

# Historic Context for Scottsdale's Postwar Townhouses

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*While the market is small today, he [Dell Traylor] believes townhouses will be 30 percent of the total market someday. He stresses that his Gold Key townhouses are built with the idea of selling them as individual dwellings. In no case does he use the condominium or cooperative type of purchasing setup for he believes these are too complicated for the average buyer to be interested in.*

~Article on Dell Traylor townhouses, *Arizonian* newspaper, 23 Feb.1967

## Introduction

### *Goals and Purpose*

The City of Scottsdale Historic Preservation Office initiated a study and survey of townhouses for a Historic Context for Scottsdale's Postwar Townhouses in accordance with the "Better Resource Management" goal of the Arizona Historic Preservation Plan Update 2000. This goal challenges state and local preservation groups to identify and evaluate properties from the recent past; namely, the early post-World War II boom. The study and survey of townhouse design and construction in postwar Scottsdale meets that challenge. The study findings provide a comprehensive historic context of a specific historic resource type from the recent past of both the City of Scottsdale and Arizona.

Study goals include integrating townhouse survey findings into the City's broader planning and decision-making processes. The findings will assist the Scottsdale Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in reaching a better understanding of the nature and condition of this specific historic resource type; in developing local HP programs that support the preservation of extant properties; and by providing the national and local historic context necessary to select properties for listing on the Scottsdale Historic Register. Ultimately, this study will aid the Scottsdale HPC in the proper evaluation and preservation of a representative collection of Scottsdale townhouses.

### *Methodology*

Previous studies of multifamily housing resources by and for the City of Scottsdale have guided the discussion on post-WWII multifamily housing trends as well as the selection of the methods, techniques, and scope of this study (Abele and Wilson, 2006; and various reports by Don Meserve). These earlier studies resulted in the development of several historic context studies that could be used in the evaluation of the significance of the townhouse properties identified. With an understanding of the postwar growth in Arizona, the Phoenix metropolitan area and Scottsdale, an initial hypothesis of the study undertaking assumed that townhouse development would follow similar patterns. Consequently, the initial focus for the survey concentrated on townhouse units as defined by the Maricopa County Assessor's Office and Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) classification systems for property built between 1962 and 1983.

The selection of time period for the context study, 1960-1974, strongly relates to the issuance of building permits by the City of Scottsdale for townhouse construction. Issued permits steadily increased towards the late 1960s, peaked in the early-1970s and tapered off in the mid-1970s due to

the oil embargo and recession. In addition, the percent by year of new townhouses in relation to all new housing peaked in 1975 at 21%. These factors serve as the rationale for the historic context study's cut-off date of 1974.

Approximately 56 townhouse developments, including 81 plats, were the basis for this study and the City of Scottsdale Historic Preservation Office's townhouse survey. Researchers compiled this number of developments and the analysis of their design, layout and construction through researching newspapers and county and municipal records, and through conducting photo surveys. Architectural style classifications are based in part on the typology of architectural styles established in previous housing surveys for Arizona. New sub-styles have also been developed to specifically describe the single family attached/townhouse typologies reviewed later in this study.

### *Definitions and Terminology*

Townhouses are distinguished by their single family attached home design. One of the most significant design elements of townhouse construction is that, while attached to each other, each townhouse is a single residence vertically. This is one primary physical factor that distinguishes a townhouse development from many condominiums.

For the purpose of this study the following abbreviated definitions apply for single family attached housing (SFA)—the overarching study category under which townhouses fit. The following summary on SFA variations pulls from SFA architectural styles developed by the Scottsdale Historic Preservation Commission. The section Regional and Local Context provides more detailed discussion on classifications of townhouses developed in Scottsdale, 1960-1974.

An SFA is a residential dwelling unit that:

- Is designed for occupancy by one family or living unit,
- Has one or two party walls shared with an adjacent home or homes,
- Sits on its own lot in a subdivision,
- Is typically owner-occupied, and
- Has no other home above or below each home.

