Growing Smarter at the Edge

LINCOLN INSTITUTE OF LAND POLICY

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Contents

Introduction 1

Case Study & Land Use Objectives 2

Market Performance Objectives 3

Case Study Highlights/Projects Charts 4

Lessons Learned 9

- Planning Lessons 9
- Planning Challenges 12
- Respond to the Market 13

Case Studies-Detail 15

- Rancho Viejo-Santa Fe, NM 17
- Mesa Del Sol- Albuquerque, NM 23
- Verrado-Buckeye, AZ 31
- Vistancia-Peoria, AZ 37
- DC Ranch-Scottsdale, AZ 41
- Rancho Sahuarita-Sahuarita, AZ 47
- Summerlin-Las Vegas, NV 51
- Otay Ranch-San Diego, CA 57
- San Elijo Hills-San Marcos, CA 63
- Hidden Springs-Boise, ID 69
- North City Future Urbanizing Area-San Diego, CA 75

Case Study Market Comparison 81

Other Projects of Interest 92

INTRODUCTION

Over the next 25 years, it is estimated that the United States will grow by another 50 million residents. The American West, with its wide open spaces and desirable lifestyle, is predicted to absorb a large share of that growth, with some projections indicating that the West could increase by as many as 25 million people. Rapidly expanding metro areas like Phoenix, Arizona can anticipate three million new residents in addition to its existing three million. By all accounts, the West can expect much of the explosive growth that has characterized the last 20 years to extend to the next 20 years.

Advocates of smart growth point to the need to encourage infill and redevelopment within our existing developed areas. This ameliorates the impacts of a rapidly growing society on our natural landscapes and conserves limited resources–such as fossil fuels–more responsibly. However, it is becoming apparent that even the most optimistic infill or redevelopment scenarios will accommodate less than half of the projected increase in households over the next 25 years.

Development at the edge of urban areas will continue to be the predominant aspect of our future growth.

While development at the edge is frequently consigned by critics to the "sprawl" category and dismissed as undesirable, a number of encouraging trends in master-planned communities suggest that development at the edge is growing smarter. In a variety of communities across the West, the following basic elements of smart growth are being accommodated within master-planned communities (Heid 2004) and are increasingly seen as factors which provide a market advantage:

- *Integrated, accessible, natural open space;*
- *Mixed public, commercial, and residential uses;*
- *Pedestrian orientation and other mobility options; and*
- *A range of housing densities and prices.*

The above are some of the core aspects of these new communities and they are pointing the way to smarter growth at the edge.

This report examines specific case studies both from a private and public sector perspective to glean lessons that can foster similar development at the edge of our rapidly growing metro areas. It is our hope that with proper attention to infill and redevelopment as well as smarter growth at the edge, we can help sustain and improve the livability and economic vitality of our communities, while helping to keep the West and its natural landscapes a defining element of our nation's heritage.

Heid, J. *Greenfield Development Without Sprawl: The Role of Planned Communities, Washington, D.C. : ULI-the Urban Land Institute. 2004*

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the Sonoran Institute worked with the City of Tucson, Arizona, to retain Clarion Associates and Economics Research Associates to provide planning assistance for the preparation of the Houghton Area Master Plan (HAMP), one of the largest areas of undeveloped land remaining within Tucson city limits. The area encompasses nearly 10,800 acres on the City's southeastern edge, with 7,750 acres under the control of the Arizona State Land Department.

This comprehensive case study, *Growing Smarter at the Edge*, is designed to review and evaluate the best of urban edge development associated with master-planned communities. The case studies will assist with the development of HAMP, an area plan that is intended to provide the implementation framework for the Desert Village concept established in the City of Tucson's 2002 General Plan.

The Desert Village concept is a large-scale development comprised of multiple master-planned communities, neighborhoods, and a Desert Village Center. Key considerations have been a blend of factors including:

- *Preservation and integration of natural desert spaces and vegetation with ease of accessibility for people and vehicles;*
- *An appropriate mix of commercial and residential development; and*
- *A range of housing density, styles, sizes, and prices.*

There is little doubt that the aspects of today's newer community concepts lead to smarter city growth while retaining maximum value for property owners.

Case Study Objectives

Prior to initiating the detailed research of the case studies, the project team developed a list of representative projects from the Western United States to help focus its efforts. These recommendations were gleaned from planners and developers as well as extensive Internet and literature reviews.

Land Use Objectives

From a land use standpoint, targeted case study projects included:

- *Western edge city locations;*
- *Contemporary models of progressive master-planned development; and*
- *Desert Village model elements as defined in the City of Tucson General Plan.*

Market Performance Objectives

From a market performance standpoint, targeted case study projects identified and documented:

- *Market performance of progressive master-planned development in urban edge environments;*
- *Successful examples of projects that balance the competing interests of the differing scales of commercial centers;*
- *Successful examples of planning models and development patterns that maximize and preserve long-term value and have a positive impact on the cost of providing public services, including public schools.*

STUDY CATEGORIES

Three categories of case studies targeted include:

Category 1: Large-scale Master-planned Communities

- Range of size and scale (1,500-10,000 acres);
- Open space preservation component;
- Urban edge location;
- Western location;
- Progressive urban form
- Mix of housing types and price ranges;
- Mix of land use types (residential, commercial, employment, open space).

Category 2: Mixed-use Centers

- Part of master-planned communities;
- Progressive examples of regional commercial centers as well as neighborhood and community-scale development;
- Projects that plan for and integrate public/civic spaces effectively.

Category 3: Public Sector Area Plans

- Examples of public sector planning frameworks (e.g., City's General Plan, Area Plan, or other planning frameworks) that encourage/foster progressive master-planned communities that might be appropriate for the study area.

REPRESENTATIVE PROJECTS

The team developed a focused list of case study projects for further research and analysis, based on land use, market performance objectives, and other criteria. The projects, which span five western states, include:

New Mexico
Rancho Viejo • Mesa del Sol

Arizona
Verrado • Vistancia
DC Ranch • Rancho Sahuarita

Nevada
Summerlin

California
Otay Ranch • San Elijo Hills
North City Future Urbanizing

Idaho
Hidden Springs

CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

The following information is a matrix summarizing key characteristics and planning tools used in implementing each of these projects. It highlights projects that have successfully accomplished one or more key master-planned community criteria, such as a mix of housing densities, a mix of housing prices, open space and natural resource protection, a multi-modal street layout and the incorporation of commercial and retail. Particularly notable examples of these criteria are indicated by a ✪.

This matrix can be used as a tool in locating the case studies most applicable to a particular issue related to the implementation of the Desert Village concept or master-planned communities in general.

Case Study Project Chart

Key Characteristics	Mix of Housing Densities	Mix of Housing Prices	Open Space/Preservation	Multi-modal Street Layout	Commercial/Retail	Planning Tools
Vistancia – Peoria, Arizona						
•7,100 acres •17,000 units planned •Collection of intimate villages •Centerpiece of community is the Discovery Trail •Variation in home size/price, not necessarily housing type •Unprecedented "respect for the land" •1,700 acres open space •Opened April 2004		✔	✔ ✪			•Peoria General Plan •Planned Communities District
DC Ranch – Scottsdale, Arizona						
•8,281 acres–3,700 of which are developable •Remainder is protected by McDowell Sonoran Preserve–well integrated with its desert setting •4-5,000 units planned •Mix of housing types •Market Street–300,000 sf neighborhood center •2 million sf mixed-use town center (planned) •Community opened 1997 •Expected build-out 2007	✔	✔	✔ ✪	✔	✔ ✪	•Strategic Area and Character Plans •Sensitive Design Program •Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance
Rancho Sahuarita – Sahuarita, Arizona						
•2,810 acres •10,600 units planned •Family-oriented, "lifestyle living" •15 acre lake park •Town Center (planned) •Residential well-established •Expected build-out 2015	✔	✔ ✪	✔		✔	•Rancho Sahuarita Specific Plan

Legend

✔ = meets criteria

✪ = notable example of criteria

sf = square feet

Case Study Project Chart

Key Characteristics	Mix of Housing Densities	Mix of Housing Prices	Open Space/Preservation	Multi-modal Street Layout	Commercial/Retail	Planning Tools
Rancho Viejo – Santa Fe, New Mexico						
• 2,500 acres • Collection of villages/village centers • 50% open space • Promotes "living amid nature" • Construction began in 1998, two villages under construction • 500+ occupied homes • Affordable housing component	✔	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔	✔	• Santa Fe County Growth Management Plan • Santa Fe Community College District Plan • Community College Land Use and Zoning District Regulations
Mesa Del Sol – Albuquerque, New Mexico						
• 12,400 acres–State Trust Land • 39,000 units planned • Affordable, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly • Combination of urban and rural villages • Incorporates employment, neighborhood, village and community centers • 3,000-4,000 acres open space • Water Conservation Component • Forest City Covington Master Developer • Anticipated 70 year build-out • Construction has not begun	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	• Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan • Planned Communities Criteria • Level A master-plan (First in 3-step process)
Verrado – Buckeye, Arizona						
• 8,800 acres • 9,500 units planned • Built amenities before homes • Neighborhoods range from urban to rural • Town center constructed up front • Village center/model homes complete • Planned for up to 4 million sf of commercial space • Phase I includes 2,040 homes	✔ ✪	✔	✔	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	• Buckeye General Development Plan • Community master-plan

Legend

✔ = meets criteria

✪ = notable example of criteria

sf = square feet

Case Study Project Chart

Key Characteristics	Mix of Housing Densities	Mix of Housing Prices	Open Space/Preservation	Multi-modal Street Layout	Commercial/Retail	Planning Tools
North City Future Urbanizing Area – San Diego, California						
• 12,000 acres • 13,000 units planned • Over 50% set aside as open space • Built environment was defined by environmental factors • Minimum of 20% of units set aside for families earning no more than 65% of median area income (city mandate) • Other units very exclusive–land now goes for approximately $1M per acre	✔	✔	✔ ✪		✔	• NCFUA Framework Plan • Five Sub-Area Plans
Hidden Springs – Boise, Idaho						
• 1,800 acres • 1,035 units planned • Foothills setting, recreation amenities, community atmosphere, rural character, farming, and small town feel • 1,000 acres of open space • Motto is "The Antidote to Anywhere USA" • Winner Best Smart Growth Community in Nation (2000) • Opened 1997–brisk sales • 500 residents today • Marketing 3rd phase of development	✔ ✪	✔	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔	• Hidden Springs Specific Plan • Hidden Springs Planned Community Zoning Ordinance

Legend

✔ = meets criteria

✪ = notable example of criteria

sf = square feet

Case Study Project Chart

Key Characteristics	Mix of Housing Densities	Mix of Housing Prices	Open Space/Preservation	Multi-modal Street Layout	Commercial/Retail	Planning Tools
Summerlin – Las Vegas, Nevada						
• 22,000 acres • Population 83,000 (160,000 at build-out) • America's best-selling master-planned community 2002 • 1/3 acreage set aside for open space • Began in 1990 • 30 year build-out • Nine villages completed, eight in active stages of development • Villages range in size from 100 to 1,300 acres • Mix of housing types/multiple town centers	✔	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔	✔ ✪	• Planned Community District
Otay Ranch – San Diego, California						
• 22,899 acres • Approximately 78,500 residents at build-out • Small town ambiance • San Diego County's top-selling planned community • 2,500 acres of open space • Heritage Town Center opened in April 2004, includes 1550 sf homes, 1150 sf apartments, 38,000 sf retail, affordable senior units • Opened 1999 • 13 neighborhoods with 33 model homes • Several neighborhoods completed • Includes designated transit corridor for future expansion of San Diego system	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔	• Otay Ranch General Development Plan/Subregional Plan • Sectional Planning Areas • Village Design Plans
San Elijo Hills – San Marcos, California						
• 1,920 acres • 3,398 units planned • 777 acres natural open space • 28 neighborhoods • Mixture of housing types/densities • 10% of units devoted to low-income rentals • 18 miles of trails	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔ ✪	✔	• San Elijo Hills Specific Plan

Legend

✔ = meets criteria

✪ = notable example of criteria

sf = square feet

LESSONS LEARNED

Introduction

Each case study project offers a number of lessons learned from a design, planning process, and development program standpoint. While the significance of these lessons may vary between projects depending upon the reader's primary objectives, day-to-day role in the design, development, and oversight of master-planned communities, there are a number of noteworthy common themes. These themes are organized into three categories:

- *Planning Lessons: What's working from a planning standpoint in most or all of the projects reviewed?*
- *Planning Challenges: What are the most common or difficult issues that have arisen during the planning and development of master-planned communities around the West?*
- *Market Lessons: What are important market lessons in the planning of large-scale master-planned communities?*

Planning Lessons

Provide clear direction at the General/Comprehensive Plan level.

Each of the master-planned communities reviewed was required to meet a detailed set of policy objectives as set forth by the adopted community plan for the city/county in which it is located. Typically, community plans contain a variety of elements such as parks and open space, land use, growth management, housing and neighborhoods, and other categories based upon applicable state legislation and community needs. Although these documents are usually advisory in nature, by setting a clear direction at a broad level, communities are better equipped to enforce the implementation of their goals and objectives as they review more specific plans for master-planned communities. Some states, such as California, go one step further and require that zoning must be consistent with the adopted plan.

In Arizona, Growing Smarter legislation in 1998 and 2000 (Growing Smarter Plus) required all communities to update their General Plans, add four new elements (Open Space, Growth Areas, Environmental Planning, and Cost of Development) and set a deadline for completion of the update (December 2001). As a result, Arizona communities researched were fairly consistent at the General/Comprehensive plan level on their policies in these areas, sending a clear message to developers and property owners regarding the expectations for plans submitted for master-planned communities. Many planners indicated these policies were relied upon heavily during the preparation of specific area plans and negotiation of development agreements for individual properties.

Other states, such as Nevada, have similar legislative requirements that ensure communities incorporate mandatory elements into their city or county plans. In some cases, the master-planned community was subject to the adopted policies of both the city and county plans.

Although the nomenclature varies, many communities also utilize sub-area plans, specific plans, framework plans, community plans, or similar, more detailed documents to supplement their general or comprehensive plans. This is common when a particular area or property has unique issues and characteristics, either due to existing development patterns,

notable natural features, or other factors and requires an additional layer of discussion.

Provide a clear process to guide the development of master-planned communities.

Many of the municipalities reviewed have established processes specifically for the development of master-planned communities. While the processes vary in their formality and level of detail–some representing a lengthy chapter in city's zoning ordinance and others summarized in a brief memo on the city's Web site–they all play a key role in clearly defining what the city's expectations will be for each master plan submittal. Common specifications include:

- *A minimum size for master-planned communities (ranging from 600 acres in Peoria, Arizona, to 3,000 acres in Las Vegas, Nevada);*
- *Minimum open space or environmental protection requirements (ranging from 10% in Buckeye, Arizona, to 50% in Santa Fe, New Mexico); and*
- *Desired and/or required development characteristics, such as a mix of uses, inclusionary housing, varied housing types, protection of natural features, or an integrated open space network. In most cases, these are characteristics that must be addressed in subsequent phases of the process.*

Establishing a straightforward process for the development of master-planned communities helps ensure that specific requirements applied to master-planned communities are applied consistently across the board and ensure that the city's planning staff and elected officials are working and reviewing project submittals with the same set of objectives in mind.

Equally important is the need to establish flexibility within the master-planned community framework to encourage creativity and innovation in design. In fact, planners and developers acknowledge that many of the more innovative projects would simply not have been possible if required to follow every aspect of the city's traditional zoning districts, as the issues associated with a 10,000 acre master-planned community are simply not the same as those associated with a 200-acre subdivision. Working within various master-planned community processes, new zone districts and standards were crafted in many cases to allow for variations in housing types, increased densities, mixed uses, flexible lot depths, reduced street widths, and naturalized street cross sections, to name a few. Planners indicated that these often hefty "custom" standards far exceeded basic standards set forth by the city. Close coordination with city engineering and public works staff was required in order to gain approval for narrow streets or other features that must meet accessibility standards for emergency vehicles.

In some cases, cities have developed detailed design guidelines to help clarify their expectations for new development and have used them as a tool for reviewing individual components of proposed master-planned communities (Scottsdale, Arizona, is one good example). Development review boards were also used in several instances as a means of ensuring high quality development, while allowing a more flexible approach.

Do not budge on the basics.

Despite clear distinctions in density, architectural character, types of amenities, and other features, each project evaluated has a common theme–a mix of housing types, a mix of land uses, and an integrated open space and pedestrian system. The presence of these characteristics is truly what turns a typical production subdivision into something more:

- *Inviting to live in;*
- *Sensitive to the environment and the community; and*
- *Better able to retain their value in the long-term.*

City or county-level policies that provide a framework for the protection of open space, parks, and natural features and the accessibility of these features are a must for any community, regardless of the size and composition of the master-planned communities it contains. Some level of citywide or countywide environmental protection and open space policies exist in each of the communities evaluated, and while it could be argued that any good developer would preserve the best natural features of the site regardless of whether there was policy direction to do so, the general consensus among communities that deal with this issue on a daily basis is that it is better not to leave it to chance.

Take advantage of available mechanisms for infrastructure financing.

The immense scale and fringe locations of many master-planned communities can make the cost of providing basic infrastructure, such as roadways, drainage systems, schools, and other public facilities extremely costly. Rarely are municipalities–particularly smaller communities–equipped to pay for such improvements upfront. In 1988, the Arizona Community Facilities District Act became effective, which allows municipalities to form special districts for the purpose of financing the installation, operation, and/or maintenance of public infrastructure. Homeowners are then assessed for the costs over time and in most cases completed facilities are turned over to the municipality.

Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) were the most common tool used to meet the basic infrastructure needs of master-planned communities in the Phoenix region. This was the case with the Verrado project in Buckeye, Arizona, where a CFD was used to build a freeway interchange and a 3-mile access road. CFDs are also being used successfully in the Tucson area by the community of Marana, Arizona. According to Marana's planners, they have helped facilitate a more coordinated approach to the development of the Northwest Marana area by allowing infrastructure improvements to be made upfront, regardless of whether all of the affected properties were being developed in the short term. CFDs can also be used to cover ongoing costs such as maintenance or operating costs, allowing them to be paid back over time.

To help level the playing field between large and small developers and property owners, Marana has also recently begun investigating the use of impact fees for parks and roadway improvements. Typically, impact fees do not cover operating and maintenance costs once the facilities are established, so additional sources of funding may ultimately need to be identified.

Other tools common in the western states include the use of Special Assessment Districts, which operate under a similar premise. This was the case with Summerlin, located within the City of Las Vegas, where seven districts have been used to pay for parks, roadways, and other improvements during the project's history.

Some of the case study projects, including Otay Ranch and the North City Future Urbanizing Area, were required to submit Public Facility Financing Plans upfront to illustrate how each community's infrastructure needs would be met. These plans were then approved concurrent with the master-plan.

Planning Challenges

Maintain a region perspective.

Regional coordination between local jurisdictions and other public agencies is especially critical when dealing with emerging development areas likely to attract larger master-planned communities. With many master-planned communities locating on the fringes of a larger metropolitan area, local jurisdictions have struggled to pay for and implement urban services, such as roadway widening, regional drainage systems, and other improvements necessary to support growth. Regardless of the ultimate funding source, whether public, private, or a combination of the two, communication and coordination must occur on an ongoing basis to ensure improvements being made meet the needs of not only the planned development, but are also compatible with existing and planned regional systems.

