



"We are a welcoming, active and business-friendly rural foothill community built on California's rich gold rush history."

Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: October 21, 2026

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PROJECT INFORMATION SUMMARY

Case File: Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) 26-05 Model Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance (MWELo) 2026 Updates.

Request: Conduct a public hearing and consider a recommendation to the City Council to adopt an ordinance amending Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code and Ordinance 1706 to update internal citations to the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) so that they conform to the renumbered provisions of Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Section 18989.2 and Section 493.2(d)(2), (3), (4), and (7), effective for jurisdictions on May 4, 2026; and to adopt the associated Common Sense Exemption under CEQA Guidelines §15061(b)(3).

Summary Recommendation:

Recommend that the City Council adopt ZOA 26-05, the proposed ordinance amending Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code, Ordinance 1706, and the associated Notice of Exemption (Common Sense Exemption).

PURPOSE

The Local Assistance and Market Development Branch of CalRecycle notified jurisdictions that, effective May 4, 2026, regulatory language in Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Section 18989.2 was amended. The approved language requires each jurisdiction to adopt an ordinance or other enforceable requirement that requires compliance with Sections 493.2(d)(2), (3), (4), and (7) of the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo), Title 24, Division 2, Chapter 2.7 of the California Code of Regulations, as enacted on January 2, 2025.

Ordinance 1706 and Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code currently incorporate MWELo compost and mulch requirements (and related organic-waste / SB 1383 provisions) in Section 7-1B-11. That section expressly cites the former MWELo sections 492.6(a)(3)(B), (C), (D), and (G). Because those section numbers have been renumbered, the City's local ordinance provisions must be amended so that the citations match the current Section 493.2(d) text.

CalRecycle guidance directs jurisdictions to examine existing SB 1383 ordinances or local Water Efficient Landscape Ordinances and to amend local text where historic section citations appear.

The proposed amendment is limited to updating the outdated section citations (and any related internal cross-references) within Ordinance 1706 and Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code. No substantive change is proposed to the City's organic-waste reduction standards, compost or mulch application rates, landscape thresholds, CalGreen cross-references, or other requirements already established. Staff recommends amending the existing ordinance framework rather than adopting a separate standalone MWELo ordinance, in order to preserve a single coherent regulatory framework.

BACKGROUND

Ordinance 1706 implements the City's organic-waste reduction program consistent with SB 1383, incorporates MWELo compost and mulch use requirements, addresses CalGreen compliance, and includes related Title 10 Zoning provisions. Section 7-1B-11 currently reads, in relevant part:

(A) Property owners or their building or landscape designers lots who are constructing a new Single-Family, Multi-Family, public, institutional, or Commercial project with a landscape area greater than 500 square feet, or rehabilitating an existing landscape with a total landscape area greater than 2,500 square feet, shall comply with Sections 492.6(a)(3)(B), (C), (D), and (G) of the MWELo, including sections related to use of Compost and mulch as delineated in this Section.

Subsections (B)–(D) of the same section further reference the former MWELo citations and include the substantive compost and mulch standards that remain unchanged. A control search of the City's SB 1383-related ordinance language confirms that the outdated MWELo section numbers appear only within Ordinance 1706 and the corresponding sections of Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code

DISCUSSION

The required action is administrative and ministerial in character: replace each occurrence of the former MWELo section numbers 492.6(a)(3)(B), (C), (D), and (G) with the current numbers 493.2(d)(2), (3), (4), and (7), and update any accompanying internal cross-references so that the local text accurately reflects the statewide regulation. The compost application rate (minimum four cubic yards per 1,000 square feet of permeable area incorporated to a depth of six inches), the three-inch mulch layer requirement, the preference for recycled organic mulch, and the exemption for soils already containing greater than six percent organic matter remain exactly as previously adopted.

Because the City's existing regulations already consolidate organic-waste reduction, MWELo compost/mulch standards, CalGreen compliance, and related zoning provisions, a targeted amendment to Ordinance 1706 and Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code keeps the regulatory scheme coherent. This avoids the potential for conflicting or duplicative local rules that could arise from an isolated, standalone MWELo ordinance.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has determined that the proposed ordinance is exempt under CEQA Guidelines §15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption). The amendment consists solely of administrative updates to section citations in an existing ordinance; it does not authorize physical development, change land-use designations or zoning, or result in any physical change to the environment. Consequently, it has no potential to cause a significant environmental impact. A Notice of Exemption is included as Attachment A.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Notice of the Planning Commission public hearing was published in accordance with State law and local noticing requirements (see Attachment E). The legal advertisement describes the proposed amendment as an update of internal MWELo citations within Ordinance 1706 and Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code to conform to Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Section 18989.2 and Section 493.2(d)(2), (3), (4), and (7), with no other substantive changes. Any public comments received prior to the hearing will be provided to the Planning Commission and forwarded to the City Council as part of the administrative record.

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

The Planning Commission's authority to hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council on proposed amendments to Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code (regarding Water Efficient Landscaping Regulations) comes from the following sources:

- **City of Placerville Practices and Descriptions:** The official City website and related documents describe the Planning Commission as responsible for reviewing land use proposals and making recommendations to the City Council on amendments to the Zoning Ordinance (Title 10 of the Municipal Code), rezoning requests, General Plan amendments, and other planning matters. This includes preparing and reviewing ordinance amendments for consistency with the General Plan and State law.
- **Standard California Local Government Structure:** Under California law (Government Code Sections 65100 et seq. and 65800 et seq.), local planning commissions serve in an advisory capacity to the legislative body (City Council). They typically conduct public hearings on zoning ordinance amendments and forward recommendations to the Council, which holds final adoption authority. This process aligns with Placerville's practices, as evidenced by historical examples where the Commission has reviewed and recommended zoning text amendments to the Council.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Hold a public meeting; and,

The Planning Commission may take one of the following actions based on the analysis provided:

1. Forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council
2. Forward a recommendation of approval with modifications to the City Council
3. Forward a recommendation of denial to the City Council

If adopted, the Zoning Code amendments to Title 10, Chapter 6 of the Placerville Municipal Code become effective 30 days post-adoption by City Council per Government Code §36937. This aligns with state mandates and there are no General Plan conflicts.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. CEQA Notice of Exemption
- B. Planning Commission Resolution No. XX – Draft
- C. Draft Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 1706 (redline)
- D. CalRecycle Notification – Title 24 CCR Section 18989.2 (MWELo Citation Update)
- E. Proof of Publication

INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

City of Placerville General Plan

City of Placerville Zoning Ordinance

Ordinance 1706 (Organic Waste Reduction / SB 1383 / MWELo / CalGreen / Title 10 provisions)

Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Section 18989.2 and Chapter 2.7 (Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance)

Contents of City of Placerville Planning Department Project File for Zoning Ordinance Amendment