Variations on SFA homes in Scottsdale are below:

- Townhouses/Townhomes: rows of three or more units; sometimes called row houses in older urban areas (though generally not referred to as such in Arizona).
- Twin or semi-detached home: attached by a party wall to solely one adjacent home in each structure.
- Clustering or Clustered townhouses: three or more homes grouped in a structure with common open spaces between structures and often with shared or common driveways for each group of homes.
- Patio home or zero lot line home: one or two party walls with adjacent homes, or at least one wall on the lot line abutting a neighboring wall on the lot line, and which has a private patio or courtyard along the long side of the lot; typically one-story units.

### *Works Consulted*

Myriad professional works on recent housing history provide the national and regional context for postwar townhouse development. These include 1950s-1980s reports and studies from institutions such as: The Social Science Research Council (Winnick, 1957), The American Conservation Association (Rockefeller/Whyte, 1964), The President's Committee on Urban Housing (1968), The National Association of Home Builders (Sumichrast/Frankel, 1970), The Urban Land Institute (Norcross, 1973 and Engstrom/Putnam, 1979), and The Center for Urban Policy Research (Horowitz, 1983). Studies consulted that are more scholarly in approach ranged in date from 1964 to 2003 and include, but were not limited to: *City and Suburb: the Economics of Metropolitan Growth* (Chinitz, 1964), "New Communities in the United States: 1968-1973. Part 1: Historical Background, Legislation and the Development Process" (Turner in *The Town Planning Review*, 1974), *The Townhouse in the Suburbs: a Study of Changing Urban Morphology and Social Space in American Suburbs, 1960-1974* (Dingemans, UC-Berkeley dissertation, 1975), *Building the Dream: a Social History of Housing in America* (Wright, 1981), *Redesigning the American Dream: the Future of Housing, Work, and Family Life* (Hayden, 1984), *Bourgeois Utopias: the Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (Fishman, 1987), *Where We Live: a Social History of American Housing* (Welfeld, 1988), *Styles and Types of North American Architecture: Social Function and Cultural Expression* (Gowans, 1992), *American Housing Production, 1880-2000: a Concise History* (Doan, 1997), *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture* (Rifkind, 1998), and *Community: Pursuing the Dream, Living the Reality* (Keller, 2003).

### **National Historic Context**

#### *Postwar United States Residential Housing Trends\**

In the twenty years after World War II, America experienced an unprecedented housing boom. This boom added more than twenty-five million new residential structures by the year 1965. Demographic factors, socioeconomic conditions and trends, the availability of land, and government policies all largely influenced the record housing demand. In the postwar era when housing starts by month and year grew to be an important economic indicator for the first time, the housing of Americans became both national priority and big business.

New residential construction post-World War II contributed less than one percent to the gross national product (GNP) initially. Yet it quickly rose to account for more than six percent by 1950 before leveling off at about three percent of the GNP by the late 1960s, with residential land and structures representing nearly one third of America's total national wealth (Hayden, 1984; Sumichrast/Frankel, 1970). Housing had become "a premier U.S. consumer good" (President's Committee on Urban Housing 1968, 114).

In the first postwar decade, housing demand favored single family home construction. Specifically, most of the residential growth focused on free-standing, or detached, homes. Between 1945 and 1955 the number of newly-constructed single family homes was overwhelming. In contrast, multifamily units accounted for less than fifteen percent of all new housing at the time. This gap was so distinct that one past observer remarked that new multifamily rental housing seemed to be "going the way of the icebox and the horsecar" (Winnick 1958, 3).

Single family detached housing had persisted as the ideal form since the early days of the nation's settlement. It symbolized independence and personal identity; egalitarian qualities underlying the establishment of American democracy. Thus, the American family's desire for private home ownership and space had a deep-seated history, frustrated only by economic and social barriers. Historical studies indicate that the typical postwar American household would have chosen ownership of a freestanding, single family home, if given the opportunity. Notwithstanding, by the late 1960s the single family home development market began to give way to a higher volume of postwar multifamily housing production.