Driving through the semi-rural, but quickly growing areas in the East Valley of Phoenix, it quickly becomes apparent that the existing transportation network is woefully inadequate to handle the increased travel demands of thousands of new residents. According to county planners, in more than one instance, annexations have occurred that stop short of adjacent roadways, or improvements have occurred in a piecemeal fashion with a "one-mile-here-one-mile-there" approach. This is highly inefficient and results in roadways that are unsafe and inadequate. In another instance, a roadway has been barricaded by one community to accommodate a planned development, and as a result has cut off a major east/west route for the neighboring community. Clearly, both the design and review of master-planned communities must occur with a strong sense of the broader region in mind.

Take the "standard" out of design standards.

As discussed above, many master-planned communities have devoted considerable time and effort into the preparation of detailed design standards in order to ensure that each phase of the project maintains a similar level of quality and is visually compatible with existing and future phases. However, even with the best of intentions, this approach can occasionally backfire–resulting in homogeneous neighborhoods that are virtually indistinguishable from one to the other. Design standards, whether applied at a community-wide level or limited to a specific community master-plan, should encourage creativity and variety in design. Each standard should be carefully considered to assess its effectiveness applied over several thousand acres, or even citywide.

Although homebuilders have in the past relied upon repetition for speed and cost effectiveness and as a result have been reluctant to increase the diversity of residential streetscapes, attitudes are beginning to change. Both planners and developers surveyed acknowledged an initial resistance to these types of requirements from the homebuilder community, but also stressed that through persistence and the consistent application of standards, they ultimately achieved their objectives. Diversity requirements were in many cases applied by design at the master-plan level and were used as a major selling point–as was the case with Verrado and Otay Ranch, among others. In some cases, however, basic diversity requirements were already codified and were simply exceeded by the subsequent master-planned community's standards. In Buckeye, Arizona (home of Verrado), for example, the city's zoning ordinance contains a "3x3" variety provision for housing types (floor plans, colors, and facades) to ensure that a quantifiable level of variety is provided in all master-planned communities but allows for flexibility in developing an alternative approach.

Respond to the Market

The review of the case studies' market characteristics and project performance reveal several lessons that may apply to other planning efforts:

Timing of development is dependent on regional growth trends and patterns.

A growing regional market, in terms of jobs, population, and housing, though not a prerequisite, is a common condition of all of the case studies reviewed. For those areas that are not growing as rapidly as most of the case study markets, the rate of development will be related to regional growth trends and patterns. This means that the implementation of some plan elements, such as multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial uses (which may not be feasible today) will need to be paced in order to allow the market to build over time.

Deliver housing at a variety of price-points.

Building programs for master-planned communities need to deliver housing at price-points that are affordable to different market segments, consistent with household incomes and characteristics in the market area.

Develop a strategy of providing affordable amenities.

The case studies illustrate that master-planned communities often obtain premium pricing relative to their markets because of the amenities they offer and their strategic market-orientation. However, larger communities that by design provide a broad range of housing types, either as a strategy or as a regulatory requirement, obtain average prices that are comparable to their regional markets because of this additional responsibility.

While amenities often command price premiums, these premiums are limited by the buying-power and depth of the target markets. In areas with relatively low land costs compared to some of the case study markets, there is less room for land to absorb expensive amenities. Therefore, projects in these areas must develop a strategy of providing amenities affordably through design and economies-of-scale. Preserved open space that is set-aside and integrated with development is a lower cost way of providing amenity value than, for example, more expensive recreational facilities.

Responding to the market without losing sight of the early vision.

As voiced by planners and developers alike, one of the greatest challenges in successfully implementing master-planned communities is maintaining the project's overall vision over an extended period of time. While it is generally expected that there will be some "shifting" of densities and land uses within a master-planned community between phases, some master-planned communities have gone astray when mechanisms were not built into their master-planned community processes to ensure that adjustments to the adopted master-plan did not result in the outright loss of important elements of the plan, such as commercial uses or housing variety.

To prevent this, many of the municipalities surveyed categorize amendments to master-plans as "major" or "minor" and provide detailed specifications as to what types of changes may be made at each level. Typically, minor amendments are defined as not significantly altering the overall vision of the master-plan as adopted and can be approved administratively. Major amendments often involve land use changes or adjustments in density that require further discussion and are required to go through a public hearing process and be approved by elected officials.

Case Studies

Rancho Viejo

DESCRIPTION

Rancho Viejo is a located on 21,000 acres on the outskirts of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Approximately 6,000 acres lie within the Santa Fe Community College District of Santa Fe County.

The community is designed as a collection of villages to reflect the form of traditional communities found in Northern New Mexico and features a diverse mix of housing types and prices. Each village is organized around a central community-gathering space, similar to the traditional plaza, which is within a 5-to-10 minute walk of the surrounding residences. Villages are distinct in their composition of housing types and are distinguished from others by an extensive open space network that represents 50 percent of the total land area.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Context:
Southwest of Santa Fe
in Santa Fe County

Project Size:
5,000 (2,500 acres currently being developed)

Existing Units:
Approximately 300

Planning Started: Mid-1990s

Construction Started: 1998

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types

Rancho Viejo is planned to include multiple village "clusters" each with a distinct mixture of housing types that include attached and detached single-family, accessory dwelling, multi-family, and live/work units, as well as compound-type dwellings drawn from local patterns. Densities are most intense within the center of villages (minimum of 3.5 dwelling units/acre) and decrease toward estate homes on one-acre lots at the fringe. Homes incorporate traditional Spanish-style architecture as found throughout Santa Fe.

Affordable Housing

Rancho Viejo offers homes in a variety of price ranges and is required to devote 15 percent of the homes allowed within its master plan to affordable housing. Three income ranges are targeted and 5 percent of the required 15 percent of homes are devoted to each target range. Affordable housing units are required to be integrated throughout the development to promote diverse neighborhoods.

Village Centers

Each of Rancho Viejo's villages will contain a village center, similar to the traditional plazas found in many Northern New Mexico communities. The plazas provide a gathering space for residents and will ultimately include neighborhood-scale shops to meet day-to-day needs.

Open Space/Trails/Parks

Approximately 50 percent of Rancho Viejo's total land area has been set aside as natural open space and parks. Natural open space areas include the site's numerous arroyo corridors, which serve as buffers among villages, steep slopes, and areas of protected Pinon/Juniper woodlands. The large amount of dedicated open space at Rancho Viejo, combined with the fact that much of the open space is wooded, allows the development's visual impacts on the landscape to be minimized.

Complementing the open space system is an extensive network of trails. More than nine miles of trails have been developed to date, providing access to open space areas and linking each of the villages, the Community College, and other amenities.

Rancho Viejo has three neighborhood parks to serve its residents, as well as an active playfield. In addition, each village center features a landscaped plaza that serves as a more formal gathering space.

Multi-Modal Transportation System

Based on the objectives stated in the Community College District Plan, Rancho Viejo's circulation system is designed to promote a reduction in vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, and to increase accessibility, safety, and efficiency for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit services. The plan identifies three tiers of roadway categories:

- Living priority—where pedestrians and cyclists are given primary consideration;
- Mixed priority—a transition zone; and
- Traffic priority—where automobiles are the primary consideration.

Existing transit service is limited to the Cerrillos Road corridor and the Community College; however, future service phases have been identified and will be implemented as the community grows.

Detailed design cross-sections for roadways in each of the three categories identified above were adopted as part of the Community College District Land Use and Zoning Regulations. The cross-sections help define the character of each street to ensure that roadways are consistent with the desired character of the district.

Some of the community's streets are laid out in a traditional interconnected grid system, while others maintain a more suburban cul-de-sac character.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	N/A
Price range (per sf):	$127.53–$160.68
Average price (per sf):	$145.16
Annual absorption rate:	120–150

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

While the entitlement process for Rancho Viejo began as early as 1989, it was a challenging process that met with a negative backlash. As a result, the property's owners put their plans on hold. At the time, the property was zoned as "rural," which would have permitted 2 1/2 acre residential lots and would not have permitted clustering.

A number of years later, the project was revisited and began to gain momentum. A visioning process for the property sponsored by the property owner and developer occurred concurrently with an effort by the county to update its development standards and identify an updated growth management model. This spurred further discussion between the two groups, who had similar goals in terms of the village concept and an emphasis on open space. Ultimately the discussions resulted in the development of the Santa Fe County Growth Management Plan, the Santa Fe Community College District Plan, and the Community College District Land Use and Zoning Regulations.

SANTA FE COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Santa Fe County Growth Management Plan was adopted in 1999 as a mechanism for identifying preferred land use patterns and guiding future development within urban and rural areas of Santa Fe County. The plan identifies the Community College District (which contains Rancho Viejo) as the only designated New Community District within the county, encompassing approximately 10,000 acres of land. The designation was driven in

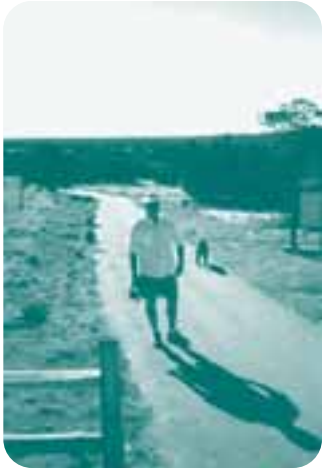
large part by the emergence of the Community College as a focal point for community development south of the City of Santa Fe, and by its role as a significant employment, education, and cultural center to the city, county, and region. The designation was also driven by the district's location, in which:

- Major public facilities and services, such as water, roads, schools, and recreational opportunities, were already in place or were planned;
- Development pressures were being experienced and some village development was already underway (Rancho Viejo Phase I);
- Major land owners (Rancho Viejo and the State Land Office) expressed a willingness to develop their property in a more compact, village-oriented pattern or were already doing so; and
- Opportunities existed for the area to become a receiving area for the county's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.

Primary development considerations identified for the district included the timing and delivery of utilities, the development of a coordinated open space and trail system for the area, and the development of a balance of land use types. Although these considerations were addressed in greater detail during the development of the Community College District Plan, preferred densities, open space, and lot size requirements were set forth in the Growth Management Plan. These preferences included a 60:40 open space/developed area ratio to create and maintain a more rural character for the district; the use of density bonuses for affordable housing and the use of transferred development rights; and a density range of 1–3.5 du/acre on average, with higher densities of up to 6 du/acre permitted for areas providing affordable housing or using transferred development rights. Other planning criteria, such as character and design, land uses, and the timing and size of new villages, were also identified to guide the development of the District Plan.

SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT PLAN

The Santa Fe Community College District Plan defines a clear vision for the district that emphasizes the incorporation of compact development forms characteristic of traditional village patterns, mixed-use "centers;" clear connections within and between places; strong community principles; and sustainable development principles. The plan also sets forth district planning principles or policies to guide future development. These policies are based on four fundamental premises that address such issues as land use, community structure and development patterns, circulation and connections, open space, infrastructure, community services and facilities, economic development, environmental and sustainable systems, affordable housing, and operations and maintenance.



The land use component of the plan proposes three distinct compact development forms to allow incremental community growth within a flexible framework: village zones, institutional campuses, and employment centers. Each of the forms is described as mixed-use in nature, but is intended to accommodate different needs. Each of the forms is required to have a center that focuses on density and diversity, and to be separated by well-defined edges and buffers of open space.

The plan provides a detailed discussion of each of the development forms identified and provides a list of intended development characteristics for each that addresses, among other things: desired uses, relationships to surrounding development, circulation, trails, parks, and other key features. Required minimum average densities (sometimes maximums) and floor area ratios for uses in each of the development areas are provided; however, when specified as minimums they are relatively modest targets (i.e., a minimum average residential density of 3.5 du/acre within Village Zones), and when specified as maximums, they are designed to protect or define the character of a particular area.

A number of guidelines for sustainability are included in the plan. In addition, the plan identifies guidelines requiring infrastructure, education, or materials not available at the time of adoption, those that require state or federal legislation, or new technologies. These guidelines are grouped into two categories to be addressed at a later date, either as part of a three-to-five-year plan, or a part of longer-term plan.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT LAND USE AND ZONING REGULATIONS

Zoning, detailed development standards, and master plan submittal requirements for the Community College District were developed to implement the unique goals of the plan. Key components of the ordinance include, but are not limited to:

- Permitted/prohibited uses;
- Affordable housing requirements;
- Roadway and trail cross-sections;
- Development setbacks, densities, massing, relationships, and heights;
- Landscape requirements; and
- Designation of protected arroyo corridors and open space.

It is worth noting that the ordinance does not include standards related to architectural character and design, as is typical with many master-planned community ordinances.

The ordinance is summarized in the form of a zoning matrix that serves as a quick reference guide for both county planning staff and the development community.

SOURCES:

The Santa Fe Community College District Plan
October 2000

True West: Authentic Development Patterns for Small Towns and Rural Areas, Christopher J. Duerksen and James Van Hemert. Chicago: APA Planners Press, 2003

www.ranchoviejo.com

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Mesa del Sol

DESCRIPTION

Mesa del Sol is a 12,400 acre master-planned community located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The project is located on land owned by the State Land Office (SLO). Although several previous plans had been prepared for the area and had not moved forward, in the mid 1990s the area was annexed into the city. The city sought to produce the Level A Community Master Plan for Mesa Del Sol, adopted by the city's Environmental Planning Commission in 1996. This effort fell under the direction of the SLO with the long-term goal of establishing Mesa del Sol as a model for sustainable development practices in the desert Southwest.

Working within the policy framework of the city's Planned Communities Criteria and with the SLO's goal in mind, the current vision for Mesa del Sol was developed to include a series of 39 mixed-use urban and rural villages linked by extensive multi-modal transportation and open space networks, and supported by multiple community commercial and employment centers. At build-out, expected to occur over the next 70 years, it is anticipated the community will have up to 97,500 residents and will employ up to 80,000 people.

Forest City Covington, L.L.C. was selected in 2002 by the SLO to be the master developer for the property, but construction has yet to begin on the project's residential and commercial components due to market limitations. In spite of this, the project still serves as a positive example of progressive planning and long-term vision for large state land parcels in New Mexico and beyond.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Context:
Just south of Airport, five miles from downtown

Project Size:
12,400 acres

Total Units—Planned:
39,000

Gross Density:
3 dwelling units/acre

Annexed:
1993

Projected Build-out:
70 years

Master Developer:
Forest City Covington, LLC

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types

Neighborhoods at Mesa del Sol will accommodate approximately 1,000 homes each and will feature a variety of housing types and prices, including single-family attached and semi-detached homes; patio homes and townhomes; casitas and garage apartments; small-scale, owner-occupied buildings or traditional New Mexico compounds (typically 2-4 units); investor-owned multi-family homes (typically 8 units or more); homes above storefronts in core areas of activity centers; and live/work studios.

Although actual densities will be determined at the Level B stage of approval, densities are conceptually anticipated to range from 20 to 40 units per acre in dense areas of the urban center down to approximately 10 dwelling units per acre in single-family areas. However, when factored across the site as a whole, gross residential densities will be three dwelling units per acre in accordance with the city's Planned Communities Criteria.

Coordination with local homebuilders to assure homes will meet the intended character of the plan is considered critical by the SLO, and Albuquerque home builders have initiated programs to address the issue.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is planned to be integrated into the community at both a neighborhood and block level. A target level of 20 percent of the developed housing units was established for affordable housing as a condition to approval of the Level A Community Master Plan. For the purposes of the condition, affordable housing was defined as units meeting federally established low/moderate income guidelines.

Activity Centers

A hierarchy of activity centers is planned at Mesa del Sol, at the neighborhood, village, community, and urban levels. Centers will be mixed-use in nature and will incorporate office, retail, and residential uses to promote extended hours of activity. Centers are described in a conceptual fashion only, as proposed densities and specific uses for the centers are not required at the Level A stage of approval.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

Overall, approximately 30 percent of Mesa del Sol's total acreage has been set aside for parks, open space, and trails, providing an extensive, well-integrated network. Open spaces will provide natural transitions between individual villages and activity centers. In addition, pocket parks and neighborhood parks will be provided throughout the community to provide ease of access to residents. Parks and open space percentages within each village and activity center will be approximately 10 percent of the land area within the center itself. Consideration for the development of a special parks district for Mesa del Sol was brought up during development of the Level A plan and will be revisited during subsequent planning phases.

Early in the planning process, the SLO committed to begin with recreational development that would benefit the entire region and its children. The first phase of the 640 acre Bernalillo County Regional Recreation Complex, located in the City of Albuquerque, was completed in fall of 2000; it will include 44 soccer, football, baseball, and softball fields at

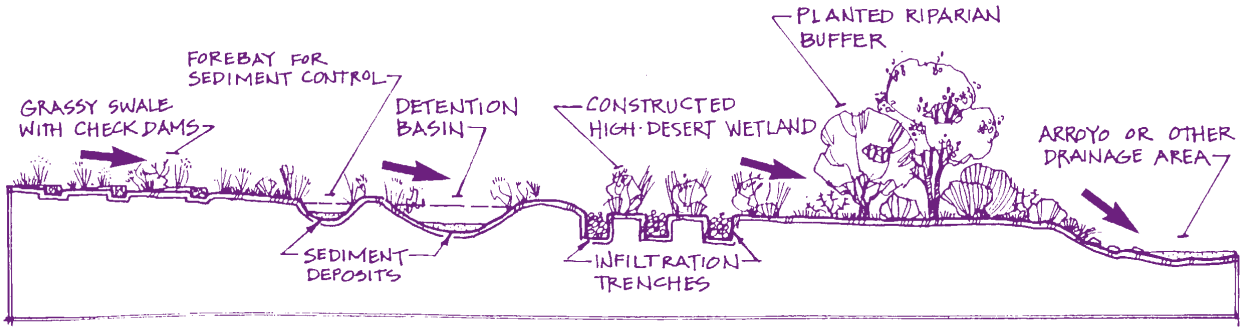
completion. A 15,000 seat outdoor amphitheater was also completed as part of the first phase—anchoring the complex and bringing more than 100,000 people a year to the area. In addition, it serves as a significant employer in the area. The complex is being built and financed by Bernalillo County in partnership with the State Land Office, the State Legislature, and the private sector. A portion of the ticket sales at the amphitheater helped to pay for construction and maintenance of the complex and lease payments collected from the private sector at the complex go to the State Land Office to help support education in New Mexico.

Street Design and Circulation Systems

Streets at Mesa del Sol will be built with a multi-modal transportation system in mind, with pedestrian-scaled cross-sections and frequent connections. At both a community and neighborhood level, streets and trails will form an integrated network that encourages walking, bicycling, and use of transit options such as buses, trolleys, and ultimately, light rail. Street classifications are proposed based on their contribution of character to the community in addition to their capacity. Road types at Mesa del Sol will include urban boulevards; parkways and drives; urban streets; rural roads, alleys, and rear lanes.

Stormwater Management

In keeping with the State Land Office's goal of sustainability, Mesa del Sol's stormwater management system is designed to maximize valuable water resources. Stormwater is captured on-site to allow for slow ground infiltration to minimize soil disturbance and run-off, enhancement of wildlife habitat, and ultimately, the recharging of the Albuquerque aquifer.



