



## COMMON AREA CLASSIFICATION & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

### I. SCOPE

The intent of this document is to provide an understanding of the Brambleton Community Association's (Hereinafter, BCA or Association) classification of Common Areas throughout the community and to provide a basic outline and understanding of the grounds maintenance standards that have been set for that classification.

Per the BCA Declaration, Common Area is defined as “means, at any given time, all of the Property other than Lots, then owned or leased by the Association for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the Owners; provided, however, that land within the Property is not Common Area solely because it is burdened by an easement for utilities, landscaping, storm water management or signage or dedicated as a public street or roadway even though the Association may provide Upkeep for such area.”

In developing these standards, the Association has considered the following elements:

- Industry Best Practices
- Environmental Preservation and Stewardship
- Impact to Residents
- County & State and Federal Requirements
- Association's Vision, Mission and Financial Impact

The standards outlined in this document are to be considered a basic guideline and the Association may change the standards at any time as deemed necessary and reasonable by staff or the Board of Directors.

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### III. TURF & LANDSCAPES

Brambleton has extensive areas of manicured turf and landscapes. Turf and landscape areas are defined as Common Areas containing planted landscape and cool season turf grasses that are manicured and maintained on a regular basis. Some turf & landscape areas are irrigated, while others are not.

#### a. Irrigated Turf & Landscapes

Many of Brambleton's Common Area parcels contain manicured turf and planted landscapes that are irrigated. These areas are often highly visible to residents, guests and visitors such as larger common area adjacent to major roads, Association buildings and pools facilities, and many active parks. Minimum maintenance standards for these areas are as follows:

- Mowing typically takes place on a 7-10 day cycle.
- Turf is fertilized a minimum of 4 times annually.
- Pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicides will be used to control weeds.
- Turf is aerated and over-seeded annually.
- Litter and debris is removed on a 7-10 day cycle.
- Mulching of beds and tree rings occurs annually in the spring. A second fall mulching may be performed if deemed necessary.
- Perennials, shrubs and trees are pruned as necessary.
- Irrigation operates between the months of May-September.
- Landscaping color may be selectively enhanced by the installation of annual flowers.

#### b. Non-irrigated Turf & Landscapes

These areas are maintained to a standard similar to the irrigated turf and landscaped areas however there are no in-ground irrigation systems. These areas are often Common Areas within townhome and single-family sections that are only used, or visible by residents within that section. Generally, these areas are passive parks or areas where a power and water source is not easily available. Residents can expect the turf to go dormant during the summer months within these areas. Minimum maintenance standards for these areas are as follows:

- Mowing typically takes place on a 7-10 day cycle. Lower cycles may occur if turf is dormant during the summer months.
- Turf is fertilized a minimum of 4 times annually.
- Pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicides will be used to control weeds.

- Turf is aerated and over-seeded annually.
- Litter and debris is removed on a 7-10 day cycle.
- Edging and mulching of beds and tree rings occur annually in the spring.
- Perennials, shrubs and trees are pruned as necessary.
- During periods of drought, planted trees will be watered where accessible.

### **c. Transition Areas**

A transition area is typically a Common Area located between the rear property line of residential lots and a natural area. Where possible, the Association will maintain a transition area to provide residents and their lot with a buffer between the maintained yard and the native environment of a natural area. The transition area will primarily consist of turf grasses and will be maintained on a regular basis. The transition area also provides the Association with access to the natural areas and open space for other maintenance purposes. For these reasons, transition areas should remain free of landscaping or other elements which would restrict vehicular access. Maintenance of the transition areas are as follows:

- Mowing should take place on a 7-14 day cycle with the goal of maintaining a grass height between 3" to 6". Grass clippings will be mulched and remain on site. Turf in this area will not be watered by the Association.
- Fertilizers will be applied to turf areas
- Pre-emergent and post-emergent will be used to control weeds.
- If trees are planted in transition areas by the Association or Developer, those trees will be mulched once annually. Trees in this area will not be watered by the Association. Adjacent residents are encouraged to water the trees during periods of drought.
- Trees in this area are not watered.
- Dead trees will be removed and are typically not replaced.

## **IV. NATURAL AREAS**

Natural areas throughout Brambleton are considered a natural and valued resource. Natural areas are defined as having physical characteristics developed through natural growth rather than design or planning. These standards address the maintenance and protection of various classifications of natural areas throughout Brambleton.

