

## 2023 MEHA Beatification Director's Report

Meadowhills Estates owns and maintains over 40 acres of commons area, of which, approximately 32 acres are mowed. This report is a summary of the maintenance work done in 2023.

**Brush Clearing**—MEHA spent \$30,000 to clear invasive buckthorn thickets around the north detention pond and North Commons areas last fall. This preventive maintenance facilitates cleaning of the inlets/outlets, proper operation of the pond, prevents street flooding and improves walkability of the park. To conserve budget, volunteers raked and seeded the cleared area in fall 2022 and spring 2023. The seeded area was also cleared of obstructions for mowing. The cleared area is now being regularly mowed with the rest of the commons. Volunteers included: Curtis and Meredith Kaisner, Harry Dakesian, LaJean Nagrant, John and DeeDee Dezelski, Greg and Jill Hemingway and Fernando Huerta (doing it from memory, apologies if I forgot anyone)

**Entrance Signs**—Three entrance signs were repainted to restore their appearance to an acceptable level. The signs have some wood deterioration, but this should last for several years until they are replaced. Volunteer work by Greg Hemingway

**Entrance Flower Beds**—The entrances have been maintained for several years by Cathy Rapp and other volunteers. Cathy planted the annuals this spring but was out of the country this summer. I did some occasional weeding and trimming to maintain the appearance. This is Cathy's last year for the entrances. We need to find new volunteers or hire a landscaping company for next year. Any Master Gardeners out there?

**Entrance Holiday Decorations**—Lynda O'Donnell is doing the decorations again this year. Thanks for the many years she's done it.

**Mowing**—Charles Hill (former resident) has had the mowing contract for many years. Mowing is done weekly through July 1 until typically, the weather dries up and growing slows down. For the remainder of the season, we schedule the commons every other week at \$750 per cut and the road frontages only on the off weeks at \$275. That typically works, but not in 2023! With the nonstop rain we had this year, we added several extra mowing and eventually settled on a 3x per month schedule for the commons to keep it from getting too long. Next year's budget will accommodate this schedule if needed. Charles also edges the sidewalks a couple times per year (something previous contractors did not do).

**Tree Maintenance**—We had a rough year! A spring ice storm and an August wind storm resulted in significant expenditures for cleanup. Additionally, I did a significant amount of chainsaw work to clear areas until the tree service could come out. I have plans for one more round of tree trimming this year in November/December. This will concentrate on low branches around the play structures, pathways and the subdivision entrances. For disease prevention concerns, this cannot be done until after the first good freeze.

**Pathways**—Our paths were repaved 4 years ago. Over time, they've developed cracks (normal) which require filling to prevent water intrusion and freeze/thaw damage. Hot crack fill and seal coating were

done this past week as preventative maintenance. 2600' of pathway, \$3400. The contractor (Nexus Sealcoat) was very conscientious and delayed work multiple times until good weather windows came up.

**Sprinklers**—Entrance sprinklers have been winterized

**2024 Projects, Beautification Concerns:**

Playground maintenance

Play structure mulch

New benches and picnic table cleanup

Address overgrown commons areas where trees were removed.

Plantings in street right-of-way blocking visibility

A couple strategic tree plantings to replace trees on their way out.

Greg Hemingway, MEHA Beautification Director

October 20, 2023