SM-5: Stormwater Managment Treatment Train: Cross Section

Water Conservation

Mesa del Sol will target indoor potable water use to approximately 50 gallons per day/per resident. Outdoor plantings in all common areas, and potentially on individual lots, will be maintained with treated effluent and will be subject to similar limits.

Dark Skies

Potential light pollution resulting from future development at Mesa del Sol will be mitigated by the adoption of a "dark skies" initiative. The initiative will reduce light pollution while saving energy, which is intended to protect the city's beautiful night skies. The initiative was modeled after a similar one developed for the City of Tucson.

Project Sales Performance

Information not available; project not yet developed.

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

ALBUQUERQUE/BERNALILLO COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Planned communities within the city have historically been required to meet the broad-brush policy objectives of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan. These policy objectives address the size, land use and intensity, environmental and cultural preservation, and provisions of public services for planned communities. A somewhat unusual stipulation, however, is that public services for planned communities must be provided at no net expense to the city.

In the case of Mesa del Sol, the SLO voluntarily agreed with the city that the community would be built under this "no net expense" criteria, making it the only development within the city required to pay for itself over time, meaning that city taxpayers will not be subsidizing roads, sewer lines, and other city services for Mesa del Sol.

PLANNED COMMUNITIES CRITERIA

Recognizing the probability of new planned communities within its rural and reserve areas over time, the City of Albuquerque adopted its Planned Communities Criteria Policy Element in February 1991. These criteria are the result of a year-long process that involved a public and private sector task force and was designed to provide guidance for the development community on the preparation of planned community master plans and a framework within which the plans would be reviewed. The criteria were developed largely in response to the inability of standard subdivision practices to meet community planning goals that included:

- Efficient access and mobility for multiple modes of transportation;
- Decreased homogeneity of residential development in terms of cost and character;
- Proximity and connection of housing areas to employment areas;
- Preservation of environmental features; and
- A strong sense of community identity.

The planned community criteria acknowledge the long time frame and incremental phasing associated with most master-planned communities and are designed to allow flexibility within a three-tiered process, described in greater detail under Planned Communities Submittal Requirements, that follow in the next section. Performance objectives outlined in the document are used to review and evaluate proposals. In addition, requirements for the submittal and processing of planned community center master plans and subsequent, detailed submittals for specific areas are set forth.

The planned community criteria include recommended acreages and service areas as guidelines, but allow the actual size and configuration of various community components to be established at the community master plan level in accordance with the criteria. At a broad level, the criteria acknowledge variations between planned communities in the city's rural and reserve areas, and apply a higher level of development constraint to the rural areas. Overall, the performance of planned communities is expected to improve upon that within established and developing areas of the city on a per-household or per-capita basis. These sustainability indicators include:

- Nonrenewable energy use;
- Vehicle miles traveled;
- Travel time;
- Single-occupant vehicle trips;
- Water use;
- Open space and recreation;
- Storm drainage/flood hazard protection;
- Air quality deterioration;
- Noise levels in sensitive areas; and
- Costs of essential public services.

PLANNED COMMUNITIES SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A checklist of descriptive, graphic, and quantitative elements necessary for community master plan approvals are provided at three levels: Level A—Community Master Plan; Level B—Village, and/or Community/Employment/ Urban Center Plans; and Level C—Subdivision and Site Plans. With each subsequent step, a more detailed level of planning is required to address specific design, location, and development issues. Although separate review processes are outlined for each step, applicants have the option of developing and seeking approval of the three components simultaneously.

LEVEL A: COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

At the community master plan level, approvals are granted by the City Council and County Commission and typically address communities between 5,000 and 10,000 acres in size. Once approved, community master plans must be reviewed for validity after 10 years to ensure the plan's vision and intent remain true. The Level A checklist sets forth requirements in four areas:

- ***Land Use***—The provision of a general mix of land uses; description of a hierarchy of activity centers; delineation of open space networks and their functionality; a phasing plan; and a conceptual strategy for the provision of utilities to support the proposed land use concepts.
- ***Transportation***—A transportation system plan that addresses major travel corridors; strategies for multi-modal opportunities; a hierarchy of internal and regionally connected roadways; phased analysis of travel demand and supply; and consideration of public and private responsibilities for on- and off-site improvements.
- ***Environment and Open Space***—Detailed site analysis to identify and incorporate significant natural features and site amenities; drainage strategy; water quantity and quality analysis; and wastewater and solid waste management/recycling strategy.
- ***Government and Public Services***—Conceptual plan for provision of schools, parks, and other public facilities and services; infrastructure funding strategy; and proposal for annexation by the city, if necessary.

Development agreements are developed in accordance with the approved community master plan as a means of codifying the plan; outlining preliminary infrastructure and service agreements necessary for phasing of the plan; formalizing mitigation commitments where needed; documenting agreements between various parties; and identifying incentives provided to the developer if applicable.

LEVEL B: VILLAGE MASTER PLAN, COMMUNITY CENTER, EMPLOYMENT CENTER OR URBAN CENTER

Level B approval is granted by the Environmental Planning Commission and the County Planning Commission for villages (neighborhood clusters) ranging in size from 650 to 1,200 acres. Plans must be reviewed for validity four years after initial approval is granted. Checklists for Level B approval are provided in the same four categories as for Level A above, however, requirements are much more specific:

- ***Land Use***—Specific identification of land uses by type, acreage, and parcel; conceptual description of village location, size, development intensities, service area, and market potential/opportunities; locations and densities of neighborhoods and centers; specific location of open space, parks, recreation areas and their linkages, as well as proposed ownership, management, and maintenance structure; and definition of key design characteristics.

Diez Señoras Compound, Illustration by George Lawerence Studio

- ***Transportation***—Includes disclosure statement regarding conformance with Level A transportation system plan; traffic studies for Level B elements; identification of circulation system down to a local street level (conceptual); typical cross-sections for major roadways; type and location of multi-modal transportation elements; performance objectives for increasing transit ridership; and other issues as identified at the Level A stage.
- ***Environment and Open Space***—Includes detailed analysis of natural features and other site characteristics; air quality conformance strategy; energy conservation strategy; conceptual drainage plan for management of watershed and floodplains; mitigation strategy for archaeological features; and siting of industrial land uses to avoid conflicts with ground water and other sensitive areas.
- ***Government and Public Spaces***—Includes strategy for funding and maintenance of public facilities and sites, including open space; facilities plan for water, sewer, drainage and mobility systems; annexation plan/agreement; statements of availability for water and public services.

Level B approval must occur in conjunction with a Level B development agreement that requires follow-through on detailed infrastructure/service agreements; specifies measures to mitigate negative consequences of the village's development; augments Level A development agreements as needed; and identifies specific incentives and/or partnerships.

LEVEL C: SUBDIVISION, SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Level C approvals are granted at the staff level within the city, provided a pre-application conference is conducted. Plans must be reviewed for validity two years after initial approval.

Level C submittals must address the following:

- ***Land Use***—Subdivision platting of lots and parcels; dedication of easements, rights-of-way, parks, public open space, and linkages; maximum floor area ratios for non-residential areas; lands use specifications and design standards within activity centers.
- ***Transportation***—Site-specific traffic impact study; platting and dedication of streets and trails; streetscape details; parking and internal circulation systems; location and dedication of transit facilities; mitigation of on- and off-site impacts.
- ***Environment and Open Space***—Platting and dedication of key site features identified within the plan; site-specific assessment and proposed maintenance program for open space components; air and water quality assessment and maintenance program; design and dedication of drainage facilities; geo-technical surveys and analysis as needed; final documentation of water availability, quantity, and quality; and final wastewater and solid waste management plan.
- ***Government and Public Service***—Detailed water, sewer, and drainage system design; implementation of Level B annexation agreement; subdivision and site plan financial guarantee for improvements; and negotiated agreement for future dedication of school sites.

Level C development agreements are also required to fully execute previous agreements.

SOURCES:

www.cabq.gov/planning/

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Verrado

DESCRIPTION

Verrado is located on 8,800 acres in Buckeye, Arizona, in the West Valley of Phoenix, just southeast of the White Tank Mountains. For many years the site was used as a proving ground for the Caterpillar Equipment Company, which left numerous visible scars on the desert landscape.

Although the project is officially within the municipal limits of the Town of Buckeye, it is physically detached from the town's core and from other developing areas. Verrado's developers saw this detachment, as well as the site's less than pristine condition, as an opportunity to build a master-planned community that would look, feel, and function as a distinct town of its own. With this approach in mind, Verrado was designed using traditional town-building principles to create a series of diverse neighborhoods organized around a community-oriented "main street" town center. Wanting to ensure that future homebuyers would fully understand the vision and character on which the community was being established, developers constructed the Main Street District—including the loft apartments, health club, welcome center, golf course club house, and a village green—prior to the construction of any detached homes, a risk they feel was worth taking.

At build-out, Verrado will include more than 9,000 homes. Phase I, which opened in January 2004, will include approximately 2,000 homes in three distinct neighborhoods, including urban neighborhoods clustered in and around the mixed-use town center, traditional neighborhoods surrounding the community's parks and schools, and larger-lot neighborhoods surrounding the golf course (already in operation). The first group of model homes opened in April 2004 and the community's first elementary and middle schools are scheduled to open in the fall of 2005. The Main Street District's first retail tenants, a 16,000 square foot Bashas specialty grocery store and a 2,165 square foot Bank of America office, were scheduled to open in the summer of 2004.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Buckeye, Arizona

Context:
40 minutes west of downtown Phoenix

Project Size:
8,800 acres

Phase I:
1,145 acres

Total Units—Planned:
9,500 (Zoned for up to 14,000)

Opened:
January 2004

Planning Started:
1999

Anticipated Build-out:
2018

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types/Character

Verrado was designed to include a variety of housing types to appeal to a diverse group of people. Housing types range from high-density apartments, lofts, and townhomes integrated as part of the Main Street District, to traditional small-lot single-family detached homes, to large-lot resort type homes surrounding the golf course.

Wanting to ensure Verrado's homes would have a character in keeping with its small town feel that was distinctly different from other master-planned communities in the West Valley, developers and designers visited many prewar era towns across the West, including nearby Glendale—known for its charming Caitlin Court historic district. Armed with many images of the character they were seeking, developers worked with designers to develop homes that were reminiscent of the communities they visited, but that would be unique to Verrado—with broad front porches, recessed and detached garages, and a high level of architectural detailing.

Early plans for more "far out" architectural character were ultimately scrapped due to the need for designs to be adapted for production builders. To ensure the character would not be overly diluted by repetition, multiple home builders construct units within each neighborhood and follow strict design guidelines that address the number of models along a particular street, the appearance of the homes from the sidewalk, and many other design details.

Developers acknowledge that the smaller lots and varied home types offered at Verrado are untested in the Phoenix market, but feel that the combination of community style and a "sense of place" will appeal to homeowners desiring to live somewhere out of the ordinary. Initially, homes ranged in price from $180,000 to $400,000.

Retail/Commercial/Employment

Verrado's Main Street District is located at the center of the community—two miles north of Interstate 10. While "burying" retail within neighborhoods and away from high visibility roadways is often viewed as a risky decision, the developers wanted Verrado's core activity area to be focused on views of the nearby White Tank Mountains, not on passing traffic. The Main Street District features a traditional design organized around the village green and anchored on either end by what are anticipated to be two of the community's hubs of activity—the Golf Club House and the Health Club. The Main Street District includes a mix of uses, including a grocery store, retail shops, and apartment and loft residences. The district is also very pedestrian-friendly, with large storefronts, lush landscaping, wide sidewalks, and narrow streets leading into the adjacent neighborhoods.

At Verrado's south end, bordering Interstate 10, a large parcel of land has been set aside for future office and industrial space, as well as a large regional retail center, currently in the planning phase. Retail is a niche that has yet to be tapped in the retail-starved West Valley. It is anticipated that this area will make up a large percentage of the more than four million sf of commercial planned at Verrado and will serve a much larger market. In fact, more than 240,000 homes have been approved for construction within the next 10 years as part of several other large master-planned communities within Buckeye's jurisdiction, including Tartesso and Sun Valley South.

Open Space/Parks/Trails
Verrado's first phase will include more than 20 community and neighborhood parks, in keeping with one of the community's goals to ensure that most residents live within two blocks of a park. Many of the parks are located along major street sightlines and are visible from surrounding homes.

Phase I also includes three miles of paths and trails along the Acacia, Sunrise, and Lost Creek washes. Trails will provide linkages to different areas of the community, as well as to an additional 20 miles of shared use trails in the adjacent White Tank Mountain Regional Park, which covers more than 30,000 acres.

Street Design and Circulation Systems
In keeping with its small-town character, Verrado's neighborhoods are organized around a traditional gridded street network. Streets have been deliberately narrowed from Buckeye's standard street cross-section requirements to create a more intimate character and to slow traffic. Detached sidewalks are buffered from the street by street trees and provide direct linkages to the community's extensive trail system.

Outside of Verrado's core neighborhoods where topography is more distinct and development is less intense, streets will be more relaxed in character—winding to follow the contours of the land.

To serve the property, developers constructed an interchange on Interstate 10 and several miles of Verrado Way, a landscaped boulevard that serves as the community's primary access road.

Project Data

LAND USE MIX

LAND USE	PLANNED
Residential	2,700 acres
Commercial/ Retail	4M sf
Office	2M sf
Open Space	3,900 acres
Public/Civic Facilities	220 acres
Mixed-Use/Town Center	300 acres

Project Sales Performance:

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	9,500 planned
Price range (per sf):	$91.26–$135.88
Average price (per sf):	$107.93
Annual absorption rate:	150

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

The Town of Buckeye is currently home to just under 10,000 residents, yet encompasses more than 600 square miles of land within its municipal limits—largely due to the annexation of multiple master-planned communities within the last decade. The largest of these is Douglas Ranch, which spans more than 32,000 acres. Several others, including Verrado, fall within the 8,000-12,000 range. Town planners will process more than 3,000 units this year and anticipate an additional 5,000-6,000 next year.

Although the town is also experiencing a great deal of growth on a smaller scale, it uses several planning documents to facilitate the development of large master-planned communities in particular.

BUCKEYE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Buckeye General Development Plan provides the highest level of guidance for the community, containing policies on 13 elements ranging from land use, to community facilities, to development growth areas. The plan contains numerous policies pertinent to the development of large master-planned communities including regional open spaces and transportation policies.

AREA PLAN

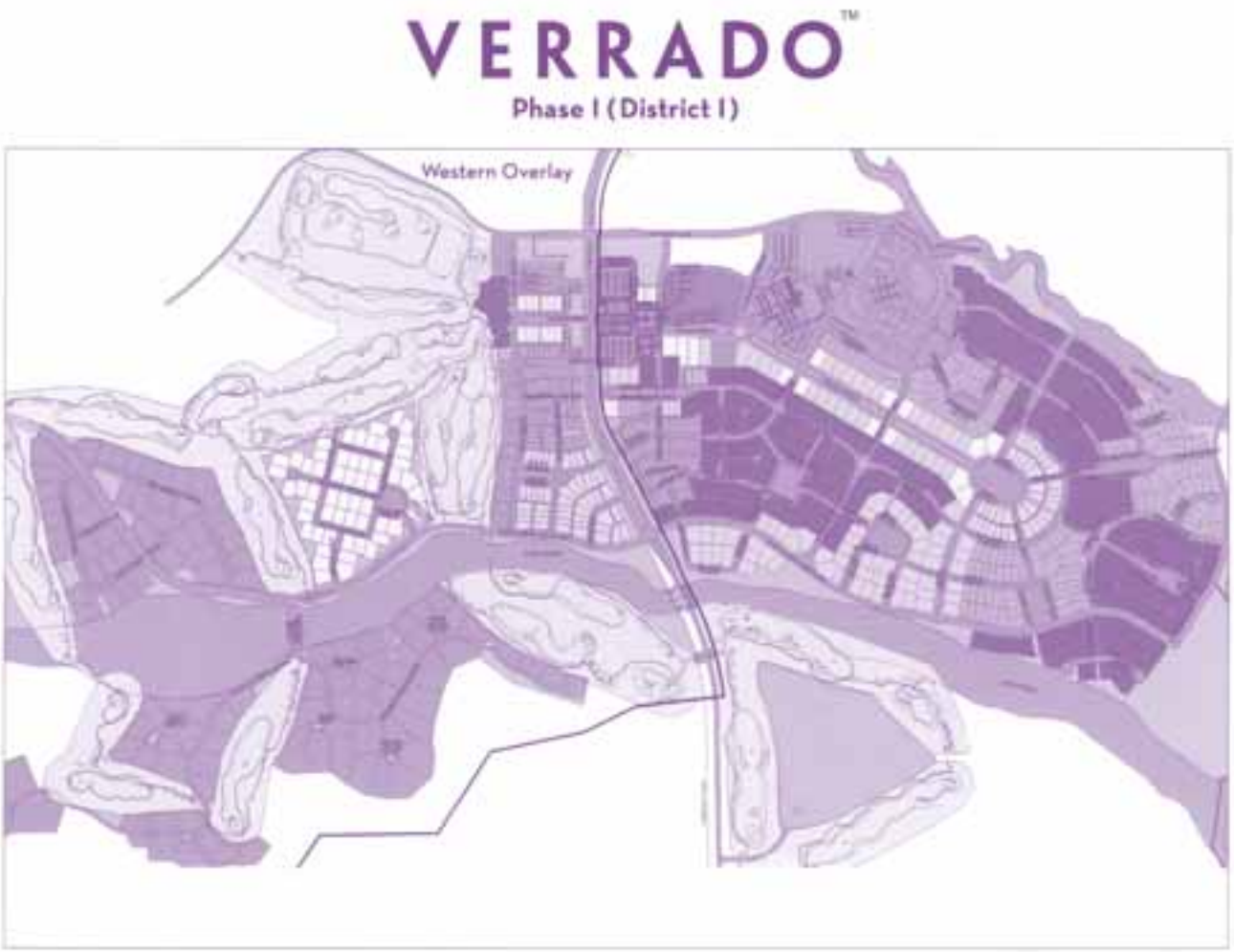
The development of an area plan is typically used as the first step in planning for a large parcel of land within the town. It is at this stage that the adopted policies of the general plan are used to evaluate development potential and public facility needs. Although the primary purpose of the area plan tool is to identify general land use patterns, densities, and public facility requirements on a particular property, regional issues such as water availability and transportation capacity are also addressed. Area plans are adopted by the Town Council and are then implemented through the adoption of a community master plan.

COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

The community master plan (CMP) serves as the town's primary means of regulating the development of large master-planned communities. Although they are typically used in conjunction with an adopted area plan, a CMP may also be used independently. CMPs are required to be in conformance with the adopted policies of the general plan; however, with council approval some flexibility is allowed as to how the policies would be achieved.

CMPs establish land use, densities, provision of public facilities, design standards, phasing schedules, procedures for administration, and all other regulatory provisions necessary for the development of the master-planned community. Within the CMP designation, master-planned communities of more than 640 acres (1 square mile) in size are given the option of developing unique zoning and design standards independent of the town's adopted development code—essentially coming up with a separate code just for the master-planned community. According to town planners, the option is used more often than not, and in fact serves as a major incentive for developers to build in Buckeye and not in a neighboring community where their particular project would have to be "pounded to fit" a more narrowly defined set of regulations.

