GCTF Proposal
Increase Biodiversity in Public Landscapes

Implemented
Local Law 11 of 2013

Summary

Historically, foreign species and monocultures have been widely used in landscaping to the detriment of the urban ecology. Native and diverse plant species tend to be hardy, require little water and fertilizer, and provide habitats for birds and other native animals.

This law directs the Department of Parks and Recreation to revise its planting design manual to encourage the use of native plant species and prohibit invasive species.

New Requirements or Changes

Effective: February 25, 2013. The Department of Parks and Recreation must complete the manual by November 1, 2013, and must begin following the new rules described in the manual by May 1, 2014.

Amendment to Chapter 1 of title 18 of the Administrative Code, adding a new section 18-141:

- Directs the department to revise its planting design manual.
- Specifies that the manual must encourage the Department to maximize the use of plant species that are native to New York City, where appropriate, and prohibit the planting of invasive species. The manual is to include a native species planting guide that lists the native species suitable for planting in New York City, including the qualities and planting conditions for each of those species. It is also to include a list of native species that could be planted instead of commonly-used non-native species.
- Directs that the manual be made available on the City’s website for public use.
- Specifies that each calendar year from 2015 to 2019, the Department must review the manual’s effectiveness and report on its efforts to increase native species.
- Exempts botanical gardens and similar public institutions from planting requirements.

Enforcement

Not applicable. Any enforcement would occur through City Council oversight hearings.

Implementation

There are no known issues for the implementation of this rule. Native plant species are widely available.