

# Memo

**To:** Mayor Currin & Town Board of Commissioners  
**From:** Stephen Wensman, Planning Director; Michael Elabarger, Assistant Planning Director; & Meredith Gruber, Senior Planner  
**Date:** Meeting Held March 17, 2026  
**Re:** TA-25-11 Land Development Ordinance (LDO) Text Amendments to Required Perimeter Buffers

*The Legislative Hearing for Text Amendment Application **TA-25-11, LDO Text Amendments to Required Perimeter Buffers**, was continued from February 3, 2026 to March 17, 2026. The continuance was made to allow time to update notes for Perimeter Buffer Types 2L and 3L to increase plant materials and define the level of opacity.*

## **Background**

Land Development Ordinance (LDO) Text Amendment Application TA-25-11 was submitted in Rolesville's online development portal, [GovWell.com](http://GovWell.com), by Dave Gorman of Lock7 Development in October 2025. The application proposes modifying **Required Perimeter Buffers** to eliminate fences and walls between residential developments.

## **Proposed Text Amendments**

The proposed text for TA-25-11 is shown in **blue and underlined**. The notes for Perimeter Buffers Type 2 and Type 3 have been added since the Planning Board meeting on December 15, 2025. The notes have been updated since the Board of Commissioners' meeting on February 3, 2026, to double the amount of plant materials in a landscape-only buffer as well as increase the proposed minimum amount of evergreen plant material from 35% to 50%.

### **6.2.2.1.F.2. Perimeter Buffer Type 2**

- a. **Where shown in Table 6.2.2.2., Perimeter Buffer Type 2L denotes landscape materials only; a fence is not required.**
- b. **Type 2L Perimeter Buffers must include twice the amount of landscape materials than Type 2 Buffers to achieve a minimum seventy-five percent (75%) level of opacity from ground level to six feet (6') in height.**
- c. **Type 2L Perimeter Buffers must include at least four (4) evergreen trees per one hundred (100) linear feet, either tree or understory tree. In addition, at least fifty percent (50%) of the plant materials in a Perimeter Buffer shall be evergreen.**

### **6.2.2.1.F.3. Perimeter Buffer Type 3**

- a. **Where shown in Table 6.2.2.2., Perimeter Buffer Type 3L denotes landscape materials only; a wall is not required.**

- b. Type 3L Perimeter Buffers must include twice the amount of landscape materials than Type 3 Buffers to achieve a minimum seventy-five percent (75%) level of opacity from ground level to six feet (6') in height.
- c. Type 3L Perimeter Buffers must include at least four (4) evergreen trees per one hundred (100) linear feet, either tree or understory tree. In addition, at least fifty percent (50%) of the plant materials in a Perimeter Buffer shall be evergreen.

**Table 6.2.2.2. Required Perimeter Buffer by District**

Zoning District of Adjacent Property	RL	RM	RH	MH	GC	CH	OP	BT	GI
RL	1L	2L	3L	3	3	3	3	3	4
RM	2L	1L	3L	3	3	3	3	3	4
RH	3L	3L	1L	2	2	2	2	2	4
MH	3	3	2	1L	2	2	2	2	4
GC	3	3	2	2	N/A	1L	1L	1L	4
CH	3	3	2	2	1L	N/A	1L	1L	4
OP	3	3	2	2	1L	1L	N/A	3	4
BT	3	3	2	2	1L	1L	3	N/A	3
GI	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	N/A

**Comprehensive Plan Consistency**

The Rolesville 2050 Comprehensive Plan Focus Areas include looking at challenges and opportunities as they relate to:

- Transportation,
- Economic Development,
- Housing & Land Use, and
- Parks, Recreation, & Community Character.

A text amendment that allows landscaped perimeter buffers may add to improved Community Character by saving more existing vegetation, providing opportunities for design collaboration among adjacent neighborhoods, and facilitating sidewalk and greenway connectivity. The 2050 Plan notes the Opportunities for Parks, Recreation, & Community Character as promoting parks and greenway identity of Rolesville, developing policies and plans that support continued park and greenway expansion, and local and regional greenway connections. Building fences and walls between all subdivisions may go against the pedestrian connectivity that is so important to the Town of Rolesville.

### **Planning Board Recommendation**

At their meeting on December 15, 2025, the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of TA-25-11 with the consideration of additional plantings at a rate of twenty-five percent (25%). Landscaping notes have been added to the proposed text amendments since the Planning Board meeting.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Based on consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, staff recommends approval of TA-25-11.

### **Proposed Motions**

- Motion to (*approve or deny*) **TA-25-11 - LDO Text Amendments to Required Perimeter Buffers** because it is (*consistent or inconsistent*) with the Comprehensive Plan. (*Please include examples of consistency or inconsistency.*)

*If TA-25-11 is approved:*

- Motion to adopt a Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness as **TA-25-11** is consistent with Rolesville's Comprehensive Plan, supporting the plan's Parks, Recreation, & Community Character Focus Area, and is therefore reasonable

*Or*

- Motion to continue **TA-25-11 - LDO Text Amendments to Required Perimeter Buffers** to a future Town Board of Commissioners' meeting (**Provide date certain.**)

### **Attachments**

- Text Amendment Application TA-25-11 – Applicant Submittals
- Ordinance 2026-ORD-XX

**Proposed Amendment:**

*Amend LDO Section 6.2.2.2 (Perimeter Bufferyards) to allow a Type 1L buffer (landscape-only, no wall required) in place of a Type 3 buffer (25' depth + 6' masonry wall) when RH zoning abuts RM or RL zoning.*

Table 6.2.2.2. Required Perimeter Buffer by District

Zoning District of Adjacent Property	RL	RM	RH	MH	GC	CH	OP	BT	GI
RL	1L	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
RM	2	1L	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
RH	→ 1L	→ 1L	1L	2	2	2	2	2	4
MH	3	3	2	1L	2	2	2	2	4
GC	3	3	2	2	N/A	1L	1L	1L	4
CH	3	3	2	2	1L	N/A	1L	1L	4
OP	3	3	2	2	1L	1L	N/A	3	4
BT	3	3	2	2	1L	1L	3	N/A	3
GI	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	N/A

**Text Amendment Justification**

**1. Consistency with Comprehensive Plan:**

The amendment supports the Plan’s environmental and neighborhood design policies by encouraging vegetated buffers, which preserve natural character and reduce hardscape impacts.