CMP approvals do not result in changes to the zoning map, but are governed through a separate development agreement between the master developer and the Town Council. Development agreements outline cost and responsibilities for the provision and timing of public facilities. Three- to five-year performance criteria are built into development agreements as a "checks and balances" measure.



BUCKEYE DEVELOPMENT CODE

As is typical with most codes, Buckeye's Development Code contains minimum standards for development to regulate parking, densities, lot specifications, setbacks, street design, landscaping and other site planning considerations; however, the code contains several standards worth mentioning as they pertain to master-planned communities. These standards are intended to ensure that smaller master-planned communities not eligible for, or likely to use, the CMP process maintain a consistently high level of quality.

Key standards include:

- "3x3" residential variety requirement that applies to floor plans, colors, and facades;
- Graduated scale for densities beginning with three dwelling units/acre and 10 percent open space, increasing by a dwelling unit for each additional percentage of the property that is dedicated as open space; and
- Residential density bonus for projects of "exceptional quality."

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING

Nearly all of the master-planned communities located in Buckeye have used the Arizona Community Facilities District Act as a means of funding major public improvements and infrastructure needs. Under the act, municipalities are allowed to form special districts for such a purpose. Once completed, improvements are turned over to the municipality.

The town does not have transportation impact fees since developments typically pay for the improvements. However, it is in the process of adopting an impact fee system that will apply only to highway interchanges.

SOURCES:

www.buckeyeaz.org

www.verrado.com

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Vistancia

DESCRIPTION

Vistancia is a 7,100 acre master-planned community located northwest of Phoenix in the City of Peoria, Arizona. Nestled in the desert foothills, Vistancia was designed as a family-oriented community intended to meet the day-to-day needs of multiple generations. To this end, the community will feature 11 distinct neighborhoods with a variety of housing types centered around the 11 acre Mountain Vista Club, which contains swimming pools, an indoor gym, and meeting rooms.

Environmental sensitivity is one of the hallmarks of Vistancia's design. This is evident in the lush desert plantings that line the community's streets, most of which were created from vegetation salvaged from the site prior to construction, and in the natural transitions between neighborhoods. A 900 acre mountain preserve is also planned to protect the surrounding foothill landscape.

The community opened in February 2004 and is anticipated to take up to 15 years to be completed, depending upon market demand. At build-out the population could reach 45,000.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Peoria, Arizona (Maricopa County)

Context:
Northwest valley of Phoenix

Project Size:
7,100 acres

Total Units—Existing:
Approximately 200

Total Units—Planned:
17,000

Construction Started:
2003

Projected Build-out:
2019

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types

Vistancia's Land Use Master Plan designates a variety of housing types within 11 neighborhoods:

- Large-lot, single-family residential at densities of 2.0–5.0 dwelling units per acre;
- Medium-density residential at densities of 5.0–8.0 dwelling units per acre;
- Medium- to high-density residential at densities of 8.0–15.0 dwelling units per acre; and
- High-density residential at a density of 15 dwelling units or more per acre.

The 1,300 acre first phase of development, which opened in the spring of 2004, will contain approximately 1,250 units, including a gated, age-qualified neighborhood aimed at buyers aged 55 and over.

Retail/Commercial/Employment

Approximately 680 acres at Vistancia are planned for retail, commercial, mixed-use, and business park facilities. These facilities are anticipated to include more than six million sf of space at build-out. Construction on this component of the master plan is anticipated to begin by the summer of 2005.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

Approximately 1,700 acres of open space have been set aside at Vistancia, including a 900 acre mountain preserve, two city regional parks, and five city neighborhood parks. In addition, a three-mile interpretive trail called the Discovery Trail will link community destinations while educating residents on their desert surroundings. The trail's interactive themes include a wildlife refuge, cultural walk, solar garden, and an interpretive desert garden.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	17,000
Price range (per sf):	$83.91-$143.76
Average price (per sf):	$90.07
Annual absorption rate:	N/A

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

The City of Peoria uses a two-tiered planning process to address most of its master-planned communities: the general plan and the planned community district contained in its zoning ordinance. In some instances specific area plans are also used, but this was not the case with Vistancia.

PEORIA GENERAL PLAN

The Peoria General Plan provides broad policy direction for all types of development within the city. As it pertains specifically to master-planned communities, the plan contains a growth areas element that identifies areas where future growth will be targeted. One of the primary goals identified for these growth areas is to promote "efficient development areas which support a variety of land use types, conserve natural resources, reduce automobile dependency, and exhibit a logical extension of infrastructure and service capacities."

Vistancia, along with several other master-planned communities, is located within the North Central Peoria/Lake Pleasant Parkway Corridor growth area. The area is recognized as becoming the next area of urbanization and infrastructure expansion for the city. The general plan recommends the development of specific area plans to provide further direction on each area. To date the North Central Peoria/Lake Pleasant Parkway Corridor has had a specific area plan prepared, but it is more focused on the conservation of scenic amenities along the corridor through the use of clustered development nodes and other strategies.

PLANNED COMMUNITIES DISTRICT

The Planned Community (PC) District provides an alternative zoning district and development process for master-planned communities intended to encourage creativity and promote development patterns that respond to the varied and often unique features of larger sites. More specifically, the PC District enables the incorporation of mixed-uses, unique design features, or other techniques that would not be permitted within the city's standard zoning districts. The PC District also ensures that the proposed master-planned community can be developed in phases over an extended period of time while maintaining a high level of continuity.

Projects proposed within the PC District must be a minimum of 600 contiguous acres in size and be in conformance with the city's general plan, overlay districts, and other applicable regulations. Applications are required to be accompanied by a Standards Report and Development Plan, as set forth within the ordinance.

STANDARDS REPORT

The Standards Report is required to include all pertinent information regarding the proposed project, including its purpose, nature, and defining characteristics. Proposed land uses must be displayed, along with a detailed description of each "development unit" in terms of its proposed use breakdown, projected employees, maximum dwelling units, floor area ratios, and a proposed zoning district (either an existing zoning district, or a proposed modified district).

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SCHEDULE

The Development Plan is required as a companion piece to the Standards Report and includes a Development Plan Map that illustrates the project's land use and circulation concept and is consistent with the goals and policies of the general plan and the environmental conditions of the site, and may be served by existing and planned public facilities and utilities. Reports on drainage and hydrology, water and sewer system, traffic impacts, and infrastructure and facilities costs must all be submitted as part of the development plan. In addition, a development schedule indicates the approximate timeframe in which construction or development will begin and its anticipated duration, as well as a proposed phasing strategy if the property will not be developed simultaneously.

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

Projects proposed within the PC District are treated and adopted as "rezonings." Future amendments to an approved PC District are processed as minor or major amendments. Major amendment triggers include proposed changes to land uses, densities that increase more than 10 percent, or other adjustments that alter the original intent of the PC District or are likely to burden public facilities.

SOURCES:

www.vistancia.com

www.peoriaaz.com/index1.htm

CONTACTS:

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DC Ranch

DESCRIPTION

DC Ranch is a diverse mixed-use community nestled at the foot of the McDowell Mountains in the geographic center of Scottsdale, Arizona. The community is planned to include four village neighborhoods, each offering a unique character and varied amenities. One of the most notable features of DC Ranch is its impressive sensitivity toward the natural desert environment. The site's many washes and arroyos have been preserved in their natural state, protecting native vegetation and drainage systems while giving the project an appealing "wildness" that truly defines its character. In addition, many features have been incorporated that not only help protect the natural features of the site, but also highlight them as major character defining elements, for instance, the appearance of major boulevards and trails are downplayed with narrow cross-sections and a lack of formalized landscaping.

Although homes are not particularly diverse in terms of their architectural character, their earth-toned stucco walls and tiles roofs also complement the natural landscape, serving to minimize the visual impacts of developed areas when viewed from major roadways and pedestrian systems. Most of residents' daily needs can be met at Market Street, which offers a grocery store, restaurants, and several retail shops. The area also serves as a gathering space for residents with its inviting plaza and other outdoor seating areas. An existing community center and school, combined with other planned amenities on-site, will minimize the need for cross-town trips and help foster a sense of community.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Scottsdale, Arizona

Context:
North of Phoenix-west of McDowell Mountains

Project Size:
8,281 acres (3,700 developable—balance has been incorporated into the McDowell Sonoran Preserve)

Total Units—Existing:
Approximately 2,500

Total Units—Planned:
4,000–5,000

Planning Started:
1993

Construction Started:
1997

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types

Within its four village neighborhoods, DC Ranch includes a diverse selection of homes, including attached villas, single-family homes, and luxury apartments and condominiums. Higher-density homes are concentrated in and around Market Street, with lower-density development "feathering" out toward the steeper slopes of the McDowell Mountains. Homes range in price from the high $100,000's for a townhome adjacent to Market Street, to between $300,000 and $500,000 for cottages and manor homes in the Desert Parks Village, to several million dollars for a custom home in one of several guard-gated neighborhoods.

Retail/Commercial

Market Street, DC Ranch's 300,000 sf town center, includes a variety of retail shops, office space, public safety facilities, and restaurants, as well as the DC Ranch Welcome Center, Realty Office, and Property Management Office, all organized in an inviting "main street" setting. Market Street opened in 2002 and, despite a prominent location at the intersection of Pima Road and Thompson Peak Parkway, maintains a low profile amidst its desert surroundings in a style that is uncharacteristic of a retail center. Subtle architectural details reflect the natural character of the site and incorporate elements from the site's ranching history, blending in beautifully with earth-toned walls and the liberal use of natural materials, including local stone, unearthed during street and water line construction. Even the Safeway grocery store is barely visible from adjacent Pima Road amidst the lush desert vegetation.

Although its timing remains uncertain, plans for a mixed-use town center at the base of the McDowell Mountains remain a key component of the community's overall Master Plan Map. Initially planned for 60 acres, detailed plans for the center developed by Calthorpe Associates illustrate a 218 acre design concept that would include a retail main street, condominiums, a resort hotel, spa and conference center, as well as a mix of other housing types.

Parks/Open Space/Recreation

Approximately 4,500 acres of DC Ranch's total acreage has been incorporated as part of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, planned to ultimately include 36,460 acres. The Preserve provides a scenic backdrop for the community and will eventually allow residents an opportunity to access miles of multi-use trails and natural desert. DC Ranch also offers a number of more formal parks and recreational opportunities, including the Desert Camp community recreational facility, two private golf courses, and a variety of neighborhood parks.

Street Design and Circulation Systems

Roadways in DC Ranch have intentionally been narrowed from Scottsdale's typical specifications and feature a much more rural cross-section. In addition, formal tree lawns and sidewalks typically found along the manicured boulevards of more conventional master-planned developments have been replaced by broad buffers of untamed desert landscaping. Constructed as part of Phase I development, 13 miles of discrete pathways and trails meander among the lush vegetation next to roadways and along the sites many washes, providing linkages between villages, to Market Street, and to other amenities located on the site. To maintain an uninterrupted flow of movement and to minimize vehicle and pedestrian conflicts, trails and walkways have been designed to pass beneath roadways in many cases.

Project Data

LAND USE MIX

LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
Residential	2,300	27.8
Commercial/Retail	30	0.7
Open Space	760	9.2
Public/Civic Facilities	100	1.2
Recreation/Amenities	400	4.8
Resort/Residential	50	0.6
Town Center (Mixed-Use)	60	0.7
Other Non-Developable Space (transferred to McDowell Preserve)	4,581	55.3
TOTAL:	8,281	100.0

HOUSING MIX

HOUSING TYPE	# OF UNITS
Single-family detached	1,103
Townhomes	150
Condominiums	150
Apartments	1,200
TOTAL:	2,309

*As of May 2004, total number of units at build-out is anticipated to be between 5,000-6,000.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance:

Total # of units:	
Price range (per sf):	
Average price (per sf):	
Annual absorption rate:	

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

Overview

The City of Scottsdale uses a three-level general planning approach. A citywide "blueprint" is set forth in Scottsdale's General Plan, which contains the following elements: character and design, community involvement, public services and facilities, housing, neighborhoods, cost of development, growth areas, preservation and environmental planning, open space and recreation, land use, economic vitality, and community mobility. To address the unique needs of specific areas, character planning is conducted through the use of strategic area and character plans that provide more detailed discussions and policies. To provide an even finer grain of detail, neighborhood plans are conducted where necessary. DC Ranch, in combination with the Pima Acres Subdivision and Ironwood Village development, is identified as a unique character area, but is not governed by a specific character plan because the area was well on its way toward being developed when the general plan was last updated in 2001.

Despite the win-win outcome of DC Ranch for both the developer and the city, early plans for DC Ranch were marred by a lawsuit when the developer filed a takings claim against the city over an environmentally sensitive land designation in its master plan. Through the litigation process, a development agreement was reached that allowed the project to move forward in its current form, with development intensities substantially reduced from what was initially proposed. Detailed project specifications and design standards were included in the agreement, which allowed many of the unique design characteristics to be implemented, such as the reduced street widths, a specific architectural palate, garage specifications, varied landscape character, and other features that would otherwise not be addressed or permitted within the city's standard code.

Although the city has a long track record of pushing for environmentally sensitive design that is in keeping with its established character, several programs and initiatives—some of them developed subsequent to DC Ranch's approval—have strengthened its position and will help ensure that it continues to see high-quality, sensitive development at a variety of scales, ranging from the large master-planned community on the fringe to a small retail center in an established area of town. A brief summary of these follows.

SENSITIVE DESIGN PROGRAM

To ensure that its residents may retain their high quality of life, Scottsdale has gone to great lengths to protect the natural features attributed to its Sonoran Desert location and to ensure that future development is in keeping with the community's established character. To this end, a comprehensive compilation of policies and guidelines related to the city's built environment was developed entitled the Sensitive Design Program. The Program is based on several elements, including the Sensitive Design Principles and a set of Architectural Design Guidelines.

SENSITIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

One of the key components of the program is the Sensitive Design Principles, approved in August 2000 and amended in March 2001. The principles were derived from existing city policies and from concepts developed by citizen groups as a means of articulating Scottsdale's vision and to outline design expectations. The principles address such issues as:

- Building, signage, and site design;
- Site layout;
- Relationship to and protection of the natural landscape;
- Encouraging the use of alternative modes;
- Pedestrian amenities;
- Sustainable building practices; and
- Water conservation.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

To help support the objectives of the Sensitive Design Program, and to assist applicants, decision-makers, and staff with consistent development review, architectural design guidelines were developed for four types of uses commercial/retail, restaurants, office, and gas stations/convenience stores. The guidelines are applied throughout the community and are structured to respond to the varying conditions and constraints inherent to individual site and contextual settings.

SCENIC CORRIDOR DESIGN GUIDELINES

A third component of the Sensitive Design Program is the Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines. Applicable to key portions of six major roadways within Scottsdale, including the portion of Pima Road that creates the western boundary of DC Ranch, these guidelines provide a mechanism to encourage the protection of the natural setting along these highly visible areas of the community. Each of the scenic corridors is notable for its desert landscape setbacks, views of desert landforms, and view corridors along major washes. In many cases, desert setbacks also help buffer adjacent land uses from the busy thoroughfares. Corridors are designated at the general plan level.

GREAT SONORAN DESERT DESIGN CONCEPTS

The city also refers developers to its Great Sonoran Desert Design Concepts for ideas and recommendations based on minimizing the visual impact of the built environment on the natural desert setting. The design concepts were created by a group of citizens and presented to the city for further action/implementation. The concepts are applicable to those areas that fall within the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance Area, including DC Ranch, and urge developers and residents to:

- Respect, protect, and conserve the special features of the environment;
- Blend with the natural shape and texture of the land;
- Use natural desert landscaping as much as possible;
- Design spaces that extend to the outdoors;
- Maintain starry nights and dark skies with limited lighting;
- Provide for meaningful natural desert open space;
- Consider all sides of buildings as part of the character of the area;
- Use colors and materials that blend into the natural setting; and
- Emulate Scottsdale's rich and diverse southwestern architectural heritage.

GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM

The city has also taken a proactive approach to encouraging the use of a Green Building Program, adopting a voluntary program that offers incentives such as expedited plan review for qualified residential and commercial projects. The program encourages environmentally responsible building through the incorporation of healthy, resource—and energy—efficient materials and methods in the design and construction projects.

The program was established in 1998 as part of an industry advisory committee, and was Arizona's first Green Building Program developed as a means of mitigating the negative impacts of building and development on the environment. Projects are evaluated using a point system that rates them in the areas of site, energy, building materials, indoor air quality, water, and solid waste. To promote use of the program, a multitude of workshops, lectures and public events about green buildings are offered to educate and promote the benefits of an environmentally responsible lifestyle.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS ORDINANCE

In addition to the many advisory programs and guidelines outlined above, Scottsdale has also implemented an Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance to help enforce critical issues. The ordinance is designed to provide protection of people and property from hazardous conditions related to environmentally sensitive areas, to minimize public costs of providing public services and facilities in sensitive areas, and to protect and preserve:

- Significant natural and visual resources;
- Renewable and nonrenewable resources such as water and air quality, soils, and natural vegetation; and
- The character of the natural desert landscape.

To accomplish these objectives, the ordinance provides detailed criteria to guide the location, intensity, and design of all development located within areas designated as environmentally sensitive. Color, massing, materials, grading techniques, and landscaping are all evaluated for their visual impact upon the natural character of the landscape. The ordinance also ensures that significant open spaces, such as washes, floodplains, view corridors, and wildlife habitats may be preserved in their natural state. The impacts of the ordinance are visible throughout DC Ranch. In fact, much of the lush desert vegetation found in developed areas of the community can be attributed in part to a provision in the ordinance that requires all significant vegetation on the site that must be disturbed during development to be boxed, stored, and reused on the site. The ordinance has been in place since 1991 and is periodically reviewed and updated to reflect the city's most current thinking and to refine and increase the effectiveness of the language.

SOURCES:

www.ScottsdaleAZ.Gov

www.dcranch.com/hybrid/intro.html

Urban Land Institute, Great Planned Communities, 2002

CONTACTS:

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Rancho Sahuarita

DESCRIPTION

Rancho Sahuarita is located nine miles south of Tucson, Arizona, and just west of the Santa Cruz River within the Town of Sahuarita. It is a planned community that will ultimately include single- and multi-family homes as well as commercial, park, and industrial land uses. Sharpe and Associates, Inc., is developing the entire project, which encompasses 2,810 acres. The project's backers purchased the land on January 1, 1994, prior to the town's incorporation. More than 1,000 homes were sold within the first two years after opening.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Sahuarita, Arizona

Context:
9 miles south of Tucson

Project Size:
2,810 acres

Total Units—Existing:
460+/-

Total Units—Planned:
750

Opened:
2001

Projected Build-out:
10,600

The grand opening of the community was October 2001, and the expected build-out is in 2015, with a total of 10,600 homes planned. The following is a breakdown of land use.