This infrastructural change relates to shifting family structures: 1960s American family values were changing. The "spatial segregation and isolation" linked to the American dream of the "single-family, detached house with a lawn and the proverbial picket fence" seemed less suitable to certain demographic alterations to the traditional household (Keller, 55-56). Increasingly, wives were becoming second wage-earners while single parents and self-supporting unmarried persons moved up as heads of households. These changes affected the financial practicability of responsible single family home ownership.

Multifamily construction therefore increased substantially in the second postwar decade and the housing industry became the domain of large-scale developers. Smaller developments were non-competitive. Thus, multifamily housing development soon comprised more than a third of all new housing units (Doan 1997; Horowitz 1983; The Report of the President's Committee on Urban Housing 1968; Winnick 1958).

\*This section draws greatly from Abele and Wilson's "Scottsdale Postwar Multifamily Housing Survey" (2006),

#### *Growth of New Communities*

Paralleling changes in demographics and to the American family structure, commercial centers mobilized in the late 1950s-1970s, locating major employment centers out in the suburbs. In the 1960s, the American Conservation Association referred to this new postwar spread of Suburbia, which traditionally carried the concept of space and proximate access to the countryside and outdoor recreation, as the "spread city" (Rockefeller/Whyte, 12). Postwar Suburbia fostered a rise in the number of specialized service jobs, including specializations in banking, accounting, law, and advertising, and it also attracted 75 percent of all new manufacturing and retail jobs. Not surprisingly, central cities subsequently lost thousands of jobs and by 1970 jobs located in the suburbs outnumbered those in the central city. These new suburban industries fostered rampant suburban residential growth, influencing the demand for and development of many multiuse residential projects in suburban communities (Fishman, 1987).

The need for residential areas to be located near suburban centers of commerce, as well as buyers' demands for easily-accessible conveniences and recreational areas prompted the rapid design and construction of planned suburban communities, also referred to as "new towns" or "new communities." The origins of new towns lay in late-1800s industrial and factory town developments, as well as within the City Beautiful movement of the 1890s. The new post-World War II phase, however, far exceeded its 19<sup>th</sup>-century origins.

As inner city problems of overcrowding, crime, and racial tensions intensified in the postwar decades, various developers, planners, architects, landscape architects, and visionaries idealized and promoted the utopian virtues of small town or village life which the newer suburbs developing around the central cities promised. New town developers also envisioned their planned communities as an opportunity to create cities that offset the negative development in central cities of diminished recreational areas. Urban trails and the design of other urban recreational opportunities composed a growing national trend in the 1950s which culminated in the late 1960s with Lyndon B. Johnson's beautification plans and the National Trails System Act. "New Towns" reflected this national trend.

The federal New Communities Act of 1968 did what visionary planners, architects, developers and President Johnson wanted – providing government loan guarantees to new communities meeting federal standards. The latter Urban Growth and New Communities Development Act of 1970 extended the guaranteed financing to New-Towns-In-Towns (NTIT) as well as New Towns. Federal programs to encourage new town development through federal loan guarantees lasted from 1968 until 1981.

These planned mixed-use communities—of residential, industrial, commercial, and recreational spaces— offered easily-maintained, efficient, and attractive homes in close proximity to places of work, commercial and industrial centers, and open recreational areas. New towns responded to issues of overcrowding and rampant development in central cities. With urban-like conveniences in suburban settings that boasted "wilderness" and unlimited open space, these new towns were advertised as ideal cities without the path-dependency growth issues that long-existing central cities faced as they grew. New towns were invented cities that theoretically matched the needs and ideals of the American people: pre-planned cities which, on paper, provided no avenue for negative, unplanned development or population growth.

