

HOUGHTON ROAD CORRIDOR |

Master-Planned Communities Case Studies



FINAL

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Prepared for



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by:

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

EDAW, Inc. has been retained by the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), through the Westcor Company II, LP (the Permittee), pursuant to an Urban Planning Permit (UPP), to prepare this *Master Planned Communities Case Studies* report for the Houghton Road Corridor (HRC) project, an approximately 12,000-acre Plan Area, owned by the State of Arizona (State) and located in the City of Tucson, Arizona (City).

The purpose of this case study is to research, analyze and report on several comparable successful large-scale master planned communities projects with a focus on the land use program of each community and the context in which they were developed. Each of these case studies were successful in different ways and offer lessons for future development of the HRC Plan Area.

SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES

Several case studies of master-planned communities completed by other relevant entities were consulted prior to the writing of this document. These include a study sponsored by The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, the City of Tucson and the Sonoran Institute entitled “Growing Smarter at the Edge”, which reviewed several communities across the southern and western United States in an effort to assist in the planning of the Houghton Area Master Plan (HAMP). HAMP is a previous plan area that overlaps with much of the HRC.

After reviewing these documents, it was decided that additional research was needed beyond the scope of previous case studies due to the unique conditions of the HRC Plan Area. These unique conditions include:



Recently built housing in the Tucson region



- A very large Plan Area that would be developed in numerous phases over many years
- The housing market and demographic realities of the Tucson area
- The location of the Plan Area relative to existing development and infrastructure
- Environmentally sensitive aspects of the Sonoran desert

The following five communities were selected for further investigation because they shared in common some or all of these attributes with the HRC Plan Area:

- Anthem, Maricopa County, AZ
- Summerlin, Las Vegas, NV
- Woodlands, Montgomery County, TX
- Ladera Ranch, Orange County, CA
- McDowell Mountain Ranch, Scottsdale, AZ



These communities were determined to be “successful” case studies for two main reasons. First, they were successfully built, sold, and occupied in a predictable and orderly way. Second, they have maintained or, in some cases, significantly increased their value over time, proving to be a long term-asset for home buyers, businesses and surrounding communities.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Various criteria were established that are believed to contribute to success of each of these communities. These include:

- An appropriate mix of recreation amenities
- A mixture of housing types and densities
- Attractive landscaping and community design
- Pedestrian connectivity
- The sense of a “complete” community
- Open space amenity

In analyzing each of these criteria for each of the case studies, several “lessons learned” were gained and are summarized at the end of each case study. The sum of these lessons learned should inform the future planning of the HRC Plan Area in order to ensure a successful master-planned community is built in this new frontier of development in the Tucson region.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this case study was to research, analyze and report on the character of several comparable successful large-scale master planned projects, with a focus on the land use program of each community and the manner in which they were developed. The following provides a general summary of conclusions reached for each community researched.

The small city features offered by Anthem, Arizona offered residents a desirable place to live, work and play. The mix of housing types, densities, and neighborhoods provided for a community attractive to many segments of the population.

Summerlin's success can be attributed to the developer's commitment to building value into community, through the provision of amenities, parks, public facilities, landscaping, and architecture. This success was dependent on flexible zoning regulations that provided ability to make adjustments in neighborhood design to accommodate market changes and consumer preferences.

The legacy of the Woodlands is that of a master-planned community that has incorporated mixed-use design and environmental sensitivity. As a "complete" community with jobs-housing balance, the Woodlands has maintained long-term value.

Ladera Ranch's diverse product mix and diverse amenity program along with the village core / high-density development strategy allowed for rich community character providing residents with a variety of lifestyle, shopping, recreation and housing options.

McDowell Mountain Ranch's sensitivity to open space preservation and allotment of varied housing types contributed to the completion of the master plan well ahead of the original anticipated date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the communities outlined in this report be considered in an itinerary for any future site visits to master planned projects.