- Residential–1,531 acres
- Town center–122 acres
- Regional commercial center–302 acres
- Industrial park–172 acres
- Public facilities–249 acres
- Park/open space–241 acres

Community amenities include a private swim and fitness center, hiking trails, a 10 acre lake and park (the state stocks the lake with fish twice a month and a free sail boat is offered with every home), a K-12 school campus, a U.S. Post Office, and two adult living communities. Cox Communications, the preferred supplier of all high-speed information at Rancho Sahuarita, will provide phone, cable, and Internet services. Rancho Sahuarita also has its own water company and wastewater facility. Proposed features include places of worship, a golf course, a town center, a linear park and commercial sites.

The main street development is envisioned as a mix of new retail, institutional and commercial services, including a town hall and a fire station. There are also plans to include multi-family housing within the town center (currently there is no multi-family housing located within the community). The developers also have plans for a grocery-anchored community center at the northeast corner of Sahuarita Road and I-19.

The first phase includes plans for 2,500 units in nine neighborhoods. Each community includes its own neighborhood park with a trail system that leads to the lake. The six designated home builders are D.R. Horton, Insight, KB Home, Monterey, Pulte Homes, and Richmond American. The second phase includes 1,000 home lots and a town center. The lot premium for a home location on the lake is $75,000.

The developer visited about 25 different master-planned communities across the country in order to incorporate the most successful features in other areas. Since providing affordable housing was a major concern, more than 30 different home models in the development are priced between $100,000 and $200,000. According to the developer, 70 percent of Tucson buyers purchase homes for under $200,000. More expensive homes, including custom designs, are available in the $200,000 to $400,000 range. Homes are reportedly averaging 10 to 15

percent lower than for equivalent homes in the Tucson area. Inexpensive land has allowed the builders to pass on some of the savings to the homebuyers. In addition to affordability, the developer also wanted to provide attractive amenities. The clubhouse includes a pool, waterpark, exercise facility, dance studio, sports bar, and teen room.

While the Town of Sahuarita already had a K-12 school, the developer donated 33 acres of land to the school system and helped float a $25 million bond issue for a new middle school and improvements to the existing high school facility. There are no impact fees; however, builders pay a $2,500 parks and recreation fee. Del Webb is building two active adult communities within Rancho Sahuarita—Sonora and Las Brisas. Sonora by Del Webb will offer single-family homes as well as duplexes and triplexes. The age-restricted community will eventually include just over 1,000 homes and its own recreational facility.

A summary of the characteristics of the 19 single-family home projects in Rancho Sahuarita is included at the end of this project profile. Based on the 4th Quarter 2003 Meyer Group Competitive Housing Market Report, there are 2,245 units planned among the 19 projects. The average sales pace per month (since project opening) is 3.69 units, with an average price per square foot range of $76.48 to $103.59 and an average size range of 1,451 to 2,376 square feet. The average monthly homeowner's association fee is $53. Total home sales throughout the community have been averaging about 50 homes per month.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance:

Total # of units:	10,600
Price range (per sf):	$76.48–$103.59
Average price (per sf):	$88.21
Annual absorption rate:	1,235

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

The Town of Sahuarita, incorporated in 1994, contained an estimated population of 4,600 persons in 2001. The town's general plan, adopted in 2002, projects a population of 23,000 persons by the year 2012, growing to more than 45,000 by the year 2020.

The town has adopted several specific plans, including the Rancho Sahuarita Specific Plan, which is incorporated by reference into the general plan. The specific plan was most recently updated in February 2003 and is intended to combine the elements of various town regulations into one document that governs all development, in order to establish a flexible and cost-effective framework for the Rancho Sahuarita development. The specific plan includes the following elements:

- ***Site Analysis and Inventory***– including a detailed inventory of the site's physical features, as well as all facilities and services available in the vicinity of the site.
- ***Development Plan***–including an overall land use plan, circulation concept plan, public facilities and services plans, landscape concept, recreation and trails concept, and a grading concept. Development Regulations, including detailed standards and guidelines for the following features:
  - Land use plan designations;
  - Development area categories;
  - Building height regulations;
  - Archeological regulations; and
  - Hydrology and drainage regulations.

- ***Design Guidelines***–including standards for site planning, architectural guidelines, landscape, and signage.

The plan outlines a detailed phasing plan that governs the timing of the various development areas, as well as roadways and other public facilities. The specific plan is essentially implemented through the subdivision process.

Summerlin has also been recognized for its sensitivity to the fragile desert environment. Developers have worked closely with the Bureau of Land Management, Clark County, the City of Las Vegas and other regional partners to protect washes and arroyos in their natural state and to provide trail linkages to other regional open space systems, including the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.

SOURCES:

Rancho Sahuarita Specific Plan, 1996
(Revised Draft-February 2003)

www.ranchosahuarita.com

CONTACTS:

Town of Sahuarita
Planning and Zoning
850-B West Sahuarita Road
Sahuarita, AZ 85629
(520) 648-1972

Summerlin

DESCRIPTION

Summerlin is located within the city limits of Las Vegas, Nevada, a city that has seen staggering amounts of growth in the past 15 years. In fact, between 1990 and 2000, the city increased its population by 73 percent. Although growth rates have eased slightly, according to city records, fourth quarter residential building permits in 2003 still exceeded 2,000—more than most comparable communities see in a year. Much of the city's growth boom has taken place in the form of large master-planned communities at the fringe of the urbanized area. Summerlin is one of the largest and most well-known of these communities.

In its 14 year history, Summerlin has established itself as one of the best-selling master-planned communities in the country. Encompassing more than 36 square miles of desert on the western fringe of the Las Vegas metropolitan area, Summerlin provides a broad mix of uses distributed within 30 distinct villages grouped around a major business core and town center. Villages are categorized according to their character and land use composition and range in size from 100 acres to more than 1,300 acres. Those categorized as primary are the most intense and diverse of the three, with a wide range of housing types, schools, parks, and other community-based amenities; those designated as amenity-based are geared toward a more focused market niche with high-end, golf course-oriented housing; low-density villages are located on the fringes of the community and may include hotels, resorts, and golf courses in addition to moderate- to high-end housing in a less urbanized setting. A hierarchy of commercial and retail services is located throughout the community.

To date, nine of the villages have been completed and eight are in active stages of development. The community is already home to 85,000 residents and has established itself as a major employment center within the valley, providing 17,500 jobs as of March 2004 in fields that include health care, retail, and the high tech industry. At build-out, Summerlin's population will reach 160,000.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Las Vegas, Nevada

Context:
20 minutes west of the Strip

Project Size:
22,500 acres

Total Units—Existing:
34,534

Total Units—Planned:
64,000

Employment:
17,500

Planning Started:
1980s

Construction Started:
1990

Projected Build-out:
2020

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types

Each of Summerlin's villages contains a mix of single-family and multi-family homes, ranging from high-end custom homes to townhomes, apartments, and condominiums. Senior housing options and assisted living facilities have been incorporated into a handful of the villages and provide a range of on-site services for residents. Although the mix of housing types at the village level seems relatively diverse, a look at the overall project statistics reveals that more than 80 percent of the units constructed to date have been single-family detached homes.

Retail/Commercial

Summerlin currently contains six commercial/retail centers strategically located throughout the community. Centers vary in size according to their area of influence from neighborhood-scale centers, such as the Trails Village Center, which is anchored by a grocery store and drug store; to community centers featuring a broad array of "big box" stores such as Costco, Best Buy, Bed Bath and Beyond, and others appealing to the larger community; to a recently unveiled mega-mall called Fashion Show, featuring more than two million square feet of retail and 200 shops that will likely attract patrons from throughout the Las Vegas Valley. In addition to the existing centers, several centers are in the planning stages in Summerlin's newer southern and western regions. In all, about four million square feet of retail/commercial have been approved.

Office/Employment

Over the past 14 years, Summerlin has managed to build a significant employment base that not only provides residents with a variety of job opportunities within close proximity of their homes, but also helps ensure the heath and vitality of the area's many retail and commercial centers. Employers are scattered among the community's many office parks and retail/commercial centers, including such companies as Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, Humana Health Insurance of Nevada, Williams Sonoma, Inc., Sallie Mae, owestfare.com, Fairfield Acceptance, Bechtel Nevada/Science Applications International Corp., and American Express Financial Services. Existing office square footages total well over a million, but approved square footages are closer to 16 million.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

Nearly 30 percent of Summerlin's total acreage has been set aside as community space in the form of recreational facilities, golf courses, passive and active open areas, and natural preserved areas. Approximately half of this acreage is devoted to irrigated open space and the other half to the preservation of natural features such as washes, arroyos, and desert canyons.

Summerlin's many villages are linked by the 107 mile Summerlin Trail System, providing off-road circulation for walkers, joggers, cyclists, and skaters. The system includes a variety of trail types including street-side trails, which serve as the framework of the system; village trails that follow natural arroyos and man-made open space corridors; regional trails planned along the eight mile Western Beltway corridor and flood control channels; and natural trails within undeveloped areas of Summerlin that will ultimately connect to the regional system. Regional trails will provide linkages to Bureau of Land Management land in the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area and are intended to be multi-use, non-motorized trails. These trails will be constructed through public/private partnerships between Clark County, Las Vegas, and the Howard Hughes Corporation. At completion, the Summerlin Trail System will include more than 150 miles of trails.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreational facilities are abundant in Summerlin. Currently, there are 19 major parks and more than 80 neighborhood/pocket parks. Major parks range in size from just over six acres to nearly 70 acres. Amenities vary by park, but include community centers, lighted playfields and tennis courts, picnic pavilions, children's play areas, jogging paths, and swimming pools, along with abundant space for more passive recreational pursuits. Two additional parks are currently in the planning stages. Summerlin is also home to nine public and private golf courses.

Project Data:

LAND USE MIX

LAND USE	ACRES
Residential	12,800
Employment/Industrial	1,760
Retail/Services	400
Office	16 M sf
Open Space	6,500

HOUSING TYPE	# OF UNITS
Single-family detached	23,279
Townhomes	1,016
Condominiums	1,973
Apartments	1,200
TOTAL:	1,935

As of May 2004

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	64,000
Price range (per sf):	$101.54–$216.46
Average price (per sf):	$154.53
Annual absorption rate:	656

OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

PLANNED COMMUNITY (P-C) DISTRICT

Within the City of Las Vegas, planned communities such as Summerlin must be included in the Planned Community (P-C) District, which encourages the development of unique, comprehensively planned communities with a minimum of 3,000 contiguous acres under a single ownership or control. In order to qualify for P-C District zoning, the master developer must demonstrate how a series of specific objectives will be achieved during the planning, design, and development stages. Key objectives include provision of the following items:

- A mix of housing types, employment opportunities, and commercial services to encourage a diverse population;
- A planned and integrated multi-modal transportation system;
- Adequate open space and community facilities;
- Cultural, educational, medical, religious, and recreational facilities; and
- View corridor and natural feature protection.

Approval of P-C District zoning is awarded in conjunction with the approval and adoption of a Planned Community Program that establishes the types and general relationships of land uses on the site, maximum per gross acre residential densities, open space quantity and location, and other factors necessary to meet the objectives outlined above. A process for modification to the original Planned Community Program is included,

provided the modification would be consistent with the approved planning objectives and goals for the property. Within the P-C District, projects must set aside a minimum of 20 percent of the gross property area for open space, recreational facilities, multi-purpose trails, pedestrian and bikeway facilities, and other community or landscaped areas located within the public right-of-way. In addition, standard street and subdivision design requirements within the city's code must be met unless alternate provisions are approved as part of the Planned Community Program.

SUMMERLIN'S EVOLUTION

In May of 1987, the City Council adopted an amendment to the city's General Plan that incorporated by reference a Master Concept Plan and Land Use Plan for the proposed Summerlin community. The following month the council approved the reclassification of approximately 4,600 acres of Summerlin land, from N-U (Non-Urban) to P-C (Planned Community District) as the first phase of the project. Plans were announced publicly in 1988 and development standards were adopted by the council the following year.

An important component of Summerlin's adopted Planned Community Program was its design guidelines, developed with the intent of encouraging diversity in design and development, so that each village would have a unique identity and character. Ironically, the strict application of these guidelines, as well as their enforcement through protective covenants and restrictions once villages are established, has resulted in what may be Summerlin's largest drawback—a relatively monotonous appearance. While each of the villages is noticeably different in terms of land use composition, the general architectural flavor and character of all of the villages is very similar: pale stucco walls and tile roofs.

Acknowledging this issue, Summerlin's developer has shifted its village development model from a "super pad" approach, where 12 to 35 acre parcels would be sold off to individual home builders for development, to a "finished lot" approach, that allows 4 or 5 developers to build homes within a single neighborhood. This revised approach provides greater variety within neighborhoods and encourages competition among builders to produce higher-quality products.

SOURCES:

City of Las Vegas
www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us

The Howard Hughes Corporation
www.summerlin.com

Urban Land Institute, Great Planned Communities, 2002

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Otay Ranch

DESCRIPTION

Otay Ranch is a 22,899 acre master-planned area located in southwestern San Diego County, California, approximately seven miles north of the Mexican border. The original plan anticipated approximately 78,500 residents by build-out, though recent and proposed amendments will increase this number. Otay Ranch was privately owned by Stephen and Mary Birch. After the last survivor, Mary Birch, passed away, United Enterprises Ltd. was formed on behalf of the Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation to dispose of the property for the foundation and heirs. A portion of the property was sold, on which the planned community of EastLake was developed. In 1988, the Baldwin Company purchased the remaining Otay Ranch property from United Enterprises Ltd. and began planning efforts with both the City of Chula Vista and San Diego County. The property was initially located in the unincorporated area of San Diego County, but was within Chula Vista's sphere of influence.

The several-year planning effort, which involved numerous public meetings and workshops, resulted in the Otay Ranch General Development Plan/Subregional Plan (GDP/SRP). The plan was jointly prepared and adopted by the County of San Diego and the City of Chula Vista, which annexed a majority of the land area into the city's jurisdiction prior to development, subject to a fiscal revenue sharing agreement. The growth management section of the GDP/SRP Plan called for yearly reviews of the Village Phasing Plan in order to comply with the plan's established goals and objectives. An environmental impact report was prepared for the Otay Ranch General Development Plan before a final alternative was chosen and adopted.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
San Diego County, California

Context:
7 miles northwest of the Mexican border

Project Size:
22,899 acres

Total Residents—Planned:
78,500

Employment:
17,500

Planning Started:
1988s

Opened:
Mid-1990s

Villages are planned to encourage pedestrian activity and neighborhood identification, fostering a small town ambiance, where people can walk to nearby parks. Every village is comprised of a village core and a secondary area. Mixed-uses are encouraged in the village core, while residential uses are planned for the secondary area.

Neighborhoods in Otay Ranch provide residents with more transportation choices, promoting public transportation and less car usage. The objective of Otay Ranch is to promote a well-integrated land use pattern, with both housing and employment opportunities.

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing Types

The Otay Ranch plan allows for a range of housing products, including mixed-use, higher-density rental and condominium housing, townhomes, and small-lot to large-lot single-family homes. Every urban village offers a variety of housing densities and prices to enable affordability for low and moderate-income households. An inclusionary housing requirement applies to new subdivisions.

Town Centers

Most villages in Otay Ranch have a town center or village core that offers a small-town ambiance, with close-to-home shops and services. Mixed-use (MU) and medium-high (MH) residential land use categories are intended for the village core. In addition to the village town centers, a major mixed-use center, currently called the Eastern Urban Center, is planned as a subregional downtown for Otay Ranch, with office, regional-serving retail, hotel, and cultural uses, and higher-density housing.

University

Several hundred acres are set aside near the Eastern Urban Center for a future university site as part of the plan. Sized to accommodate up to 18,000 full-time equivalent students, the city is focusing efforts on a cluster of research and training institutions affiliated with multiple existing universities, including Mexican universities.

Olympic Training Center

A portion of Otay Ranch next to Otay Lakes was donated to the United States Olympic Committee for a year-round training center for several summer Olympics sports. The training complex includes a visitor center.

Retail/Commercial

Retail and commercial uses will be concentrated in the village cores at transit stations. Residents from adjacent neighborhoods will be attracted to shop, dine and work in the village cores, which will be linked through public transportation, such as light-rail or bus rapid transit. The plan also includes designated areas for "freeway commercial" retail centers, to accommodate more conventional mid- to big-box services for area residents along the SR-125 corridor. A regional shopping center is proposed just north of the Eastern Urban Center (EUC).

Light Industrial

Business park and industrial land uses are also planned to provide quality jobs within Otay Ranch and to improve jobs/housing relationships. The city is currently exploring the concept of identifying one of the industrial areas as a Regional Technology Park, with an emphasis on housing technology-oriented businesses, which are considered the future of the San Diego region's economy.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

The system of parks and open space planned for Otay Ranch is intended to exceed the requirements of both San Diego County and the City of Chula Vista. The main objective of these parks is to enhance the quality of life of its residents and visitors by offering several active and passive recreational amenities. The open space provided also is intended as a way to preserve natural resources, including implementation of the city's Multiple Species Conservation Program, and will help complete a planned greenbelt around the entire city of Chula Vista.

Residents will enjoy strolling and biking along the extensive network of trails and parks. The system also includes smaller pedestrian parks that will form part of individual neighborhoods. Four different types of parks are recognized in the Otay Ranch public park system.

Town Squares

Town square parks are located in village center areas. They are pedestrian-oriented and approximately one acre in size.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are located either in or near the village core, within the residential areas and near schools whenever possible. These parks serve residents within a 3/4 mile radius and will be linked by pedestrian trails to other neighborhoods.

Community Parks

Community parks serve residents of multiple villages within a one to two mile radius, with more intense recreational facilities, such as swimming pools, athletic complexes and multipurpose fields. Three community parks are planned for Otay Ranch, and each should be at least 25 acres in size.

Regional Parks

Regional parks are intended to preserve natural resources and offer recreational activities to residents, including camping, hiking trails, picnic areas, golf courses and open areas. The size of a regional park should be at least 200 acres.

Transportation

Otay Ranch will eventually be served by the region's light-rail public transit system, which will link several of Otay Ranch's villages and the Eastern Urban Center to San Deigo's public transportation network. Rights-of-way are preserved in extra-wide landscaped medians until the system is developed. Otay Ranch will also be served by the county's first toll-road, SR-125, with a direct link from the Otay Mesa border crossing with Mexico, north to the region's freeway system.

Drainage Facilities

To control excess flows and prevent runoffs that could threaten public safety, Otay Ranch established implementation measures to ensure provision of local drainage facilities. Telegraph Canyon and the Otay River Basin are the two main basins affected by the Otay Ranch development. All drainage facilities in Otay Ranch are designed so that stormwater flows and volumes do not exceed engineering standards of the governing land use jurisdiction.

Water Facilities

It is estimated that Otay Ranch will require approximately 22 million gallons per day (MGD) at build-out. If water conservation measures are implemented, up to 16 percent of potable water demand could be saved. Implementation measures call for the creation of new storage facilities and lease or purchase of open reservoir from the City of San Diego or the Sweetwater Authority.

Facility Financing

Development in Otay Ranch will only be allowed through phases that guarantee proper infrastructure provision, and every project will fund its fair share.