### **a. Forested Common Areas & Woodlands**

Brambleton has numerous forested areas or woodlands. Forested Common Area is considered a natural resource and should be protected in that manner. Dumping of debris, cutting of trees or clearing understory growth within the forested open space areas is prohibited. The Association is responsible for maintenance in these areas and will perform the following tasks:

- Remove litter on an as needed or as-requested basis.
- Remove or treat poison ivy on the perimeter of the woodlands on an as-requested basis.

- Trim hazardous branches on trees or remove trees on the perimeter of the woodlands as deemed hazardous. Tree “snags” may remain as habitat for wildlife.

#### **b. Hedgerows**

Hedgerows are rows of cedar trees or other native trees. These may have been preserved from initial development or planted since initial development and may be found on Common Areas, between sections of homes, along borders of the community or at other locations which shall remain in a natural and native state. The Association will provide limited maintenance within these areas:

- Remove litter on a reported or as-requested basis.
- Remove or treat poison ivy on an as-requested basis when the hedgerow is adjacent to resident’s lot.
- Trim trees of hazardous branches as deemed necessary and reasonable by the Association.
- Remove trees as deemed necessary. Tree “snags” may remain as habitat for wildlife. County approval may be necessary for the removal of trees.
- The Association may remove invasive exotic plants as deemed necessary.

#### **c. Meadows**

There are areas within Brambleton that contain natural and native meadows. The meadows are typically larger parcels of Common Area and are considered a natural resource that provides needed habitat for the local wildlife. Maintenance standards for the meadows are minimal and are as follows:

- Mow meadows annually in the late winter and as conditions allow.
- Remove litter or debris on a reported or as needed basis.
- Meadows may be selectively enhanced with additional native wildflower mix for color.
- The Association may remove woody material or invasive exotics as deemed necessary.

### **V. BODIES OF WATER**

There are several bodies of water throughout Brambleton. A body of water is defined as a Common Area parcel which contains a stream, pond, or wetlands. Maintenance of these bodies of water is determined by the type. Bodies of water are areas of sensitivity due to the fact that they can impact the local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. The Association takes a natural approach towards the maintenance of all bodies of water within the community. Loudoun County, State and Federal regulations have a great impact on how these features are maintained.

## a. Ponds

Brambleton contains many preexisting ponds; stormwater retention (wet) ponds, and stormwater detention (dry) ponds. The Association has developed various maintenance standards for its ponds based on the classification of the pond.

Residents and their Guests are permitted to fish the wet ponds from the shore on a “catch and release” basis if they are properly licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Pre-existing Ponds** – These are ponds that were located on the property prior to development of Brambleton. These ponds are primarily used for recreational and aesthetic purposes; and remain in a more natural state and require minimal maintenance as follows:

- Borders of pond will remain in a natural and native state. Such borders will serve as a deterrent for geese, filter litter and deter small children.
- Debris in pond will be removed on a monthly basis; or more frequently if needed.
- Algae will be treated on a monthly basis between the months of May through September.
- Recreational fishing is permitted on a “catch & release” basis from the shoreline.
- Swimming, boating, and ice skating on pond is prohibited.

**Stormwater Retention Ponds** – These are ponds that were created as a result of development to manage increased runoff as a result of additional impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways and rooftops. These ponds hold water and the surrounding banks/shorelines will remain in a more maintained state. Loudoun County is responsible for maintenance of the management functions of the pond. The Association is responsible for maintenance of the recreational and aesthetic functions of the pond.

The Association will perform the following maintenance tasks:

- A 10'-20' border around the pond will remain in a natural and native state. Woody material within this border will be reduced or removed biennially. Such borders will serve as a deterrent for geese, small children and will filter out litter and other pollutants.
- Geese and beavers are not desired and K9 or trapping services may be used as necessary.
- Debris in pond will be removed on a monthly basis; or more frequently if needed.
- Algae will be treated on a monthly basis between the months of May through September.
- Recreational fishing is permitted on a “catch & release” basis from the shoreline.
- Swimming, boating, and ice skating on the ponds is prohibited.

Loudoun County will perform the following maintenance tasks:

- Maintain the integrity of the dam, overflow devices and other related stormwater management structures.
- Dredge the pond when determined necessary by the County.

