

REAL ESTATE

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Developers target Scottsdale retirees

By Peter Corbett

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Scottsdale's image makers in recent years have positioned the city as a place with a vibrant lifestyle, wealth and attractive people striving to stay young at all costs.

In reality, Scottsdale is old and getting older.

In the most recent census, Scottsdale, compared with other cities with populations of more than 100,000, was the nation's third-oldest city.

The median age of Scottsdale residents was 41.

Nearly 30 percent of city's 230,293 residents are older than 55, and 31 percent are 35 to 54, according to the city's 2008 population report.

Developers are starting to take notice.

Thousands of retirement homes are filling the northeast Valley in a boom that rivals the luxury urban-condo surge of the past few years.

Three luxury-retirement communities, with a total of more than 600 units, will open early next year.

An additional 1,400 units are on the drawing board.

Scottsdale isn't becoming Sun City, but senior-housing executives point out that Scottsdale is gaining prominence as a hub for wealthy retirees.

"It far surpasses Palm Springs (Calif.)," said Michael Grust, chief executive of the Senior Resource Group.



DAVID KADLUBOWSKI/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

The 270-unit Classic Residence at Silverstone is under construction at Scottsdale and Pinnacle Peak roads in Scottsdale. The development will cater to seniors seeking to retire in luxury.

Sunset housing boom

Developers are building or planning more than 2,000 senior-housing units in the northeast Valley, including:

DEVELOPMENT	SIZE	LOCATION
Arté	170 units	114th Street and Via Linda
Classic Residence at Silverstone	270 units	Scottsdale and Pinnacle Peak roads
Sagewood	342 units	Tatum and Mayo boulevards
Maravilla Scottsdale	410 units	Scottsdale Road and Princess Drive
Ryerson at One Scottsdale	370 units	Scottsdale Road and Loop 101
Ryerson at Orchidtree	Unknown	68th Street and Camelback Road
Avenir Group at DC Ranch	500 units	91st Street and Legacy Boulevard

"Palm Springs has never had the depth of the market and wealth that Scottsdale has."

Grust and other senior-housing developers are bullish on the Scottsdale market despite slug-

gish sales in the current recession and growing competition in this housing sector.

The San Diego-based group is planning Maravilla Scottsdale, a 410-unit community just west of

the Fairmont Scottsdale Resort. Communities that will open by early next year include:

» Arté, 170 units at 114th Street and Via Linda.

» Sagewood, 342 units at Ta-

tum and Mayo boulevards.

» Classic Residence at Silverstone, 270 units at Scottsdale and Pinnacle Peak roads.

Silverstone, developed by Plaza Cos. of Peoria along with Classic Residence by Hyatt of Chicago, includes 203 residences in its sprawling main building for independent- and assisted-living residents, plus 67 villas on a 33-acre site that was part of the Rawhide theme park.

Silverstone's buy-in fee ranges from \$460,000 to \$1.5 million, plus \$3,200 to \$6,800 in monthly fees.

Ninety percent of the buy-in fee is refundable to the estate, and a resident's monthly fee does not change if they move from independent living to assisted living or to costly nursing care for the final days of their lives.

Sagewood, developed by Life Care Services of Des Moines, Iowa, has buy-in fees of \$300,000 to \$1 million, with 80 percent of that refundable.

Arté has no buy-in fee. The Avenir Group of Cos. of Vancouver, British Columbia, will lease its units for about \$3,000 to \$6,500 per month.

Is the market ready for all those senior housing units?

All three operators believe it is, and each says they offer something a little different.

"We are so high on the demographics of northeast Phoenix and Scottsdale," said Stewart Ingram, Sagewood executive director.