A Master Property Tax Agreement was negotiated between the City of Chula Vista and the County of San Diego to fund infrastructure improvements and facility financing, and ensure that fiscal resources were sufficient to fund annual service costs. The agreement established the distribution of property taxes and project revenues to the City of Chula Vista and San Diego County. Furthermore, the agreement established that service provision (including direct and indirect costs and capital and operating costs) from the county and city would be financed through project revenues, impact fees, and project exactions. If additional funding were needed, the gap would be covered by specially designated funds established by the developer, such as community facility districts, assessment districts, homeowner association fees, direct expenditure, etc. Similar contracts apply for county regional services, with a proportionate share charged to developments in Otay Ranch.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	18,000
Price range (per sf):	$174.99-$278.55
Average price (per sf):	$202.00
Annual absorption rate:	880

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

Soon after The Baldwin Company purchased the land in 1988, the County Board of Supervisors and the Chula Vista City Council executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that established a joint planning team for the Otay Ranch project. The memorandum empowered the newly formed Interjurisdictional Task Force (IJTF) to coordinate and review the preparation of plans for Otay Ranch, formalizing the relationship between the county and city. Elected officials and community representatives from the City of Chula Vista, San Diego County and the City of San Diego formed the IJTF.

The MOU stipulated a work plan for the joint processing and review of planning documents for Otay Ranch, including general plan amendments, master development agreements, environmental impact reports and annexation plans, among others.

San Diego County and the City of Chula Vista jointly prepared and adopted the Otay Ranch General Development Plan/Subregional Plan (GDP/SRP). This document is in concurrence with state law, which requires that every county and city in California adopt a general plan for its physical development.

The General Development Plan (GDP) established the overall development policies for Otay Ranch, including values, principles, goals, protected environmental areas, backbone transportation, public facility standards and responsibilities, overall development capacity, and other policies. The GDP divided Otay Ranch into 15 village areas for specific planning, one of which included a potential university site and the Eastern Urban Center (the designated area for Otay Ranch's major town center, where highest densities were envisioned), and a few specialized planning areas.

Within the county's remaining portion of Otay Ranch, the Otay Subregional Plan (SRP) forms part of the County General Plan. In the case of the City of Chula Vista, the GDP/SRP is the planning document required to implement the city's zoning ordinance Planned Community (PC) zone. Unlike in the county's jurisdiction, the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP is not part of Chula Vista's General Plan. However, in order to enforce the city's zoning ordinance, the GDP/SRP is consistent with and subordinate to the Chula Vista General Plan.

In order to better implement the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, both the City of Chula Vista and San Diego County implemented more detailed planning processes prior to land subdivision. It was felt that detailed planning and ultimate zoning should occur at this level, because the GDP level was too large to adequately address detailed planning issues. In the case of the city, preparation and adoption of sectional planning area (SPA) plans are required. For San Diego County, specific plans are required. Once SPA plans have been approved, property can be subdivided and building permits may be issued. The sectional planning area (SPA) plans are developed by the property owners and city staff, with public hearing reviews at the Planning Commission and City Council, and final adoption by the City Council.(After the GDP was completed, the Baldwin Company sold much of Otay Ranch to several development companies.) Each SPA has an associated Master Development Agreement, facility financing plan, design guidelines, and individual zoning. While zoning and planned unit development (PUD) permits are custom to each SPA, after the first two SPAs were prepared and adopted, the zoning for subsequent SPAs borrowed heavily from their experience.

IMPLEMENTING REGULATORY STRUCTURE

The Otay Ranch GDP/SRP is implemented through the planned community (PC) zoning for the City of Chula Vista and specific plan zoning in the county. Detailed design and development criteria for areas in Chula Vista are provided through SPAs, which must be consistent with the GDP/SRP. Villages must be master-planned as individual units unless otherwise specified. A single SPA may include one or more villages or planning areas as long as there is a logical connection.

SECTIONAL PLANNING AREA (SPA) REQUIREMENTS

SPAs provide detailed development utilization plans, including site and grading plans. They detail land uses and acreages for schools, open space, public facilities, parks and residential uses. In addition, they provide physical features and easements, including transit reservation, standards for planned public and private streets, as well as development standards and design guidelines.

VILLAGE DESIGN PLAN REQUIREMENTS

The community vision of Otay Ranch is most present in the village concept. To achieve such vision, Village Design Plans provide special design considerations for project implementation. Every village has a village design plan, approved concurrently with SPA approval and compliant with the GDP/SRP plan. These plans reveal each village's unique identity and theme, and incorporate their landscape and streetscape guidelines.

MARKET ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

As one of the largest providers of new and relatively affordable housing product in the county, Otay Ranch has experienced tremendous growth and absorption since the late 1990s. Low interest rates, growing demand, quality development, and a regional housing shortage has led to rapid housing price appreciation above what was originally anticipated, an experience that is occurring countywide and is not unique to Otay Ranch. Because of rising property values, the fiscal revenue generated is greater than anticipated.

After a decade of limited commercial and industrial absorption due to a relatively weaker competitive position, the main business park, EastLake Business Park, has seen a recent increase in absorption and in lot sales and reservations. Companies such as Hitachi's Home Electronics North American headquarters, Leviton Manufacturing, DNP, and RSI Technologies have chosen to locate in EastLake due to the quality of the business park and the surrounding community for its workforce, and Chula Vista's proximity to their Mexican operations.

Retail development lagged behind residential development, but once built, has been very successful due to the market area's buying power and pent-up demand.

SOURCES:

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/index.html

otayranch.com

San Elijo Hills

DESCRIPTION

San Elijo Hills is a 1,920 acre master-planned community located in the City of San Marcos, California. The community is approximately 34 miles northeast of downtown San Diego, in the southernmost part of the City of San Marcos. San Elijo Hills is 1.5 miles east of Carlsbad and five miles west of Escondido. San Elijo Hills' topography is mostly composed of steep hillsides, except the southern portion of the property with gentler slopes.

According to the town's specific plan, San Elijo Hills will accommodate at build-out approximately 3,398 homes in 28 distinct neighborhoods, of which 26 have ocean views. The maximum density allowed in the specific plan is 1.75 dwelling units per gross acre.

To date, nine neighborhoods accounting for more than 1,000 homes have been completed and fully sold. Another nine neighborhoods are in the construction and sales process, and three more are being planned to begin construction in the near future.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
San Marcos, California

Context:
34 miles northeast of downtown San Diego

Project Size:
1,920 acres

Total Units—Existing:
1,000

Total Units—Planned:
3,398

In 2002, San Elijo Hills was awarded the National Association of Homebuilders' master-planned community of the year. In addition, its town center won a Grand Golden Nugget award at the 2002 Pacific Coast Builders Conference.

San Elijo Hills was conceived following neo-traditional design, with walkability as a high priority. In addition, San Elijo Hills follows other neo-traditional concepts, such as plentiful open space, mixed-use designs, storefronts and homes facing the street, public spaces and civic buildings, and narrower streets to encourage slower traffic. San Elijo includes a walkable town center, distinctive parks and close-to-home schools.

In accordance with SPA zoning classification requirements, a specific plan was written for San Elijo Hills and adopted by the City Council of the City of San Marcos. It specifies development regulations and standards, and was strongly influenced by environmental analysis and market research. Land uses in San Elijo Hills are a direct result of such research. All land in San Elijo Hills will follow zoning standards mentioned in the specific plan. If discrepancies exist between the plan and current city ordinances, provisions set forth in the plan shall prevail. The specific plan subdivides San Elijo Hills into 37 planning areas.

The total development yield of 3,398 dwelling units mentioned in the specific plan is the result of a settlement of a lawsuit against the city, which challenged the San Elijo Hills compliance with redevelopment law and the housing element of the city's general plan. The baseline development for San Elijo Hills established by the lawsuit was 2,718 dwelling units, with 10 percent or 272 units committed to families in the 50 percent of median income category. Total dwelling units for San Elijo Hills increased to 3,398 after applying the 25 percent density bonus provided by state law.

KEY FEATURES

Town Center

The San Elijo Hills master plan development includes a town center, located in the middle of the development for easier access by all residents. It is thought of as a meeting point where residents can walk instead of drive to a variety of amenities. The center will include retail shops, offices, residential uses, and mixed-use buildings that are arranged in a small-town setting.

The town center allows for higher residential densities in an urban-style setting. Row homes are planned around the town square, which serves as a central location and offers excellent views of San Elijo Hills.

All commercial space is located in the town center, including a 60,000 sf grocery store, restaurants, pharmacy and filling station. In addition, the town center features a hardware store, pedestrian-oriented shops and a cinema. The town center also offers two different locations for office space.

The town center offers a variety of public services, such as a church, post office, daycare center, library, a 30 acre school campus, a 19 acre park that includes sports facilities, and a town square. The K-8 elementary school is also located there.

Housing Mix

The mix of residential products is intended to attract all income levels, including first-time homebuyers, move-up families and empty nesters. The physical location of all residential developments will be defined in the Master Tentative Subdivision Map and later specified in individual final subdivision maps.

Five distinct residential land uses are included in the San Elijo Hills Specific Plan: estate, single-family detached, patio, cluster detached/attached and multi-family.

ESTATE HOMES

Estate homes are on lot sizes of at least 20,000 sf, and custom homes are allowed in this classification. Of the total land in the specific plan, 134 acres or 7 percent is designated for estate homes. According to the specific plan, a total of 143 estate homes are expected at San Elijo Hills.

SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOMES

Single-family detached homes will be placed in lots varying between 4,000 to 10,000 sf. It is estimated that 638 acres or 32 percent of San Elijo Hills will contain this residential product type. Approximately 2,027 single-family detached homes are expected at San Elijo Hills.

PATIO HOMES

Patio homes will be built on 53 acres or 3 percent of the total land available. The specific plan calls for 355 patio homes, intended for first-time homebuyers and empty nesters.

CLUSTER DETACHED/ATTACHED HOMES

Cluster detached/attached homes include clustered single-family, townhomes, stacked flats, duplex or condominiums. Approximately 371 cluster detached/attached homes will be built on 35 acres or 2 percent of total land.

MULTI-FAMILY HOMES

Multi-family homes includes garden-style apartments in stacked flat configuration of two- and three-story buildings. The specific plan stipulates that 62 acres or approximately 3 percent of total land will be dedicated to this housing type. In accordance with the city's general plan, 10 percent of the maximum density of the original overall project (272 units) will be offered to qualifying very low-income renters.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

Approximately 1,050 acres or 52 percent of the land in San Elijo Hills has been reserved for open space, which is divided in six planning areas by the specific plan. The open space program includes canyons, hillsides, wildlife preserves, parks and trails. In addition, the specific plan includes the creation of a master landscape maintenance district to be operated by the master association.

Open space in the specific plan is divided into natural open space and developed open space. More than 777 acres are considered as natural open space in the plan. This space does not include any major improvements, such as accessory structures or buildings; it only considers minor improvements, such as utility corridors, maintenance roads, signage and pedestrian trails. The plan specifies approximately 265 acres of developed open space, which includes a 22 acre neighborhood park, tot lots and mini parks, school sites, a regional park, streetscapes and landscaped slopes.

Many of the 18 miles of trails provide excellent views of the Pacific Ocean. San Elijo Hills is in one of the highest points in Coastal North County, which allows it to have expansive regional views of the ocean and downtown San Diego.

Community Services

The San Elijo Hills specific plan has reserved more than 50 acres for community and institutional services, such as schools, fire stations, sheriff sub-station, water reservoir, church, daycare center, private school, and a recreation facility.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	3,398
Price range (per sf):	$178.21-$329.78
Average price (per sf):	$256.15
Annual absorption rate:	192

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

In order to regulate and guide future development projects in the San Elijo Hills area, the specific plan includes the following development guidelines and goals:

- Consider site opportunities and constraints;
- Preserve natural character, resources and topography of planning area;
- Minimize San Marcos landfill impact to San Elijo Hills;
- Provide an open space system;
- Develop project consistent with the City of San Marcos General Plan;
- Allow a maximum density of 1.75 units per gross acre and 3,398 homes;
- Provide a mix of residential products that appeal to different markets;
- Provide commercial amenities for residents;
- Adopt architectural and aesthetic standards for all developments;
- Create landscape standards for visual uniformity through planning areas;
- Assure infrastructure provision before occupancy; and
- Implement a maintenance program for proper care.

Development of unrelated housing areas is one of the main objectives that the specific plan wishes to avoid with the creation of these guidelines, which will promote a more unified community and interconnectedness among neighborhoods within San Elijo Hills.

PHASING PLAN AND FINANCING MECHANISMS

In order to provide an appropriate provision of public facilities and services, a phasing plan was established for San Elijo Hills. The plan stipulates a well-thought-out sequence and pattern of development to successfully synchronize growth with infrastructure provision. The phasing plan is taken as a guide and may change over time to reflect market conditions.

In terms of financing, one or more special assessment districts were formed to operate and manage public facilities in San Elijo Hills. Public facilities include public streets, pedestrian trails, major open spaces, fuel management zones, community landscape areas, and streetlights. The City of San Marcos will administer the assessment districts with funds from annual fees or taxes paid by property owners within the district.

In addition, South San Marcos, which includes San Elijo Hills, is within a recently formed redevelopment area that will provide redevelopment funds for regional services and other public facilities linked to the San Elijo Hills development.

IMPLEMENTATION

As part of the development review process, approval of the San Elijo Hills Specific Plan Amendment and subsequent environmental impact report (EIR) were included in the scope of work.

A master land use plan was included as part of the specific plan amendment to consider site development standards, permitted uses and special design criteria.

After approval of the amendment, the San Elijo Hills development project was required to submit a master tentative subdivision map for review and approval by the Planning Commission and the City Council. To receive approval, the map had to concur with the development standards specified in the specific plan amendment.

The main objective of the development plan review is to assure that individual planning areas within San Elijo Hills are being developed in accordance with the specific plan's goals and standards, as well as city ordinances. Accordingly, the development plan must be approved prior to granting any residential, commercial or institutional building permits in any planning area within San Elijo Hills.

A Development Plan Review Committee, implementing administrative regulations structured by the Planning Department, will have the authority to approve, amend or deny development plans for any proposed project. The director of planning, building officials and city engineers will form the committee. It is their responsibility to review development plans within 15 days of submittal of all information requested. Proponents may appeal decisions to the Planning Commission within 15 days of the review committee's determination. The Planning Commission may affirm, reverse or modify the committee's decision within 40 days. This decision may in turn be appealed to the City Council.

SOURCES:

www.sanelijohills.com

www.san-marcos.net/departments

Hidden Springs

DESCRIPTION

Hidden Springs is an 1,800 acre master-planned community located in the Dry Creek Valley 10 miles northwest of Boise, Idaho. The community is built around a 100 acre working farm, a fixture in the valley since the 1860s and still in production today. Hidden Springs incorporates a mix of land uses and a variety of housing types.

In conceiving Hidden Springs, its planners envisioned a rural community in the tradition of Idaho's small towns with diversity of housing types and prices, an emphasis on the protection of the natural environment, a traditional village center to meet day-to-day needs, and a clear sense of place.

A strong environmentally sensitive focus was also a driving force behind the planning for Hidden Springs. Approximately 1,000 acres of land are set aside as conservation land, that includes steep slopes, wetlands, and other sensitive areas. In addition, homes are required to meet stringent energy-efficiency requirements, and a wastewater reclamation system is planned.

The community is currently marketing its third phase of development and is in the process of planning for the fourth. A charter school serving grades K-9 opened at Hidden Springs in 2003.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
Boise, Idaho

Context:
Dry Creek Valley ten miles northwest of downtown Boise

Project Size:
1,844 acres

Total Units—Planned:
1,035

Planning Started:
Jan. 1995

Construction Started:
Nov. 1997

Projected Build-out:
Estimated 2012

KEY FEATURES

Mix of Housing

Homes in Hidden Springs are clustered within three distinct neighborhoods: the Village, the Valley, and the Foothills. Development within each neighborhood is governed by strict architectural, landscaping and siting guidelines designed to promote consistency as the community grows.

Hidden Springs' core neighborhood—known as the Village—contributes to its small-town feel with homes that are traditional in design, and in many cases feature broad front porches, alley-loaded garages, and historic architectural details reminiscent of Boise's historic North End and Hyde Park neighborhoods.

Hidden Springs' second-tier neighborhood—known as the Valley—is defined by homes set on larger lots in an orchard-like pattern that are distinguishable by their simple, farmhouse-like architecture.

The Foothills neighborhood—Hidden Springs' most rural—features homes designed to respect their more sensitive surroundings, with an emphasis on horizontal building forms and the use of building materials and colors that help camouflage the homes within the surrounding landscape.

Although the character of each of the three neighborhoods is well-defined, a mix of residential uses is permitted in all development parcels. As development has progressed, the project's developer has devoted more of the project to small-lot (4,000–5,000 sf), alley-loaded homes in response to increased market demand. Homes range in price from $170,000 to over $1 million.

Construction is currently underway on Hidden Springs Marketplace, a mixed-use project that includes luxury townhomes adjacent to the town center.

Retail/Commercial

A town center set around a traditional village green serves as a community entry feature and gathering space. The pedestrian-oriented design of the town center and the surrounding neighborhood is modeled after Boise's traditional core area neighborhoods. The center was constructed prior to the construction of any homes, as developers sought to emphasize that it was an integral part of the community. The center offers a variety of services, including 8,500 sf of retail space, a post office, a preschool, a sheriff's office, a general store, an Ada County branch library, a café, and offices. The town center is home to many community events throughout the year such as a 4th of July parade and a Harvest Festival in the fall.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

The desire of the developer, Ada County, and the surrounding rural community to protect Hidden Springs' visual and environmental qualities resulted in a plan that devotes approximately 1,000 acres (more than 50 percent of the total site area) to open space, parks, trails, and other recreational amenities—an increase over the approximately 800 acres originally planned. Included in the total are agricultural land, wetlands, environmentally sensitive areas, and wildlife refuges. Complementing the community's natural open space areas are a number of more traditional recreational amenities, including four pocket parks, a pool and clubhouse, and a village green.

Extensive trails and bicycle facilities within Hidden Springs provide access between neighborhoods and to more than 100 miles of trails in the surrounding community, which includes the Ridge to Rivers regional trail system.

Street Design and Circulation Systems

In keeping with its village feel, streets in the core areas of Hidden Springs are designed with a traditional cross-section that incorporates detached sidewalks and street trees. County planners note that allowing streets to be narrowed from typical county standards was somewhat contentious and that the resulting streets were not nearly as narrow as the developer had wanted.

Traffic Management Plan

A traffic management plan was devised at the project's inception to reduce impacts on the link between highways and nearby Boise. Pedestrian access is enhanced throughout Hidden Springs to reduce the overall number of automobile trips, with an ultimate goal of reducing the trips per day, per household from 12, typically found in conventional suburban development, to eight. Other strategies to reduce long-term traffic impacts include the incorporation of advanced telecommunications technology to encourage and promote telecommuting and the integration of on-site commercial and community/recreational facilities. In addition, park and ride lots and vanpools to employment areas are planned to provide alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle. Housing densities are not yet sufficient to implement these plans.

The developer has committed to providing local matching funds for purchase of a van for Ada County Highway District's vanpooling program. A bus shelter will also be provided when the regional transit district extends its bus service, Valley Ride, to the area. An update to the regional transit district's plan is currently underway.

