

Mayor's reasons for non support of amendment to Chapter 12.08.010 (City Boulevard Use)

The changes will not benefit the public and the Decorah residents. The suggested revisions do not have specific requirements for garden location, size, and height. Consideration needs to be given to safety, erosion, aesthetics, and interference with public services.

Safety. If an ordinance is to be changed there should be garden planting restrictions of 25-40 feet from alleys and driveways. This would provide a safe view from the street driver as well as someone on the sidewalk.

Environmental contamination. Gardens on the boulevard would promote more soil loss and organic materials into the streets, city storm sewer system, and ultimately into the Upper Iowa River. Nitrogen phosphorus and possibly pesticides will run off the gardens. A black exposed soil during the winter is also unattractive to most people. Added refuse from the garden ends up in the street for city crews to clean up.

Public Service . Gardens interfere with public use as many of the utilities are in the boulevard. Structures also interfere with adequate snow removal. Gardens create berms that interfere with city services.

Aesthetics. Gardens may be pleasing to the eye for a few months, spring and summer, but in the fall and winter it is difficult to say they will be an attraction to the city .

Most residents in the city have adequate size lots that they can find a place to locate a garden that is not on the public right of way. The city has provided the community gardens as an alternative for those persons with inadequate sunlight on their lot. As a Food and Fitness initiative, a walk from a Decorah resident to the community garden would provide exercise Food and Fitness. The city has provided a beautiful bike and walking trail to the site.