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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 2119

03/25/2015 Authored by Kahn

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Elections Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to local government; authorizing managed natural landscapes;
1.3 prohibiting local ordinances that prohibit natural landscapes; proposing coding
1.4 for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 471.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. **[471.145] MANAGED NATURAL LANDSCAPES PERMITTED.**

1.7 Subdivision 1. **Application.** This section applies to home rule charter and statutory
1.8 cities, towns, and counties.

1.9 Subd. 2. **Definitions.** (a) For the purposes of this section, the terms in this
1.10 subdivision have the meanings given them.

1.11 (b) "Managed natural landscape" means a planned, intentional, and maintained
1.12 planting of native or nonnative grasses, wildflowers, forbs, ferns, shrubs, or trees,
1.13 including but not limited to rain gardens, meadow vegetation, and ornamental plantings.

1.14 (c) "Meadow vegetation" means grasses and flowering broad-leaf plants that are
1.15 native to or adapted to the state and that are commonly found in meadow and prairie plant
1.16 communities. Meadow vegetation does not include noxious weeds.

1.17 (d) "Noxious weed" has the meaning given in section 18.77, subdivision 8.

1.18 (e) "Ornamental plants" means grasses, perennials, annuals, and ground covers
1.19 purposefully planted for aesthetic reasons.

1.20 (f) "Rain garden" means a native plant garden that is designed not only to
1.21 aesthetically improve property, but also to reduce the amount of stormwater and
1.22 accompanying pollutants from entering streams, lakes, and rivers.

2.1 (g) "Turf-grass lawn" means a lawn comprised mostly of grasses commonly used
2.2 in regularly cut lawns or play areas, such as, but not limited to, bluegrass, fescue, and
2.3 ryegrass blends, intended to be maintained at a height of no more than eight inches.

2.4 Subd. 3. **Managed natural landscapes permitted.** An owner, authorized agent, or
2.5 authorized occupant of any privately owned lands or premises may install and maintain a
2.6 managed natural landscape. Managed natural landscapes may include plants and grasses
2.7 in excess of ten inches in height and which have gone to seed, but may not include
2.8 any noxious weeds and must be maintained so as not to include unintended vegetation.
2.9 Managed natural landscapes may not include any plantings that, due to location and
2.10 manner of growth, constitute a hazard to the public or may cause injury or damage to
2.11 persons or property. Managed natural landscapes must not include turf-grass lawns left
2.12 unattended for the purpose of returning to a natural state.

2.13 Subd. 4. **May not prohibit managed natural landscapes.** A home rule charter or
2.14 statutory city, county, or town may adopt ordinances to implement this section but may not
2.15 adopt or enforce an ordinance that prohibits managed natural landscapes.