Carlisle non-conservation municipal land. While the use of sustainable options is encouraged, recreational surfaces such as playing fields are excluded.

### 3. POLICY

#### NEW LANDSCAPING AND ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING LANDSCAPING

Any new municipal landscaping or alteration to existing municipal landscaping should consist of:

- A minimum of 70% (area coverage/plant biomass) native, non-cultivar plants
- A maximum of 20% (area coverage/plant biomass) native, cultivar plants
- A maximum of 10% (area coverage/plant biomass) non-native ornamental plants

The maximum use of native, non-cultivar plant species is encouraged in order to provide meaningful ecological support.

- To the best extent possible, all plant specimens should be neonicotinoid-free
- All invasive plant species in the area of work are to be removed using current ecologically sensitive best practices and disposed of properly.

Any work in areas subject to Wetland Protection must go through the Conservation Commission.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

Native plant: a plant species that is indigenous to the region, occurring naturally in the local ecosystem (Northeastern Massachusetts)

Non-cultivar plant (also known as a straight species): a plant which has not been cultivated by selective manipulation/genetically modified/cloned/hybridized by humans.

Cultivar plant: a plant which has been cultivated by selective manipulation/genetically modified/cloned/hybridized to enhance specific attributes desired by humans.

Non-native ornamental plant: a plant not indigenous to the region, grown for aesthetic elements desired by humans and not invasive.

Neonicotinoids: a class of systemic pesticides known to have detrimental effects on insect populations

Invasive plant: a non-native plant species that establishes and spreads quickly, displacing native plants and causing harm to the environment. Determination of applicable species in Carlisle is based on the Mass Audubon list of Invasive Plants in Massachusetts.

Current ecologically sensitive best practices for removal: practices as described in the forthcoming Carlisle Invasive Plant Removal Plan or by Mass Audubon. Any use of herbicides should be a last resort and should only be applied by a knowledgeable licensed individual.

Proper disposal: responsible disposal to prevent further spread of invasive plants as described in the forthcoming Carlisle Invasive Plant Removal Plan or by Mass Audubon.

#### 5. RESOURCES

- Carlisle [Conservation Commission](#) list of native plants for planting within jurisdictional areas
- (wetland and wetland buffer ecosystems) and invasive plant information
- Grow Native Massachusetts [Plant Lists & Landscape Guides](#) and [Nurseries and Seed Sources](#)
- Mass Audubon [Native and Beneficial Plants](#) list
- Mass Audubon list of [Invasive Plants in Massachusetts](#)
- Xerces Society [Native Plants for Pollinators & Beneficial Insects - Northeast](#)
- Xerces Society [Buying Bee-Safe Plants](#)

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