



### By Jason Cushman

Jason Cushman manages the business development, sales and marketing department for Community Landscape Services and focuses on client management, building brand awareness as well as developing commercial and residential accounts. Cushman graduated from James Madison University in 2002, where he played baseball for the Dukers. Outside of the office, Cushman enjoys spending time with his family, playing golf, fishing, watching sports, grilling out and staying active in the community.

# Relationships Matter

Your landscape represents a large, living and growing investment of your association. Properly managed, it contributes to the value, beauty and usefulness of a community and its residents. By truly understanding a community's needs and desires, the relationship between a landscape contractor and community associations is significant. The mission for most community associations is to enhance the quality of life for its residents, while carrying out the master plan and increasing property value throughout the community. To carry out this mission, it is essential for the landscape contractor and community association to maintain open communication and to form a business partnership. By working together, the landscape contractor becomes less of a commodity and is able to design and maintain outdoor spaces that serve as a visual and functional asset to the community.

### Keys to a Successful Relationship

- Common mission shared by landscape contractor and community association to create a beautiful and healthy property enjoyed by its residents.
- Open communication between landscaper and community association to include maintaining effective dialogue and building a partnership that will become a fundamental part of the long-term development and management of the community.
- Establish a quality assurance program to ensure mission is accomplished.
- Previous experience in managing similar community.
- Flexibility and ability to adjust to unforeseen conditions.

### Benefits to Community Association

- Provide analysis and advice for property from experts in the landscape industry including certified arborists, landscape

designers, architects, horticulturists, irrigation/water management specialists and hardscape installers.

- Maintain common areas of community and carry out master landscape plan.
- Recommend enhancements to increase the value of the property and enhance the quality of life for homeowners.
- Provide a landscape standard on common grounds to be followed by individual homeowners. Employ the right site-specific specifications and services for your site.
- Provide on-call service for emergency and resident inquiries.
- Provide cost analysis and input for annual budget and projections.

### Benefits to the Homeowner

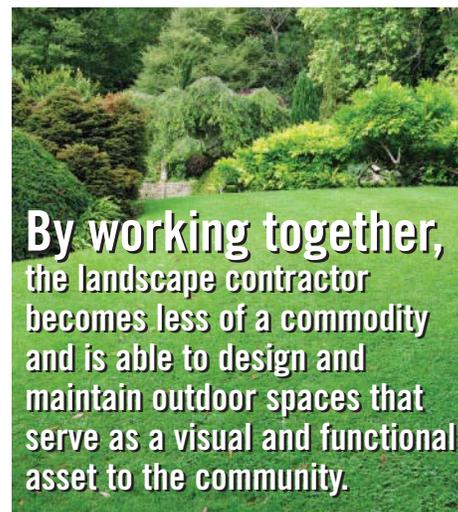
- Increase home value through beautification of community.
- Attract new homebuyers and create demand to live in a well-maintained, pristine community.
- Provide manicured and aesthetically pleasing common areas to be enjoyed as part of quality of life.
- Ability to have common ground and facility maintenance included in community association dues.

### Proven Results

A strong landscape contractor and community association partnership can generate great results for the homeowner as seen in the following example.

Common areas are the focal point for most active communities. These common areas are often used for social gatherings, athletic competition, pet walking and play areas for children. Due to the high traffic of these areas, communities should be mindful of the chemicals used in fertilizers and weed control products applied as part of the turf enhancement program. It is essential for the landscape contractor to work

closely with the community association representative to coordinate the timing of all applications and create awareness to homeowners. One community has partnered with their landscape contractor to create a unique awareness program to inform residents of upcoming applications.



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The use of the community newsletter, flyers, website, enlarged chemical signs and strategic sign placement have been incorporated to ensure all residents are aware of upcoming applications and safety procedures. In addition, safety information is made available to all community associations regarding the products being used on-site. Community associations are strongly encouraged to share this information with their residents through the multiple channels mentioned above. The use of open communication and strategic planning prior to the start of a season played a significant role in creating this unique program. Once this type of partnership is established, additional challenges can be overcome to create the quality of life desired by a community associations' residents. 📺