Water Conservation

Water conservation efforts seek to reduce water requirements for homes built in Hidden Springs as compared to more conventional developments in the Boise area. Conservation is achieved through the use of low-water landscaping in limited areas, use of advanced irrigation technology, requirements for use of low flow fixtures in homes, and the distribution of educational materials to all homeowners.

Stormwater/Wastewater Management

Hidden Springs employs a carefully designed wastewater reclamation process. The two-step recycling process treats water in 37 days to irrigate common areas and agricultural lands. Wastewater is carried to a series of ponds in the neighborhoods through a system that provides natural filtration and aeration. Stormwater is captured, dispersed and treated using grassy swales and retention areas to naturally filter pollutants and recharge the aquifer.

Project Data

LAND USE MIX

LAND USE	ACRES	DWELLING UNITS	% OF TOTAL
Farm/Ranch Lots	53	32	2.9
Rural Lots	94	2	5.1
Large Lots	360	278	19.7
Regular Lots	7	11	0.4
Village Homes	253	696	13.9
Town Homes	6	16	0.3
Town Center	.20	-	0.01
Open Space/Parks	1,024	-	56.1
Community Center/School	29	-	1.6
Equestrian Center	0	-	0
Total	1,071	-	100

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance.

Total # of units:	1,035
Price range (per sf.):	$108.69-$221.58
Average price (per sf):	$126.23
Annual absorption rate:	N/A

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

HIDDEN SPRINGS SPECIFIC PLAN/HIDDEN SPRINGS PLANNED COMMUNITY ZONING ORDINANCE

Although it has not been annexed, Hidden Springs is located within the bounds of the City of Boise's Foothills Plan and has been designated as an area appropriate for urban density development for a number of years. To facilitate a more urban pattern of development that would complement the project's rural setting, the Hidden Springs Specific Plan was developed in conjunction with a master land use plan, and the accompanying Hidden Springs Planned Community Zoning Ordinance.

The Hidden Springs Specific Plan was used to set a clear vision for the community, defining major land use elements and polices for density and community diversity, traffic reduction, trails and greenbelts, wildlife, water conservation, and design and development standards. From these policies, detailed development standards and design guidelines were developed as part of the Hidden Springs Planned Community Zoning Ordinance, to achieve the overall goals and policies of the master land use plan. Flexibility to alter the configuration and densities of development parcels and phases was built in to accommodate unforeseen market, financing, and site conditions, provided the alterations still meet the plan's overall objectives.

PLANNED COMMUNITIES BASE DISTRICT

Plans for Hidden Springs took several years to develop and were not initially approved by Ada County leaders. County planners attribute the difficulty in part to the inability of the county's zoning ordinance (at the time) to accommodate the innovative concepts proposed, and in the county's relatively limited experience in dealing with large master-planned communities. In the years since Hidden Springs gained its approvals, the county has updated its development code to include a planned communities base district to better prepare itself for future master-planned community submittals. In developing the base district, the county incorporated many elements from the Hidden Springs Specific Plan and planned community ordinance. According to county planners, although the base district does not quantify specific requirements, the county now has much higher expectations for planned communities and expects them to provide a mix of residential types and densities, pedestrian-oriented design, a reduction in vehicle trips, and high-quality design. All of the items are to be addressed as part of a planned community's specific plan. The base district is applicable to planned communities that are a minimum of 640 acres in size and that have a boundary that enhances the area's ability to incorporate or be annexed in the future.

SOURCES:

www.hiddensprings.com

www.adaweb.net

CONTACTS:

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North City Future
Urbanizing Area

DESCRIPTION

The North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA), one of the last remaining undeveloped areas of the City of San Diego, California, is a 12,000 acre area bordering Interstate I-5 to the west, Santa Fe Valley to the north and Los Peñasquitos Canyon in its southernmost edge. The plans allow for 13,000 residential units. The area has many natural features, including endemic plants, canyons, valleys, and rolling hillsides. Major parks adjoin the urbanizing area, including Black Mountain Park, Los Peñasquitos Canyon and San Dieguito River Valley.

Planning for the NCFUA began in the late 1980s when Planning Department staff noticed an increasing number of requests for one unit per four-acre estates, recreational conditional uses, campgrounds, and other uses that would preclude the area's future development as a planned urbanizing area in accordance with the city's Growth Management Plan. The applications made it difficult for comprehensive planning to occur, and the Planning Department brought these concerns to City Council.

Around the same time, the EPA was suing the city regarding its clean water program. Research was showing that the patchwork of open space preserved to date was not effectively preserving endangered species. The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), which developed a strategy for protecting larger areas of connected open space systems, evolved out of the city's settlement with the EPA.

QUICK FACTS

Location:
San Diego, California

Context:
Western San Diego

Project Size:
12,000 acres

Total Units—Planned:
13,000

Planning Started:
Late 1980s

In October 1990, the San Diego City Council appointed an advisory committee to create an overall plan for the Future Urbanizing Area that addressed the priorities of the community. This Citizens Advisory Committee included large and small property owners, community planning groups from surrounding areas, the Sierra Club, the League of Women Voters, a local planning advocacy and conservation group called C-3, housing advocates, the affected school districts, and others.

The City Council enacted a moratorium that prevented taking any project to hearing while the advisory committee's planning report was prepared, but gave a strict schedule to complete the planning process within a year and take a plan to council. If the deadline was not met, the moratorium would be lifted. This condition provided incentives for all parties to make decisions and complete the advisory committee's work on time.

The committee submitted to the City Council a final report recommending an areawide framework plan in June 1991. The plan was intended as a vision or blueprint for future development in the area, which includes small urban nodes with public amenities, cultural facilities, and shopping.

Public participation remained a priority throughout the NCFUA planning process, which started with the advisory committee and continued during committee meetings, workshops, and Planning Commission and City Council sessions throughout preparation of the framework plan. Property owners and the city split the cost of preparing the plan.

The City Manager appointed a Framework Plan Advisory Committee, adding more community representation and other citywide and industry organizations. The committee was more community-oriented and had less of a citywide policy perspective than did the original advisory committee.

THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The framework plan began with the existing conditions, and open space planning was occurring concurrently. The plan adopted a goal of minimizing impacts to open space and maintaining habitat linkages by clustering mixed-use development in a less auto-oriented format.

Traffic was the other major constraining factor. Since the city and county started to remove planned road designations, and State Route 56's alignment was not yet known, it was determined that the NCFUA could not achieve an urban density node.

The framework plan divided the NCFUA into five subareas for more precise planning, equivalent to a community plan. The plan itself provided an overall development policy, and each subarea plan had to address the following issues:

- The environmental tier;
- Urban form and design;
- Land use designations; and
- Inclusionary housing requirements.

Each subarea plan also had to provide comprehensive transportation plans and the provision of public facilities, with the stipulation that each subarea had to be sustainable and could not generate impacts to surrounding communities.

The draft framework plan established standards similar to a general plan, but was more creative as to how standards would be met. However, the community reacted negatively and went back to familiar, measurable general plan standards.

The framework plan also contained the following stringent timing requirements before development could occur;

- A Facilities Benefit Assessment District must be in place;
- All subarea plans must be prepared at the same time so that cumulative impacts could be assessed;
- All subarea plans must be presented to the council at the same time before presenting them to the voters; and
- All plans had to go to the voters by June 1994.

But property owners were slow to get started, and were delayed by planning for SR56. The property owners decided to try to go to the voters to amend the framework plan so they could proceed for approval without their subarea plans prepared. The property owners offered financing of SR56 as a carrot, but voters defeated the property owners' measure overwhelmingly.

Subsequently, one subarea decided to apply for development approvals under the existing zoning, by clustering development and setting aside open space, but without a phase-shift vote that would allow the development of many more units. The owners within the other subareas decided to proceed with the preparation of subarea plans and present their proposals to the voters. Voters eventually approved the subarea plans that were prepared and endorsed by citywide interests. The voters' approval allowed a phase shift to planned urbanizing area (PUA) designation, resulting in more developable units.

Most of the subarea plans that received approval allow densities of two-to-five units per acre, excluding the land set aside for MSCP open space (about half of the land area), ranging from one-acre estates to 20 units per acre in the town centers, subject to the total dwelling unit cap.

Approximately 39 small property owners owned a significant amount of the NCFUA. After the phase-shift vote, which enhanced property values substantially, most sold their property to larger property owners and developers and received full value.

KEY FEATURES

Affordable Housing

The framework plan established the need to supply housing affordable to all income levels in the NCFUA. It also established provision of housing for people with special needs, in accordance with the city's housing element.

An important provision of the plan was that all funds collected in lieu of construction of affordable housing within the NCFUA be retained for future affordable housing construction within the NCFUA, and was not to be distributed citywide.

The NCFUA framework plan complies with the inclusionary housing requirements set forth by the city's planned residential development provisions. These requirements can be fulfilled by setting aside no less than 20 percent of the units for occupancy by families earning no more than 65 percent of median area income, or by dedicating land for development with similar value.

Open Space/Parks/Trails

The NCFUA's irregular topography allowed it to remain mostly undeveloped while surrounding areas urbanized. The Framework Plan recognized this attribute and kept it as a key objective. The plan identified land that was to be kept untouched and established guidelines for open space in developable areas.

The city's 1990 general plan, Guidelines for Future Development, established the environmental tier designation intended to preserve land in a natural state, most of which is within the MSCP preserve. Following such guidelines, the NCFUA identified lands containing sensitive resources that needed protection and wildlife movement corridors to be preserved under the environmental tier designation. The designation also intended to classify open space systems that would preserve natural resources from future development. More than half of the 12,000 acres is preserved as open space.

Transportation

Even though the NCFUA borders two important freeways, the lack of connections to and from the area in addition to increased traffic congestion in surrounding communities prevents high-density development in the NCFUA.

The framework plan established two major transportation objectives: to limit traffic impacts in neighboring communities and to create a multi-modal transportation system. Unfortunately, these two objectives are conflicting in nature, given than more intense uses would be required to support public transportation and motivate bicycle and pedestrian traffic, but would generate more total auto trips than lower intensities. To address this issue, higher intensity uses were concentrated in two specific subareas.

The circulation component was planned to adapt to regional transportation needs by providing major links between existing and planned roads.

Public Facilities

All public uses dependant on the NCFUA population are considered public facilities. Such facilities are provided by the City of San Diego, with the exception of utilities (gas and electric provided by SDG&E) and educational services (provided by four school districts).

In order to finance such facilities, the city prepared a public facilities financing plan to estimate the total cost of facilities to be funded by developers and landowners in full or in part, and the cost distribution depending on land uses and geographic location. The plan also ensured timely construction to provide the services when needed. The financing plan depends on a combination of development impact fees and a facilities benefit assessment for funding these public facility costs. Developers may provide the funding for facilities that serve more than their development in order to have facilities in place so that they may proceed with future development. They are then reimbursed, with interest, by impact fees and assessments that are subsequently collected.

Developers also provided some extra public facilities to entice voters to approve a phase-shift vote that would allow higher density development in the area by designating the future urbanizing area as a planned urbanizing area.

Project Sales Performance

The following is a summary of the project's residential sales performance:

Total # of units:	13,000
Price range (per sf):	$235-$428
Average price (per sf):	$283.79
Annual absorption rate:	69

PUBLIC SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS

The future urbanizing area (FUA) designation was established in the 1979 Progress Guide and General Plan. The plan classified all land within the City of San Diego in three different categories—urbanized, planned urbanizing and future urbanizing—which reflected the city's desire to better manage growth and urban expansion as well as more efficiently allocate private and public resources. The goal of the FUA designation is to prevent premature urbanization, allowing development only after determining the need to accommodate the city's growth. In 1990, the city's general plan was amended to include a fourth designation to certain areas of the city. The Guidelines for Future Development established the environmental tier, intended to preserve selected lands in a natural state. The framework plan for the NCFUA includes this classification.

IMPLEMENTATION

The A-1 zone implements the FUA designation. According to Council Policy 600-29, there are four development alternatives for land designated as FUA:

- Development pursuant to A-1 regulations: maximum development intensity of one housing unit per 10 acres. Other uses could be churches, private stables, commercial riding, training horse stables and most agricultural uses;
- Development pursuant to Rural Cluster Development regulations at a density permitted by A-1 zone. Same maximum development intensity but with development clustered to maintain open space and future development opportunities;
- Development pursuant to conditional use permit regulations, provided such uses are natural resource dependent; and
- Development pursuant to Planned Residential Development (PRD) regulations, with densities not exceeding one dwelling unit per four acres.

However, the general plan recognizes that such alternatives are only for the FUA designation, and that such designation could change to accommodate growth. In such case, land under the FUA designation would change to planned urbanized area. For this to occur, the City Council must determine through a threshold determination, if there is a reasonable basis to initiate a general plan amendment to change the designation. If approved, an environmental impact report and a land use plan of the area are required. After recommendation from the Planning Commission and approval from the City Council, the amendment to change the land designation is brought to the voters in a citywide election. In this regard, Proposition A, approved by voters in 1985, amended the general plan and stipulates that a majority vote is required in citywide elections to change any future urbanizing designation or provision restricting development in the FUA.

By implementing the framework plan for the NCFUA, the goal of defining the built environment with the environmental tier and concentrating development in specific areas can be achieved. In doing so, urban sprawl is reduced.

Within the NCFUA, land use designations in the framework plan permitting greater intensities than existing zoning require the aforementioned process, including voter approval to become effective.

SOURCES:

www.sannet.gov/cityofvillages/documents/progress-guide/future.shtml

Case Study Market Comparison

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

The case studies reviewed in this report are located in seven Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) markets: Boise, Tucson, Las Vegas, Phoenix, San Diego, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe. The Phoenix and San Diego metropolitan areas have three case study projects each.

As shown in Table 1A, all of the case studies are within regional markets that are experiencing significant population and household growth, exceeding the national growth rates between 1990 and 2000. Among these markets, the Tucson market, which is the focus of this study, experienced the second smallest compounded annual growth rate and the smallest absolute increase in population and households. Phoenix had the largest absolute increase in population and households, almost twice as much as Las Vegas, the market with the second largest increase.

TABLE 1A: POPULATION GROWTH

CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate

MSA	1990	2000	NET CHANGE	CAGR
San Diego, CA	2,498,016	2,813,833	315,817	1.2%
Las Vegas, NV	741,459	1,408,250	666,791	6.6%
Tucson, AZ	666,880	843,746	176,866	2.4%
Phoenix, AZ	2,122,101	3,251,876	1,129,775	4.4%
Boise, ID	205,775	432,345	226,570	7.7%
Albuquerque, NM	480,577	712,738	232,161	-
Santa Fe, NM	117,043	275,065	158,022	-

TABLE 1B: HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

MSA	1990	2000	NET CHANGE	CAGR
San Diego, CA	887,403	994,677	107,274	1.1%
Las Vegas, NV	287,684	525,562	237,878	6.2%
Tucson, AZ	262,129	332,350	70,221	2.4%
Phoenix, AZ	808,162	1,194,250	386,088	4.0%
Boise, ID	77,502	158,426	80,924	7.4%
Albuquerque, NM	185,445	275,065	89,620	-
Santa Fe, NM	44,998	59,976	14,978	-

Notes: Area based on Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA);
Source: US Census (1990 and 2000), Economics Research Associates

Single-family homes comprised 53 percent of housing units in Tucson according to the 2000 Census, slightly above San Diego and Las Vegas, but less than Phoenix, Boise, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe, as shown in Table 2A. Tucson had the second highest share of single-family attached housing, and the fourth lowest share of multi-family housing at 25.1 percent, slightly lower than Phoenix. Santa Fe has the highest share of mobile homes and RVs, at 14.6 percent, with Tucson second at 13.3 percent, and Phoenix third with 9.9 percent. Approximately 64.3 percent of the homes in the Tucson MSA were owner-occupied and 35.7 percent were rented, which placed the Tucson region in the middle of the five metropolitan market areas. Tucson also has the lowest median rent and median home values of the case study markets as of the 2000 Census, with median rents 82 percent and median home prices 90 percent of the Phoenix regional market.

TABLE 2A: HOUSING UNITS

HOUSING UNITS				
	Single-family		Multifamily	Other
MSA	DETACHED	ATTACHED	2-UNITS +	MOBILE HOME/RV/ETC.
San Diego, CA	51.0%	9.4%	35.0%	4.6%
Las Vegas, NV	51.1%	5.9%	35.5%	7.5%
Tucson, AZ	53.0%	8.6%	25.1%	13.3%
Phoenix, AZ	58.4%	6.3%	25.4%	9.9%
Boise, ID	70.9%	3.9%	16.8%	8.4%
Albuquerque, NM	62.1%	5.4%	23.0%	9.5%
Santa Fe, NM	61.2%	7.5%	16.7%	14.6%

TABLE 2B: OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS

OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS		
MSA	OWNER OCCUPIED	RENTER OCCUPIED
San Diego, CA	55.4%	44.6%
Las Vegas, NV	59.6%	40.4%
Tucson, AZ	64.3%	35.7%
Phoenix, AZ	68.0%	32.0%
Boise, ID	71.4%	28.6%
Albuquerque, NM	60.7%	39.3%
Santa Fe, NM	68.8%	31.2%

Source: US Census (2000), Economics Research Associates

TABLE 2C: RENT

RENT	
MSA	MEDIAN RENT
San Diego, CA	$761.00
Las Vegas, NV	$714.00
Tucson, AZ	$544.00
Phoenix, AZ	$661.00
Boise, ID	$593.00
Albuquerque, NM	$563.00
Santa Fe, NM	$688.00

Note: Area based on Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Source: US Census (2000), Economics Research Associates

TABLE 2D: MEDIAN HOME VALUE

MEDIAN HOME VALUE	
MSA	MEDIAN HOME VALUE
San Diego, CA	$227,200
Las Vegas, NV	$139,200
Tucson, AZ	$114,600
Phoenix, AZ	$127,900
Boise, ID	$117,800
Albuquerque, NM	$118,500
Santa Fe, NM	$174,900

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As shown in Table 3A, the Tucson metro market area has the lowest household incomes among the case study market areas, according to the 2000 Census. The Tucson MSA's median household income was 94 percent of the next lowest market, Albuquerque, and 82 percent of the Phoenix MSA's median household income. Tucson's mean average household income is slightly better relative to the other case study markets.

TABLE 3A: HOUSEHOLD INCOME

HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
MSA	MEDIAN	MEAN
San Diego, CA	$47,067	$63,256
Las Vegas, NV	$44,317	$62,111
Tucson, AZ	$36,758	$49,415
Phoenix, AZ	$44,752	$58,886
Boise, ID	$42,570	$54,401
Albuquerque, NM	$39,088	-
Santa Fe, NM	$45,822	-

All of the case study markets had positive employment growth during the 1990s. The Tucson MSA had the third lowest growth rate and the second smallest absolute increase among the case study markets reviewed, far ahead of Santa Fe's 15,145.

