

What is NAOS?

We hear the term NAOS, but what does it mean? This abbreviation stands for Natural Area Open Space. These areas are easements that essentially restrict what can be done to a piece of land. NAOS easements are areas of continuous natural desert. The land that is designated NAOS has to be preserved in its natural desert state and remain free from obstructions. No grading, filling, clearing or excavation of any kind is permitted in the NAOS easement. The purpose of the NAOS areas is to blend nature throughout the communities, and help preserve native plant species and provide a natural habitat for the wildlife.

How does one know which areas fall into the category of NAOS? Since NAOS easements are attached to a property they will show up on the title report or on the cover sheet of the subdivision plat. This dedication stays with the property even if ownership changes. For more information on determining NAOS locations, you can contact your city's Record Department.

Maintenance in NAOS

What maintenance is allowed in an NAOS area? Maintenance is limited to the removal of man-made debris and parasitic plants such as mistletoe that can pose health concerns for the host plant. Dead plants, like saguaros that have fallen over, cannot be removed because they often serve as an animal shelter. There are exceptions to this guideline if the situation poses a health or safety concern.

From time to time, residents make requests for the trimming and/or removal of trees and shrubs in NAOS areas. Requests are also often made for the removal of dead plant material from these areas. These requests are fielded by the Management Company and assigned to the landscape management vendor.



NAOS easements are areas of continuous natural desert. These designated areas have to be preserved in their natural state.

Situations in Which Trimming/Removal Requests Will Be Considered:

- Trees and shrubs that are a hazard or impediment to people, structures or sightlines.
- Branches or trunks that are endangering walls, roofs, paths of travel or sight lines.
- Leaf or blossom litter that is proven to be more than a nuisance by causing damage to drains, pool filters, roof vents etc.
- Dead, dry plant material which is concentrated in sufficient quantity to pose a fire hazard.

Requests for corrective actions should be based on the conditions listed above. In many cases, prior approval from a municipal planning inspector may be necessary.

The goal for your community and your landscape management vendor should be to respect and protect the intent of the NAOS areas. To preserve the native plant material and provide the proper habitat for the wildlife merits all of our efforts.

Sources www.scottsdaleaz.gov.