The Rouse Company's Columbia, Maryland 1967 new town, as well as Robert E. Simon's 1964 new town, Reston, Virginia are often proffered as case studies in published reports or studies on American housing trends of the 1960s. These two planned urban communities (PUDs), like many of the new towns that gradually increased in number throughout the country in the 1960s and 1970s, provided a mix of housing types and included both single and multifamily housing. Columbia is also popular for how the new town's plan incorporated ideas for racial integration. Reston remains a successful model for the high density of housing development within its boundaries, including townhouses.

Though many of the popularly-studied new towns began in the east coast, by 1974 over 50% of planned new towns in the United States were located in California, Arizona, and Florida. Developers in Arizona participated in building new towns on the edges of metropolitan areas in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s, Carefree—planned by K.T. Palmer and Tom Darlington in 1955 on unincorporated Maricopa County land north of Scottsdale and northeast of Phoenix—was the first Arizona new town development. New towns by other developers, namely, Fountain Hills, Lake Havasu City, Sun City (and later Sun City West), Litchfield Park, and Rio Verde soon followed. Many of these towns were built on large, unincorporated vacant land areas in Arizona nearby developed communities. The two new towns with the highest percentage of townhouses

are Sun City (26%) and Litchfield Park (19%). The other five communities in the metropolitan Phoenix area had from 11% (Fountain Hills) to 16% (Rio Verde) townhouses in 2000. Three of the communities are age restricted so they fall into the retirement community category – Sun City, Sun City West and Rio Verde. (Meserve 2008)

New towns were expensive private enterprises that the federal government began to aid in 1970. The 1970 Housing and Urban Development Act maintained the 1960s' upward spiral of new town development through federal subsidization of private new town development, by means of guaranteed bonds and, in some cases, grant monies. Such policy matched the federal government's long history of public-private land policies, and supporting the American Dream of home ownership in a safe, clean suburban environment. With federal help, new town development escalated, and their effective design of high-density housing options certainly corresponds to the prolificacy of single family attached housing (condos and townhouses) that emerged nationwide—the over-arching typology with which this study is primarily concerned. (Keller, 2003; Welfeld, 1988; and Turner, 1974)

#### *Rise of Single Family Attached (SFA) Housing*

In the early 1960s, along with the development of planned towns, many developers soon discovered that they could quickly and cheaply build master planned residential developments. Many offered both single and multifamily housing, along with many of the designed recreational amenities so trendy in new towns. Single family attached (SFA) homes were achieved by attaching walls (townhouses or condominiums) and situating them in high-density complexes with shared common spaces.

The single family attached (SFA) form was a “win-win” situation for both developers and buyers. The SFA home design of shared walls, roofs, parking areas and infrastructure (i.e. plumbing, electrical, *et cetera*) cost less per unit than detached homes; space which would have been used for private yards accommodated additional units instead. These high-density features cut costs for developers and offered a desirable and affordable alternative to buyers. SFAs quickly became popular for their cost-effectiveness and for the feeling of single family homes. (Builder/Architect, January 1965; Engstrom and Putman 1979; Mason 1982)

SFAs, and particularly townhouses, often attracted buyers who were unable to afford single family detached housing in larger developments but who still desired home ownership and community amenities. As an added economic incentive to lower-income buyers, townhouse developments began to offer FHA and VA financing in the late 1960s/early 1970s. As a result, this affordable housing type attracted specific groups such as newly-married couples and retirees.

Other incentives that townhouse developers employed to attract new buyers included the marketing of townhouses as similar in features and amenities to private detached homes. Some important amenities that they marketed were in-unit appliances—such as new refrigerators, stoves, dishwashers, and garbage disposals—and private backyards and “park-like” settings in common outdoor spaces. Likewise, the planned landscape allowed residents to feel comfortable, “at home.”

