



The difference between an architectural request (AC) and a request for exterior modification (EM)?

Single Family Homeowners Associations use architectural requests. These are required when one desires to paint their home, change mailbox or post, add room additions, decorate with yard art, planted pots, and do significant landscape changes. In more and more communities, an AC request is required for any exterior change.

Condominiums, Town Houses, Villas, Multi-unit homes typically require a request for exterior modification.

Communities like these typically require permission to do or utilize areas outside of their *interior* walls. Permission is required to make any change that is visible to the public. So even a wreath on a door or furniture beside the front door will likely require a request. Plantings visible to the public/your neighbors certainly do. However, if you are able to plant areas near your home, you will be responsible for any changes required to keep all parts of your yard irrigated, the new plantings, and areas around them and that will require permission.

Also, if you are not handling your own maintenance, then the association's lawn services will not be responsible for damages to your landscaping. And they may not take care of it the way you might. Remember you do not own the grounds (typically) and community lawn contracts do not allow for that degree of specialization called for by unique or independent plantings.

In all cases, getting written approval in advance makes sense. If Board's or rules change - you have written documentation which you should keep with your home ownership records. It is not wise to make a modification until the request is approved.

Acting Prior to Approval...the Consequences... Your board will not want to be unreasonable, but even if the modification is allowable, you will be required to complete and submit an application after the fact and there may be a fine despite the change being approved.

In the past, homes painted with unapproved colors have had to repaint; garages converted to living space have had to be restored; owners have incurred unnecessary legal expenses when the association has had to issue cease and desist orders. It is not prudent to act until you get approval.

The Board typically has 30 days to approve, modify, or reject. **To expedite**, include all information, including a survey if you are modifying your lot or home. You may follow up if have not received an answer after 14 days. **Also, it will get a much faster turnaround time** if you submit it online by logging in to: vanguard.cincwebaxis.com.

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