**2. Conflict with Standards:**

The amendment does not conflict with the LDO’s intent. Instead, it refines standards to better match the intensity of adjacent land uses. Applying a Type 3 buffer with a masonry wall between lower density residential uses does not encourage connectivity between adjacent neighborhoods and existing native wildlife in the area.

3. **Changed Conditions:**

The rigid wall requirements along residential-to-residential boundaries impose costs without improving compatibility. The existing language lacks clarity when applied to legacy zoning districts such as R&PUD, highlighting the need for further clarification.

4. **Demonstrated Community Need:**

The community benefits from more flexible, cost-effective buffer standards that prioritize landscaping over masonry walls, particularly where adjacent land uses are compatible. This also reduces housing costs, allowing for missing middle development and more affordable housing options within the Town of Rolesville.

5. **Consistency with Intent of Zoning Districts:**

The amendment ensures that buffers are proportional to the intensity difference between adjacent districts, promoting compatibility without overregulation. Landscaping remains the primary tool, in line with the RH district's residential character.

6. **Public Health, Safety, Welfare:**

The amendment does not negatively impact health or welfare. Vegetative buffers provide equal or better environmental and aesthetic benefits compared to masonry walls, with less stormwater runoff and heat island effect.

### **Current Buffer (Type 3)**

A 25-foot wide buffer that includes dense plantings and a 6-foot masonry wall. This standard is intended for higher-intensity use transitions but is currently applied even between residential neighborhoods.



### **Proposed Buffer (Type 1L)**

A landscaped buffer without a wall, relying on trees and plantings to provide screening. This approach maintains neighborhood compatibility while reducing unnecessary hardscape and cost between similar residential uses.



**PROPOSAL TO AMEND  
THE LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE,  
TOWN OF ROLESVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA  
Case Number TA-25-11 Land Development Ordinance (LDO) Text Amendments to  
Section 6.2.2.1.F. Perimeter Buffer Types and Table 6.2.2.2. Required Perimeter Buffer  
by District  
Ordinance # ORD-2026-XX**

WHEREAS, the Town of Rolesville seeks to amend the Land Development Ordinance Section 6.2.2.1.F. Perimeter Buffer Types and Table 6.2.2.2. Required Perimeter Buffer by District to allow landscape only perimeter buffers between residential subdivisions.

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute Section NC Chapter § 160D-702. (Effective January 1, 2025) Grant of power; (a) A local government may adopt zoning regulations. Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, a zoning regulation may regulate and restrict the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures; the percentage of lots that may be occupied; the size of yards, courts, and other open spaces; the density of population; the location and use of buildings, structures, and land.

WHEREAS, the Town of Rolesville Board of Commissioners firmly believes that it is in the public interest to amend the Town’s Land Development Ordinance as described below.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWN OF ROLESVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA:**

**SECTION 1. That Section 6.2.2.1.F. and Table 6.2.2.2. be amended to read as follows:**

- ✓ Addition (additions are **underlined**)
- Deletion (deletions are ~~struck through~~)
- Alteration (additions are **underlined** and deletions are ~~struck through~~)

**6.2.2.1.F.2. Perimeter Buffer Type 2**

- a. **Where shown in Table 6.2.2.2., Perimeter Buffer Type 2L denotes landscape materials only; a fence is not required.**
- b. **Type 2L Perimeter Buffers must include twice the amount of landscape materials than Type 2 Buffers to achieve a minimum seventy-five percent (75%) level of opacity from ground level to six feet (6’) in height.**

- c. Type 2L Perimeter Buffers must include at least four (4) evergreen trees per one hundred (100) linear feet, either tree or understory tree. In addition, at least fifty percent (50%) of the plant materials in a Perimeter Buffer shall be evergreen.

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MH	3	3	2	1L	2	2	2	2	4
GC	3	3	2	2	N/A	1L	1L	1L	4
CH	3	3	2	2	1L	N/A	1L	1L	4
OP	3	3	2	2	1L	1L	N/A	3	4
BT	3	3	2	2	1L	1L	3	N/A	3
GI	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	N/A

**SECTION 2.** That all laws and clauses of law in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of said conflict.

**SECTION 3.** That if this ordinance or application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions of this ordinance which can be given separate effect and to the end the provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable.

**SECTION 4.** That this ordinance has been adopted following a duly advertised legislative hearing of the Town Council and following review and recommendation by the Planning Board.

**SECTION 5.** That this ordinance shall be enforced as provided in the Town of Rolesville’s Land Development Ordinance.

**SECTION 6.** Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective on the date of its adoption by the Board of Commissioners.

Adopted this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March 2026 by the Town of Rolesville Board of Commissioners.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronnie I. Currin  
Town of Rolesville Mayor

**CERTIFICATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Town Clerk for the Town of Rolesville, North Carolina, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of an ordinance duly adopted at the meeting of the Town Board of Commissioners held on this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Town of Rolesville to be affixed this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

(seal)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Christina Ynclan - Frazier  
Town Clerk