Most townhouse development designs included trees and lawns, privacy fences around small backyard areas and recreational areas, all within the complex. Appealing to the lifestyles of young two-income households and retirees, townhouse marketing emphasized these features as maintenance-free: “Freedom from yard work and outside care gives owners more time for other activities. This is particularly important to young couples when both husband and wife are employed. For oldsters it saves the physical effort needed for upkeep, a project they often find difficult” (K.C. Brown, *Builder/Architect* March 1972, 13, 29). These features offered buyers the feel of a private, single family detached home with all the interior amenities and backyard plus a maintenance-free private park. (*Builder/Architect* May 1970, June 1983; Engstrom and Putman 1979; Hayden 1984; Winnick 1958)

Development location also played a large role in a prospective buyer’s decision to purchase. When choosing site locations, complex developers sought townhouse locations situated near existing single family neighborhoods or within mixed-use developments, as well as by service and retail centers. In the West, specifically, this need to balance location ideals (wilderness and urban areas) placed most townhouse complexes near or in post-World War II single family housing developments and near or just off major arterial roads.

Thus situated, townhouses were imbued with a sense of place that fused the neighborhood appeal of a single family residential area environment with the comfort of easy access to city conveniences, similar to high density urban apartment living. It is a testament to the allure and profitability of SFA complexes that townhouses and condominiums composed nearly one-third of new construction in the United States by 1970. (*Builder/Architect* April 1965, February 1970; Engstrom and Putman 1979)

#### *Townhouse Decision-Making Comparisons: the East vs. the West*

1970 also marks an intensification of studies on townhouses and condominiums. For example, The Urban Land Institute published a major study in 1973 titled “Townhouses & Condominiums: Residents’ Likes and Dislikes” (Norcross 1973). Written by housing market analyst Carl Norcross, the study indicated how the 1960s townhouse boom differed in purchasing rationale regionally, from the U.S. East to the West. Norcross’s survey of townhouse owner satisfaction in regional areas such as greater Washington, D.C. in the East and California in the West quantifies residents’ reasons for buying and living in townhouses. The results show that a variety of reasons affected the decision-making. However, two major purchasing criteria separated the East from the West: economics or lifestyle choice.

In the East, buyers purchased townhouses as the least expensive housing investment option that enabled them to escape renting. Apartment economics — paying rent with no equity — strained long-term financial goals and paled in comparison to townhouse ownership, which attracted buyers as “the closest approach within their budget to having a house of their own” (Norcross, 13). Eastern buyers also considered positive social aspects such as neighborly interaction a factor for choosing a townhouse.

Though a lack of interest in paying rent also influenced townhouse selection in the West, lifestyle preferences dominated western residents’ decision making. Norcross’s survey tables show that the

“freedom from maintenance” factor exceeded “tired of paying rent” by almost 30%, and the availability of onsite recreational facilities heavily influenced the purchase of townhouses in the West due to year-round outdoor living (Norcross, 14-15).

## **Regional and Local Historic Context**

### *Townhouse Designs in the West: the California prototype*

Many 1960s/1970s studies on townhouse development in the West focused on California. Norcross wrote that though townhouses were first popular in the East, as descendant-prototypes of the row house concept and components of the postwar new town development, “architects and builders in California [...] adapted them and added color,” making California townhouse design an “influential principle for builders elsewhere” in the early 1960s (Norcross, 4). The “added color” that Norcross said distinguished townhouses on the west coast from those on the east included a higher level of outdoor glamour in the design.

For example, West Coast townhouses had front courts, atriums, patios and resort-like landscaping. They also featured more light and color in the kitchen and bathroom areas. Even the development names implied glamour, with the use of labels such as “isle,” “villa,” and “seascape.” Whereas eastern townhouses focused on labels suggesting something more pastoral; for example “village,” “orchard,” “oaks” or “farm” (see Appendix in Norcross, 1973). The western townhouse features pointed to the western lifestyle of recreating and entertaining outdoors.