**Stormwater Detention Ponds** – These are ponds that were created as a result of development to manage increase runoff as a result of additional impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways and rooftops. These ponds retain water for a short period of time after a storm event but will often be seen in a dry condition. The base of these ponds will remain in a natural, meadow-like state. Loudoun County is responsible for maintenance of the management functions of the pond. The Association is responsible for maintenance of the recreational and aesthetic functions of the pond.

The Association will perform the following maintenance tasks:

- Remove debris and litter from the ponds as necessary.
- Mow the meadow once annually, typically in the late winter.

Loudoun County will perform the following maintenance tasks:

- Maintain the integrity of the dam, overflow devices and other related stormwater management structures.

## **b. Streams**

There are several streams located within Brambleton. The streams serve as habitat for local wildlife as well as play an important role in draining storm water away from our home and property. Swimming in streams is prohibited. The Association will perform minimal maintenance to the stream as follows:

- Remove debris from the stream on an annual basis.

## **c. Wetlands and Wetland Buffers**

There are numerous protected wetlands and wetland buffer areas throughout the community. These areas are protected by the state and federal government and must remain in a natural state, containing only native plants. Residents should remain outside of these areas. These areas have been identified throughout the community with 4' brown fiberglass stakes placed at the outer boundary of the wetlands buffer. The following maintenance tasks are performed by the association within wetlands and wetland buffers:

- Removal of litter will occur on an annual or as-requested basis.
- Quarterly inspections of the wetland buffers for encroachment will be performed.
- Standing dead trees causing a hazard may be pruned or downed to eliminate the hazard. Approval by the County may be necessary. Downed trees may

remain within wetlands buffer. Trees may also be pruned in a manner that standing “snags” may remain.

The intent of the Wetlands Buffer is to preserve and protect the identified wetlands and the natural state within the buffer in perpetuity. This is accomplished by placing the following protective covenants and restrictions on all land within the wetland buffer:

- Destruction of the preservation or buffer area requires authorization by the Norfolk District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Brambleton Community Association.
- Construction, maintenance or placement of any structure within the buffer is prohibited.
- Ditching, land clearing, filling, excavating, grading, dumping of trash or yard debris or adding or removing top soil within the buffer is prohibited.
- Cultivating, harvesting, cutting, planting, pruning of trees and plants, using fertilizers or pesticides, watering, or other general maintenance of the buffer area is prohibited.

## **VI. COMMON AREA ENCROACHMENT**

The Common Area is for the use and enjoyment of all Brambleton residents. Residents shall not take any action that will change, disturb, alter or affect the Common Area or the classification of such Common Area. If a Common Area space parcel has been classified as a natural area, body of water or maintained area; no action shall be taken by a resident to alter the state or condition of the open space. No action can be taken by a resident that will restrict other residents from making use of that Common Area. Residents should treat the Common Area with the same respect that they would their adjacent neighbor’s yard. Examples of Common Area encroachment are:

- Dumping yard debris, dirt, rocks or other unwanted debris in a natural area or body of water.
- Dumping paint, oil or other unwanted liquids in the storm drain.
- Installing a trampoline, swing sets, play equipment or other personal equipment in the Common Area.
- Installing a garden or storing a wood pile or other materials in the common area.
- Mowing down a meadow or the understory of woodland/hedgerow on Common Area.
- Installing a fence, invisible fence, or irrigation into the Common Area.
- Installing trees, shrubs, or other landscaping beyond your property lines and into the Common Area.

The Association will periodically inspect the Common Areas for encroachment and will take action to restore the open space to its desired state and classification. Owners found in violation of the governing documents in regards to the use of the Common Area and related encroachment may be responsible for all costs associated with the restoration of the Common Area.

**VII. BRAMBLETON'S ADOPT-A-SPOT PROGRAM**

The Association encourages residents to take pride in the Common Area that is adjacent to their lot or neighborhood. Residents, a group of residents, businesses, churches or civic organizations can partner with the Association to beautify or maintain a specific parcel in their neighborhood. Such beautification or maintenance should not change the characteristic of the Common Area or result in exclusive use of that area. This relationship is formalized through the Brambleton Adopt-A-Spot program. Residents must not take any action on the Common Area until their program application has been submitted and approved. Specific information on the program can be found within the Brambleton Adopt-A-Spot Guidelines, available at the BCA Management Office or on the Community Intranet.

**VIII. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THIS DOCUMENT BY THE BRAMBLETON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

This document was reviewed and approved by the Brambleton Community Association Board of Directors on (insert the date)."