

## **SOFTSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to define and document those actions that will change or modify the landscape including the softscape or the hardscape. Approval must occur prior to initiating any change to the landscaping unless stated below.

The Architectural Control Committee's (ACC) goal is to ensure that continuity is maintained throughout Oak Ridge Meadows. All landscape including hardscape, softscape, and yard art needs to be consistent with Oak Ridge Meadows' architecture and landscape.

When purchasing a townhouse in Oak Ridge Meadows, the homeowner is purchasing the building and the land as indicated on the plat map for that unit. All landscaping outside of the area indicated on the plat map, whether installed by the Developer, HOA (Homeowners Association) or homeowner, is on the common area.

### **Procedure:**

The Architectural Modification Request Form must be submitted by the homeowner **prior to making any** changes to the outside of the unit, whether it be the structure or landscaping. The form is located on Lambeth Management's website on the Oak Ridge Meadows page. A copy of your plat map, which can be obtained on the website, indicating where the proposed changes are to be made, must be submitted. In order expedite the requests the following information must be included: any pictures, drawings or sketches of the project, drawn to scale and a list detailing the name and specific variety of plants, if they are part of the request.

Instructions for submitting the required information are listed on the request form. The ACC has 30 days to make all decisions **once all pertinent information has been received**. Do not begin any work before written approval is obtained.

### **Definitions:**

**Common Area:** The area surrounding the plot on which the unit resides. It begins immediately upon stepping outside of the front door of each unit. A portion of the property in the rear of the unit is the property of the homeowner and is outlined on each plat map. Any property other than what is outlined on the plat map is common area.

**Softscape:** The live portion of the landscape, i.e., the plants.

**Hardscape:** The inanimate elements of landscaping, especially any masonry work or woodwork (concrete or brick patios, stone or brick edging of mulched areas, fences, and decks). Additionally, anything used in landscaping that is not part of the softscape can be considered a hardscape element including yard art, shepherd hooks, bird baths and feeders, garden flags, and other decorative items.

## **Softscape requests and requirements:**

**Annual and perennial plants** may be added to the beds in front of the unit without approval.

1. Approval is required for ground cover, shrubs/bushes, or trees. Plants added to the beds must not become invasive or impede the natural growth of the original plantings, including the turf. This includes all types of ground cover. If a homeowner installs plants that become invasive, and damage occurs to the original plantings, including the turf, the homeowner will be responsible for any cost necessary to replace plants or make repairs.
2. Approval is required for expansion or elimination of existing mulched areas.
3. Requests for a trellis attached to the structure will be denied.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

1. **Maintenance:** Shrubs/bushes and trees existing in the common area at the time these guidelines become effective will be maintained by the HOA. Any plants, trees, or shrubs/bushes that are added by an individual homeowner after these guidelines become effective, whether on the homeowner's plat or on the common area, are to be maintained by the homeowner and must not interfere with lawn maintenance. Any added ground covers must be maintained to prevent invasion of the grassy area.
2. **Upon a transfer of ownership, the homeowner is required to disclose to the new owner what areas they will be expected to maintain.**

## **II. Hardscape requests and requirements:**

Hardscape needs to be consistent with Oak Ridge Meadows architecture and landscaping. Any change to the hardscape requires approval. Examples include, but are not limited to, permanent structures, planting bed walls or fences, constructed of, but not limited to, wood, brick, concrete, or stone. Additionally, stepping stones or other walkway improvements must be contained within the beds and approved.

## **III. Lawn Furniture:**

Lawn furniture cannot interfere with turf maintenance or turf growth. It may be on the turf while it is in use and then it must be removed.

## **III. Yard Art requirements:**

Decorative accents or yard art needs to be consistent with Oak Ridge Meadows architecture and landscape. The only exception to this is a small security sign.

Yard art is part of the hardscape and consists of, but is not limited to, flower pots, shepherd's hooks, statues, birdbaths/feeders, bricks, rocks, boulders within planting beds, and small garden flags.

One standard flag holder may be attached to each townhouse to display one 3'x 5' flag. An ACC request is required for any new flag holders to determine appropriateness of its location.

Yard art is allowed in the existing planting beds and on the front porch. Items must be placed within 2 feet of the homeowner's property line. The art must not interfere with entry or exit from the house. The door must be able to fully swing open and cannot pose a tripping hazard for emergency personnel, visitors, deliveries, etc. Each front stoop can have no more than 4 items displayed and must be of reasonable size. If a railing is present, it must not be obstructed by objects or be covered in a manner that makes it difficult to grasp. Storage of items is not

permitted in the front of the home.

While we all have unique tastes in decor, prior to adding yard art please consider your neighbors and the surrounding homes. Please limit items in your yard to a reasonable number so that it does not appear cluttered. If a complaint is lodged regarding yard art the ACC and/or Board of Directors will evaluate neighboring homes and yards to determine appropriateness of displays. The decision made by the committee and/or board will be considered final.

Homeowners will be given 30 days from the effective date of this policy to become compliant with the above guidelines. Any infractions after this initial 30-day period will be regarded as non-compliance of policy. The homeowner will have 10 days from receipt of a non-compliant notice to correct specified issues. Failure to make corrections within the time specified will result in the homeowner being responsible to pay the Association's selected vendor to make corrections. In addition, the homeowner may be required to attend a hearing by a panel of the Board of Directors where fines up to \$100/day for each violation may be assessed.

**REMEMBER – Homeowners must obtain written permission to add anything to the structure and for any additions or modifications to the Common Areas surrounding your home which includes everything but your back patio/deck except those outlined above.**

Approved August 29, 2022 Revised September 16, 2022

Signed Brent Sievers  
President