The California townhouse concept even influenced one of Arizona’s earliest master-planned townhouse developments. The Villa Monterey Casita Colony development in Scottsdale (constructed in nine phases, 1961-1969) resulted from a trip that east coast developer Dave Friedman of Scottsdale’s Butler Homes made pre-1961 to Monterey, California. A 1966 article on Friedman in Scottsdale’s newspaper, the *Arizonian*, explains how Villa Monterey materialized from Friedman’s Monterey trip:

Along the way the entrepreneur had purchased about 100 acres of land at Camelback Road and the Canal [...] This parcel he held in waiting for a totally new concept [...] While he was mulling over all the possibilities, [...] Friedman and his wife] took a trip to the Monterey Peninsula and Carmel area of California. Here he became fascinated with the many houses built close together in such a way they retained charm and practicality. Why not try such an idea on the Scottsdale property? The first unit of Villa Monterey Colony was begun west of Miller Road in 1961. During the first six months, 180 units were sold. After the original thought of introducing the casita idea came, Mr. Friedman continued to research, travel and make comprehensive, detailed planning for every step of actual building plans (*Arizonian*, 1 Dec 1966, pp 11-12).

Reflecting Norcross’s distinction between eastern and western townhouses, Friedman borrowed the California precedent of choosing townhouse development names that suggested the glamorous or exotic: Friedman used the term “casita colony,” and in his marketing material, Friedman defined this as “‘small houses built together’—a blending of graceful Spanish design with



functional modern convenience" (*Scottsdale Daily Progress*, 5 May 1961). The title "casita colony" drew upon a popular romantic view of the West's Spanish territorial past; it also suggested a type of neighborhood living that was as intimate and friendly as Spanish colonial living myths.

Importantly, Friedman understood the segmented buyer market for which he was constructing Villa Monterey. Friedman saw the townhouse concept as ideal for buyers in the earlier interim or transient stages of life, and for those in the latter stages of life who preferred low-maintenance property in order to "jet around the world without having to worry about what happens to the old homestead'." In this market families no longer remained together "as they did in years gone by'," and people retained a "spirit of living regardless of age" in contrast to "the Pullman-car days, [when] the old folks just sat on the front porch and rocked'." This housing typology catered to America's increasingly-mobile society yet its marketing strategies suggested a sense of community romanticized from an earlier slower-paced time. (All quotes from Friedman in the *Arizonian*, 1 Dec. 1966).

#### *Scottsdale Postwar Townhouse Development, 1960-1974*

Similar to national townhouse marketing, the promotional literature for Villa Monterey and subsequent townhouse developments in Scottsdale, Arizona in the 1960s emphasized the following key themes: Townhouses were *not condominiums*—*not cooperatives*—for they had *individually-deeded land*; they provided *resort living at home* yet were *communities in their own right*; and they were designed to balance *suburban tranquility* and *urban convenience*.

Scottsdale's townhouse development increased steadily after 1960. By 1969 nearly 50 townhouse developments existed in Scottsdale. Following Villa Monterey's Unit One in 1961, some of the more prominent developments—those advertised and discussed most in the newspapers—were built by Dell Traylor or John Hall (Hallcraft Homes). Traylor's Golden Keys (1964; 1966) and Villa d'Este (30 luxury dwellings; 1966), dominated newspaper marketing nearly as much as Friedman's Villa Monterey. Ads for and articles on Hall's La Buena Vida (136 dwellings; 1968) also received frequent local newspaper attention. Both of these developers, Traylor and Hall, led the construction of large and small townhouse developments up through the 1970s.

