

Dear Ridges Homeowners

Subject: Neighborhood Safety Measures

We hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the early signs of spring in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the warmer weather also seems to bring an increase in crime and vandalism throughout Omaha each year. Continued mail thefts, car thefts, and unwanted solicitor interactions have increased in recent months. As a homeowners association board, our primary goal is to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents within our neighborhood. With this commitment in mind, we would like to address some recurring questions about safety and discuss steps we are taking to reduce crime in our area.

Common Questions:

What crime are we talking about?

The most common event we have seen over the winter and spring has been mail theft. The brick mailboxes in our neighborhood are beautiful, but the lack of locks make mail theft all too common. Additionally, we have seen car thefts, golf course vandalism, an attempted statue theft from the 180th Street entrance, and unwanted interactions with solicitors and possible burglars "casing" the neighborhood.

Can we replace the mailboxes?

We have looked at several solutions to mail theft - large metal cluster boxes, inserts into the current brick pillars, and individual mailboxes. All of these have been deemed to be prohibitively expensive for the HOA to replace for the entire neighborhood. We have also received feedback that some neighbors do not want to pay for locking mailboxes because mail theft has not affected them. As a solution for concerned homeowners, if all neighbors that share a mailbox are interested in adding locks, they may reach out to our preferred vendor through P.J. Morgan to have the locks installed at the homeowners expense. We have had two mailboxes have locks added at a reasonable expense with no mail theft occurring after installation.

Can you put a gate up for my circle or the entire neighborhood?

The Ridges appears to be perfectly built to add gates into the limited number of entrances that already have middle islands built. However, our legal review has determined that adding gates for any part of the neighborhood that does not already have them installed would require purchasing the streets and public infrastructure in some way from the city for millions of dollars, if even considered by the city. The board is currently researching other deterrents such as cameras or license plate readers that could be installed at major entrances.

We used to have off-duty sheriff patrols. Why did those stop and can the neighborhood(or my circle) start them again?

For a number of years the neighborhood paid off-duty officers to patrol from approximately 10-12 on Friday and Saturday nights. This service was stopped during 2020 based on the expense of the service combined with the lack of the officers noticing any suspicious activity. Frankly, we had more feedback from neighbors worried the unmarked car was suspicious than any positive interaction where criminals were stopped. However, the board is researching better ways to implement increased patrols. In conjunction with Shadow Ridge Country Club, the board will be holding meetings with the Douglas County Sheriff to request additional patrol cars through the neighborhood at no expense to the association. The board has started to research paid alternatives that would utilize marked vehicles to solve the problems of low visibility and homeowner confusion we encountered with the unmarked vehicles previously used.

What should I do if I see something suspicious or am the victim of a crime?

Of course, immediately call the proper authorities. Additionally, please provide details of the crime or suspicious activity to RHOA@ridgheshoa.com. This information is the most valuable tool we have to request additional resources from the Douglas County Sheriff and Omaha police.

We believe that by working together as a community and implementing these measures, we can significantly reduce crime and create a safer environment for all residents. Your cooperation and support in these efforts are crucial, and we encourage you to actively participate in our neighborhood safety initiatives.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding our efforts to improve neighborhood safety, please do not hesitate to contact us. Together, we can make a positive difference and ensure that our neighborhood remains secure and the most beautiful place in Omaha to call home.

Property Management Contact Information RHOA@ridgeshoa.com 402-397-7775

Sincerely,

Jeff Hultgren Treasurer, The Ridges Homeowners Association