

Sod-loss money to spur recovery

By: Richard Dymond
Originally posted on September 22, 2007

LAKEWOOD RANCH -- With about \$176,000 from sod-loss settlements now or soon-to-be in hand, Lakewood Ranch will try to recapture some of its previous landscaping glory.

'I know a lot of residents purchased homes in Lakewood Ranch largely because of the landscaping and what it was,' newly hired Lakewood Ranch operations manager Ryan Heise said Wednesday. 'I want to restore it to expectations and do it in a sustainable way.'

The settlement money will go to improve common areas of Lakewood Ranch that have been hit with brown patches of dead St. Augustine grass, Heise said.

The landscape firm, Artistree, is paying District 1 \$29,900, which is half the cost for its sod loss, said Bob Fernandez, community manager.

District 2 is to receive \$24,845 and District 5 \$19,200 from JMC Property Management for 2006 sod loss bills, Fernandez said.

JMC also agreed to pay half the cost of current sod losses in districts 2 and 5, which amount to \$30,800 to District 2 and \$25,200 to District 5.

Valley Crest, which serves District 4, has agreed to pay half of Greenbrook's sod loss, amounting to \$46,000, Heise said.

Agreements with all three vendors are all signed, Heise said.

Richard Dymond, Herald reporter, can be reached at 708-7917.

Sod replacement at Lakewood Ranch

District 1 - Expect to see restoration on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard, from State Road 70 to the bridge over the Braden River and into the neighborhoods and cul de sacs. If sod is used, it will be Empire Zoysia, except if there are patches of St. Augustine that just need touch-ups. Expect to see juniper, minima jasmine and saw palmetto plant beds replacing some St. Augustine.

Districts 2 and 5 - Early next week, crews will start on Legacy Boulevard in Country Club and will begin laying Bahia or Empire Zoysia sod or planting beds. They will continue north to Arnold Palmer Green and loop back to Masters Avenue. The restoration will take a month and a half.

District 4 - Crews will begin in early October to restore sod loss along the entire section of Greenbrook Boulevard, mostly with Empire Zoysia sod. Along Lorraine Road, crews will be installing plant beds rather than sod, using wax myrtle and juniper. There will also be work beginning on the interior portions of Greenbrook.

SOURCE: Ryan Heise, Lakewood Ranch operations director.