Around 1970 after the 1960s national townhouse boom, zoning for townhouse projects escalated in Scottsdale. Large mixed-use developments contributed to this phenomenon—for it was (and still is) often easier in communities to obtain approval for high-density residential developments if they are part of a larger mixed-use development plan. Thus, the sanction of approximately 20,000 dwelling units (DUs) within major development projects (over 80 acres) in Scottsdale before 1980—especially after the approval of McCormick Ranch, the large mixed-used planned community first zoned in 1970—suggests a likely relationship between early master-planned developments, with mixed-use zoning, and available land for townhouse projects. Apartment development also contributed to the single family attached housing trend, since land zoned for apartments often ended up hosting a townhouse project instead.

#### *Impact of Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt on Townhouses*

A series of other events that affected land available for townhouse development was the crusade to improve central Scottsdale's Indian Bend Wash, 1961-1974. In the 1960s, Scottsdale residents

considered Indian Bend Wash an eyesore that divided the city when it periodically flooded. Without structured flood control, residences in or adjacent to either the western or eastern bank of the channel were subject to flooding. In 1961 the Corps of Engineers developed a plan for a concrete channel, 23' deep and 170' wide, to line Indian Bend Wash and to channel and control flooding. Though citizens opposed the concrete channel and recommended that the town pursue a greenbelt solution instead whereby developers would donate land to the city for the greenbelt in exchange for "zoning or other means to raise the value of their remaining land," the Maricopa County Flood Control District and the Corps of Engineers still preferred the concrete channel design.

The City Council therefore hired engineer John Erickson in 1965 to analyze the Corps plan. His analysis led to the "Erickson Plan," also a recommendation for a greenbelt alternative. His plan was initially defeated in 1966 after it suffered myriad funding and design approval struggles with Maricopa County and the Corps of Engineers. However, in 1974, after a major 1972 flood had destroyed numerous homes along the 7-1/2-mile wash, and influenced the relocation of homes away from the Wash's floodplains, the Corps finally approved the greenbelt alternative after roughly ten years of disputes.

In the 1974 greenbelt plan, the City of Scottsdale employed the strategy of granting landowners higher density zoning in exchange for their investment in improvements to Indian Bend Wash and their provision of the needed floodplain easements to the City. As a result of numerous rezoning cases along the length of the wash, there are now a series of multi-family and townhouse developments lining the wash that were approved post-1970. About 40% of the 1200-acre wash land is city-owned and about 60% (736 acres) is privately owned, according to a 1985 local report. Indian Bend Wash now contains several city parks and ponds as well as golf courses and paved recreational paths. The entire project took decades to complete, including the area north of Indian Bend Road within the McCormick Ranch master planned community annexed by Scottsdale in 1967.

#### *Cluster Development as Conservation*

Simultaneous to the Indian Bend Wash case, the rising trend towards high-density housing developments with outdoor recreational spaces and, especially, greenbelt areas drew the attention of the American Conservation Association (ACA). In 1964, the ACA published open-space analyst William H. Whyte's study on cluster development as land conservation in the publication "Cluster Development." Whyte used the term "cluster development" to loosely frame an unconventional approach to housing design and land use that grouped attached houses in varying, high-density cluster designs in order to conserve more open space (Whyte, 12).

Whyte found that this housing typology was popular and outsold conventional developments of the same price range in the marketplace. It especially caught on in townhouse development applications. Clustered housing had a growing emphasis on recreation as a core element and Whyte felt that its "basic procedures for common open space ownership and maintenance" were aligned with public land conservation goals (Whyte, 13-15). In concluding his study report, Whyte emphasized that those outdoor spaces often called "natural" landscapes by modern man had at one time been unnatural spaces invented to seem natural in the "eye of the beholder" (i.e., the

designed English countryside) (Whyte, 84). Whyte therefore set cluster development forward as a similar design concept providing an equally unnatural yet seemingly natural “*feeling of space...[the reality]that people see*” (Whyte, 84). Like the concept of new towns and their controlled design and development, Whyte opined that invented open space was conceptually land conservation.