TABLE 3B: EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH 1990-2001				
MSA	1990	2001	NET CHANGE	CAGR
San Diego, CA	867,603	1,081,762	214,159	2.0%
Las Vegas, NV	334,100	691,875	357,775	6.8%
Tucson, AZ	210,148	293,987	83,839	3.1%
Phoenix, AZ	867,458	1,402,830	535,372	4.5%
Boise, ID	118,132	203,658	85,526	5.1%
Albuquerque, NM	232,663	332,692	100,029	3.3%
Santa Fe, NM	59,542	74,687	15,145	2.1%

Note: Area based on Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA);
Source: US Census (1990, 2001) County Business Patterns, Economics Research Associate

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

This report considered the annual absorption, average price per sf, and sales price range per sf for for-sale housing in each of the case study market areas according data which is based on quarterly surveys of new housing projects on the market (data not available for Albuquerque and Santa Fe markets). As shown in Tables 4A and 4B, the Tucson MSA absorbed more than 7,800 for-sale housing units, equal to approximately 2.4 percent of its total 2000 Census household count, which was second lowest among the case study markets reviewed. The average price per sf in the Tucson MSA was $93.33, the second lowest above Boise and only slightly lower than Phoenix. The Tucson MSA appears to have a narrower price range than all of the other markets except Las Vegas.

TABLE 4A: FOR-SALE HOUSING

FOR-SALE HOUSING				
	2003 ANNUAL ABSORPTION	% OF TOTAL MSA 2000 HH	AVERAGE PRICE PER SF	RANGE
San Diego, CA[4]	13,899	1.4%	$213.00	$160.30-$272.65
Las Vegas, NV[2]	24,496	4.7%	$125.00	$111.00-$134.00
Tucson, AZ[5]	7,831	2.4%	$93.33	$92.55-$137.43
Phoenix, AZ[3]	44,036	3.7%	$94.00	$78.00-$185.00
Boise, ID[1]	5,535	3.5%	$80.63	$41.08-$233.69

TABLE 4B: RENTALS

RENTALS			
	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVERAGE PRICE PER SF	RANGE
San Diego, CA[9]	94.4%	$18.12	$15.96-$24.00
Las Vegas, NV[7]	92.3%	$9.96	NA
Tucson, AZ[10]	91.2%	$9.24	$9.96-$11.88
Phoenix, AZ[8]	89.8%	$9.96	NA
Boise, ID[6]	87.8%	$9.36	$6.00-$13.20

1 Colliers International (Boise), MLS data from 1/1/03 to 12/31/03
2 Meyers Group: Competitive Housing Market Report for Las Vegas, Nevada Q4 2003; Note: Annual absorption is based on figures from 1/1/03 to 12/31/03; Range is based on lowest and highest average sales price per sf
3 Meyers Group: New Home Executive Summary, Q1 2004; Note: Annual absorption is based on figures from 1/1/03 to 12/31/03; Range is based on lowest and highest sales average price per sf
4 San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
5 Meyers Group; Note: Calculations based on sales of 1-unit attached and detached homes. Sources: Economics Research Associates
6 Mountain States Appraisal and Consulting Q1 2004
7 Center for Business and Economic Research at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Q2 2003
8 Hendricks and Partners Q4 2003
9 Real Facts for City of San Diego Q4 2003
10 City of Tucson Apartment Survey; Note: Range is based on lowest and highest annual average rent per sf; Sources: Economics Research Associates

RETAIL PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

Table 5 presents the regional retail market characteristics for the selected case study markets. The Tucson MSA has the second lowest occupancy rate, at 91 percent, which indicates a regional market with surplus retail inventory, and is tied for the lowest average annual rent level, at $13.

TABLE 5: RETAIL PROPERTY CHARACTERISTIC

RENTALS			
	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVERAGE PRICE PER SF	RANGE
San Diego, CA [13]	97%	$21.96	$14.16-$35.64
Las Vegas, NV [14]	96%	$19.08	$12.00-$42.00
Tucson, AZ [15]	91%	$13.00	$9.00-$30.00
Phoenix, AZ [12]	93%	$20.54	$13.08-$28.00
Boise, ID [11]	87%	$13.00	$12.35-$17.00

TABLE 6: OFFICE PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

RENTALS			
	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVERAGE PRICE PER SF	RANGE
San Diego, CA [20]	89%	$22.80	$11.76-$34.68
Las Vegas, NV [17]	85%	$19.56	$16.92-$21.84
Phoenix, AZ [16]	82%	$19.06	$12.00-$32.00
Boise, ID [18]	86%	$14.04	$11.89-$18.87
Tucson, AZ [19]	87%	$20.74	$17.45-$24.00

11 Colliers International Q1, 2004; Market coverage: Includes all non owner/user shopping centers 10,000 sf and greater; Based on triple net lease.
12 CB Richard Ellis Q1 2004; Market coverage: Includes all shopping centers 30,000 sf and greater in size; Based on gross lease.
13 CB Richard Ellis Q1 2004; Market coverage: Includes all competitive office buildings 10,000 sf and larger; Based on triple net lease.
14 CB Richard Ellis, Las Vegas Q1 2004; Market coverage: Includes all competitive office buildings 10,000 sf and larger.; Based on triple net lease.
15 CB Richard Ellis, Las Vegas Q1 2004; Market coverage: Includes all competitive office buildings 10,000 sf and larger; Based on triple net lease; Range is based on lowest and highest annual average rent per sf Sources: Economics Research Associates
16 CB Richard Ellis Q1 2004; Market coverage: Includes all multi tenant office buildings 10,000 sf and greater in size; Based on gross lease.
17 CB Richard Ellis, Las Vegas Q4 2003; Market coverage: Includes all multi tenant office buildings 10,000 sf and greater in size; Based on averaging gross, modified gross and triple net lease.
18 Colliers International Q1, 2004; Market coverage: Includes all non owner/user buildings 8,000 sf or greater; Based on gross lease.
19 CB Richard Ellis Q4 2003; Market coverage: Includes buildings 10,000 sf and larger; Based on gross lease.
20 CB Richard Ellis Q1 2004; Market coverage: Includes all competitive office buildings 10,000 sf. and larger; Based on triple net lease; Range is based on lowest and highest annual average rent per sf Sources: Economics Research Associates

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Table 7 presents for-sale housing market performance characteristics for the specific case study projects. Of note are the annual absorption rates since opening and the premium reported for lots that front open space, including golf courses. Table 8 presents a comparison of the average price per sf for for-sale single-family homes among the case study projects relative to the average among new projects in each of the corresponding metro area markets. Average prices per sf in five of the eight case study projects exceeded their market area averages by significant amounts, ranging from 11 to 199 percent. The highest difference was DC Ranch, which is positioned in the highest local sub-market, Scottsdale, in the Phoenix metro area. The three case study projects that had lower than average prices were only modestly lower, approximately 95–96 percent of the metro area average. One of these, Rancho Sahuarita in the Tucson MSA, is lower in part because of its distance from the existing suburban market. Another, Otay Ranch in the San Diego MSA, is lower because of its size and provision of a broad range of housing types compared to most subdivisions.

TABLE 7: PROJECT PERFORMANCE—RESIDENTIAL

FOR-SALE HOUSING									
	Hidden Springs	*Summerlin*[21]	*Verrado*[22]	*Vistancia*	*DC Ranch*[23]	*Otay Ranch*	*NCFUA*	*San Elijo Ranch*	*Rancho Sahuarita*
Total # of Units	1,035	64,000	9,500	17,000	4,000-5,000	18,000	13,000	3,398	10,600
Range	$108.69-$221.58	$101.54-$216.46	$91.26-$135.88	$83.91-$143.76	$200.30-$602.16	$174.99-$278.55	$235-$428	$178.21-$329.78	$76.48-$103.59
Average Price per sf	$126.23	$154.53	$107.93	$90.07	$280.68	$202.00	$283.79	$256.15	$88.21
Premium for Units Fronting		$5,000-$150,000	$4,000-$25,000	$1,000-$20,000	$6,000-$100,000	$10,000-$50,000	$20,000-$80,000	$10,000-$90,000	$75,000+
Open Space or Golf Course									
Annual Absorption Rate Since Opening		656	150	NA	152	880	69	192	1,235

21 Annual absorption is 1,223 units since Sept. 2001
22 Zoned for 14,000 units
23 Zoned for 6,700 units
Does not include custom home sites.
Sources: Economics Research Associates, Meyers Group

TABLE 8: MARKET TO PROJECT COMPARISON: RESIDENTIAL

FOR-SALE HOUSING			
	PROJECT: AVERAGE PRICE PER SF	MSA: AVERAGE PRICE PER SF[24]	%OF MSA AVERAGE
Hidden Springs	$126.23	$80.63	157%
Summerlin	$154.53	$125.00	124%
Verrado	$107.93	$94.00	115%
Vistancia	$90.07	$94.00	96%
DC Ranch	$280.68	$94.00	299%
Otay Ranch	$202.00	$200.00	101%
Ranch Sahuarita	$88.21	$93.33	95%
San Elijo Ranch	$256.15	$200.00	128%
North City Future Urbanizing Area	$283.79	$200.00	142%

24 New single-family projects marketing at the same time as case study projects
Source: Economics Research Associates

TUCSON MARKET CONTEXT

Table 9 shows a summary of new home sales for Pima County for 2002 and 2003. Both monthly sales per project and average price per sf for single-family homes have increased over this time period. The average monthly sales per project reflect net sales per month for the year, or 3.43 sales per month in 2003. The average price per sf across Pima County for single-family homes was recorded at $92.55 in 2003. (This price is based on the base price of the home, not the actual sales price.)

TABLE 9: NEW HOME SALES SUMMARY - PIMA COUNTY

	GROSS SALES			MONTHLY SALES/PROJECT			AVG. PRICE/SF			AVG. SF
	2003	2002	% DIFF	2003	2002	% DIFF	2003	2002	% DIFF	2003
Single Family	7,580	6,125	23.8	3.43	3.22	6.5	$92.55	$86.04	7.6	1,909
Townhome/Duplex	154	246	-37.4	1.39	1.94	-28.4	$102.81	$97.83	5.1	1,421
Condo	97	122	-20.4	3.13	9.6	-67.4	$137.43	$126.28	8.8	1,309
Total	7,831	6,493	20.6	3.34	3.18	5.0	$93.33	$87.33	6.9	1,892

Note: Meyers Group data reflects new home projects throughout Pima County. This includes production projects (standard floor plans with clearly defined price sheet) as well as hybrid projects (new homes that do not fit the production definition but are not custom).

Monthly sales/project reflects net sales for the period divided by the number of project months.
Average price/sf is based on the average base sales price and reflects actual number of homes sold.
Source: Meyers Real Estate Information, Inc., Economics Research Associates

INTRODUCTION

The following master-planned communities were included in the project team's initial screening of potential case study projects. While they were not selected for more detailed research and analysis, they have been included in this report to provide an overview of the broad array of master-planned communities being developed across the West. A brief description of each project is provided, based on available information.

ALDEA DE SANTA FE | SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Aldea de Santa Fe is a New Urbanist Village located on the northwest side of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Encompassing 640 acres, this predominantly residential community is based on the traditional Spanish Colonial towns, where homes are gathered around a central commercial and civic plaza. Some 800 total units are planned, as well as a 100,000 sf retail/commercial village center. Aldea de Santa Fe includes a mix of housing types including town homes, single-family homes, and live/work units. Buildings are expected to adhere to the Santa Fe architectural style with façade, height, and view requirements. The plan includes open space protections, underground power and cable lines and alley-accessed garages. Current development construction of Phase I comprises 65 completed homes and continued construction of retail components.

SOURCES:

www.aldeadesantafe.com

CONTINENTAL RESERVE | MARANA, ARIZONA

Continental Reserve is planned as a single-family neighborhood surrounding 200 acres of protected open space. Although ranging in prices, homes are restricted to single-family units. There is a school site and park, both planned as 10 acres each. A commercial area is planned for the northeast side of the community, but the size and date to build are unknown. Extensive design guidelines are included. Phase I of construction began in early 2002.

SOURCES:

www.continentalreserve.com

RANCHO VISTOSO | TUCSON, ARIZONA

Rancho Vistoso is a well-established master-planned community located in Oro Valley outside of Tucson, Arizona. It has a mix of housing types including condos, single-family homes, and golf course homes. Also present is a wide array of recreational areas, including parks, golf courses, a trail system, 12 miles of bike lanes, basketball courts, volleyball courts, a baseball field, and picnic areas. 50 percent of the community's land area is set aside as open space.

SOURCES:

www.myranchovistoso.com

GLADDEN FARMS | MARANA, ARIZONA

Gladden Farms is a developing community built to incorporate 200 acres of open space and parks, and space for two schools. The plan includes only single-family units, and these vary in price depending on size. A commercial component is also included in the plan though no build date is known.

SOURCES:

www.gladdenfarms.com

ANTHEM PARKSIDE | PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Anthem Parkside is part of Del Webb's larger Anthem Community that includes Anthem Country Club, a gated community. Parkside includes two golf courses and a range of housing types. It was opened in 1999, and total build-out is planned for 15 years. The community features basic elements of a small city including housing, shops, offices, recreation opportunities, entertainment, and municipal facilities. Anthem is a multi-generational community with the inclusion of an active-adult living component. The full financial burden of development was carried out by the developer and included the purchase of water rights from a local Indian tribe. More than 5,000 homes were built as of March 2004, with projected build-out at 11,000.

SOURCES:

www.delwebb.com/homefinder/Community.aspx?ID=100023

RANCHO EL DORADO | PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Rancho El Dorado is a 1,600 acre golf community near the Estrella and San Tan mountains in Phoenix. A mix of housing types includes multi-family as well as single-family units, with wide-ranging prices. The internal layout of Rancho El Dorado includes a main street with cul-de-sac style streets for housing. Retail centers, schools and parks are included as part of the plan to encourage the creation of a close-knit neighborhood atmosphere. Phase I of construction is well under way.

SOURCES:

www.ranchoeldorado.net

DOVE MOUNTAIN | MARANA, ARIZONA

Dove Mountain is a planned community in the Sonoran Desert bounded on 10 miles of its perimeter by permanent open space. Approximately one-third of the development itself has also been set aside as long-term open space. Dove Mountain contains several golf courses, a golf and sports club and miles of trails. All homes are single-family and are priced starting at $200,000. At the entrance, a retail/commercial site to service the residents is included in the plan. This component, including the building of a major grocery store, began in 2003.

SOURCES:

www.dovemountain.com

ESTRELLA MOUNTAIN RANCH | GOODYEAR, ARIZONA

Estrella Mountain Ranch is a master-planned development located near Phoenix, Arizona. Bordered by the 19,000 acre Estrella Mountain Park, it is not only surrounded by open space but also incorporates it within its community. In the first phase, 72 acres of lakes and 40 acres of lawn surrounding the lakes were developed. This space is home to an outdoor amphitheater and various sports fields and courts. In addition, Estrella will soon open a new 24,400 sf recreation and swim center. The development is being built using a village concept. Each village includes a combination of homes with a system of community facilities including transportation linkages, open space and parks, police/fire, and other municipal services. In addition, there are recreation opportunities for golf and lake activities. Homes range from $170,000 production homes to high-end custom homes. Also included in the development is a 135,000 sf retail/commercial center. At this center, there is already a market, restaurants and a general service retailer.

SOURCES:

www.estrellamtnranch.com

POWER RANCH | GILBERT, ARIZONA

The Power Ranch community is developed as a system of neighborhoods linked by an extensive system of open space and trails that lead to the center of the community. Each neighborhood is built around a central park designed to be the center of activity. At the center of the community is a school, sports fields, clubhouse and community park. A retail/commercial area is located in the southeast corner of the community.

SOURCES:

www.powerranch.com

ALIANTE | N. LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Aliante is situated between the desert and the foothills of the Sheep Mountain Range near Las Vegas. It is designed to appeal to those in different age groups with planned attractions to include a 20 acre Nature Discovery Park, a man-made lake, and a 40 acre resort/hotel with gaming. Overall, 428 acres (22 percent) of land will be dedicated to recreational and public use. Three schools are planned for the community, with construction of the first underway. Construction has begun on a community fire station, and plans for future development of a library are included. Also planned are 100 acres of commercial development to incorporate further shopping, dining and entertainment uses. Neighborhoods are interwoven with the commercial areas, parks and schools. Homes are limited to single-family units, which range in price from the high $100,000s to near $600,000.

SOURCES:

www.aliantehomes.com

AGRITOPIA | GILBERT, ARIZONA

Agritopia is a unique, mixed-use community comprised of homes, urban agriculture, commercial enterprises, and other uses organized in the form of a traditional town. The community is located on the site of the former farm of the Johnston family. Both traditional and cottage homes will be included with many variations. Lots in Agritopia range in size from 7,000 to 10,000 sf and can be configured in a variety of ways to accommodate different home types. Bungalow lots allow for a secondary, free-standing home (approximately 800 sf) or office to be placed at the back of the lot along with a standard home on the front of the lot, with the bungalow unit facing an adjacent greenbelt or secondary street. Accessory dwellings as part of the garage are also permitted in the form of a Casita (no kitchen) or an apartment (with kitchen). Much of the community's open space has been devoted to urban agricultural uses, however, smaller pocket parks, sports fields, and a green belt are also provided. Nearly 20 acres at Agritopia have been set aside as an urban farm to be used for specialty crops such as fruits and vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Crops will be sold at a retail produce stand in the neighborhood or incorporated into meals served at the Harvest Restaurant, located in the 1920s era Johnston family home.

SOURCES:

www.agritopia.com

THE PARTNERSHIP

Trust Land—a Land Legacy for the American West: Balancing Public Values with Fiduciary Responsibility. In June 2003 the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the Sonoran Institute established a joint venture project to improve State Trust Land administration in the American West. The goal of the partnership is to ensure that conservation, collaborative land use planning, and efficient and effective management on behalf of trust land beneficiaries are integral elements of how these lands are managed. The efforts of the partnership are intended to assist diverse audiences broaden the range of information and policy options to improve state trust land management throughout the West.

THE LINCOLN INSTITUTE OF LAND POLICY

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is a nonprofit and tax-exempt educational institution established in 1974 to study and teach land policy, including land economics and land taxation. The Institute is supported primarily by the Lincoln Foundation, which was established in 1947 by Cleveland industrialist John C. Lincoln, who drew inspiration from the ideas of Henry George, the nineteenth-century American political economist and social philosopher.

The Institute's goals are to integrate theory and practice to better shape land policy decisions and to share understanding about the multidisciplinary forces that influence public policy. The Institute seeks to improve the quality of debate and disseminate knowledge of critical issues in land policy by bringing together scholars, policy makers, practitioners and citizens with diverse backgrounds and experience in planning, development and property taxation, both in the United States and internationally.

THE SONORAN INSTITUTE

A nonprofit organization established in 1990, the Sonoran Institute brings diverse people together to accomplish our shared conservation goals.

The Sonoran Institute works with communities to conserve and restore important natural landscapes in Western North America, including the wildlife and cultural values of these lands. The lasting benefits of the Sonoran Institute's work are healthy landscapes and vibrant, livable communities that embrace conservation as an integral element of their quality of life and economic vitality.

Through our approach, the Sonoran Institute contributes to a day when:

- Healthy landscapes, including native plants and wildlife, diverse habitat, open spaces, clean air and water, extend from northern Mexico to Western Canada;
- People embrace stewardship as a fundamental value by caring for their communities, economies and natural landscapes;
- Resilient economies support strong communities, diverse opportunities for residents, productive working landscapes, and stewardship of the natural world.

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