American philanthropist and amateur conservationist, Laurence S. Rockefeller—also Chair of the federally-appointed Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Committee of the 1960s that was instrumental in the establishment of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (later the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Commission)—endorsed Whyte’s study with the following optimistic outlook on clustered townhouse development:

The time has come [...] for conservationists to take a much more positive interest in development [...] for the potential that it holds [...] Suburban development has been squandering the very resources that people have moved out from the city to seek. In a land wasting pattern [...] houses on equal space lots have been spattered all over the landscape [...] Now a change is in the air. By applying the cluster principle, developers can put up the same number of houses but on a portion of the tract, with the bulk of the land left for open space and recreation.

This study by Whyte—who was a prime mover of open space legislation at the time—is valuable historical evidence linking the American land conservation movement and the large-scale housing industry. It provides a fuller understanding of post-war social and environmental values and policies that fostered and catapulted townhouse development. This environment saw the industry of single family attached housing development on large or multiple plats of land corresponding with a national shift of attention towards responsible and creative use of open space.

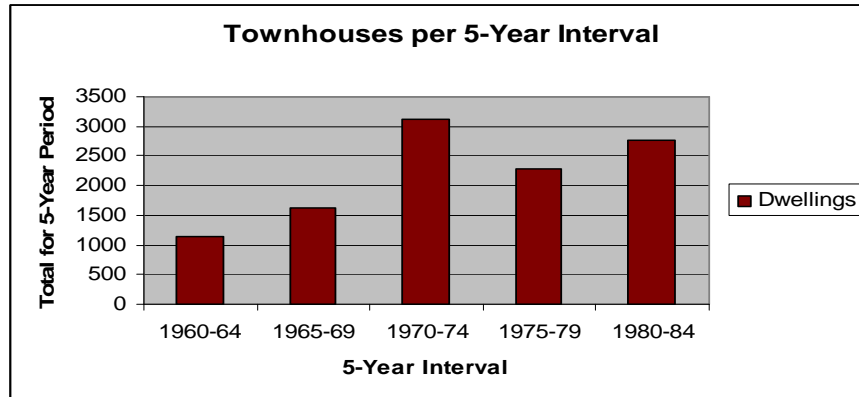
The history of Indian Bend Wash flood control and residential zoning exhibits this national interplay of planned housing and land conservation at the local level. It also demonstrates an early local case of the planned use of natural greenbelts in townhouse development: Friedman’s Villa Monterey incorporated the benefits of open greenbelt space into his development even before Erickson’s proposed 1964 greenbelt plan for the private land on Indian Bend Wash. In 1963, Friedman made use of the eastern sections of his Villa Monterey property, situated on the Indian Bend flood control spillway, to construct a golf course and country club for the townhouse residents.

### **Scottsdale Postwar Townhouse Characteristics**

Having tracked national and local trends leading to the rise of SFA housing, we now turn to examining the ways that local developers responded to these trends, the local demand, community standards, and market conditions with their own variations for the design and construction of townhouses that would appeal to homebuyers. Quite a variety of development sizes, layouts, home sizes, densities and architectural styles were observed in the townhouse and twin developments built in Scottsdale from 1960 to 1974.

The research identified 5871 townhouses or attached dwellings built between 1960 and 1974. This total includes 56 separate development projects containing 81 plats. One 5-unit complex built in 1955, the oldest townhouse development in Scottsdale, has been demolished so it is not included in the data. During the selected study period, Scottsdale’s land area and population was growing rapidly from annexations in the sixties and seventies. The number of townhouses being built in Scottsdale was greatest during the early seventies. Figure 1. shows the number of townhouses or attached homes being built by five-year intervals for the twenty-five year period from 1960 to 1984. Nearly 30% of the total dwellings were built from 1970-1974.

**Figure 1. Numbers of Townhouses Being Built**



1975 was also when the percentage of townhouses peaked at 21 %, as a portion of the total number of dwellings in Scottsdale shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Peak for Townhouses: Townhouses as a Percent of Total Housing**

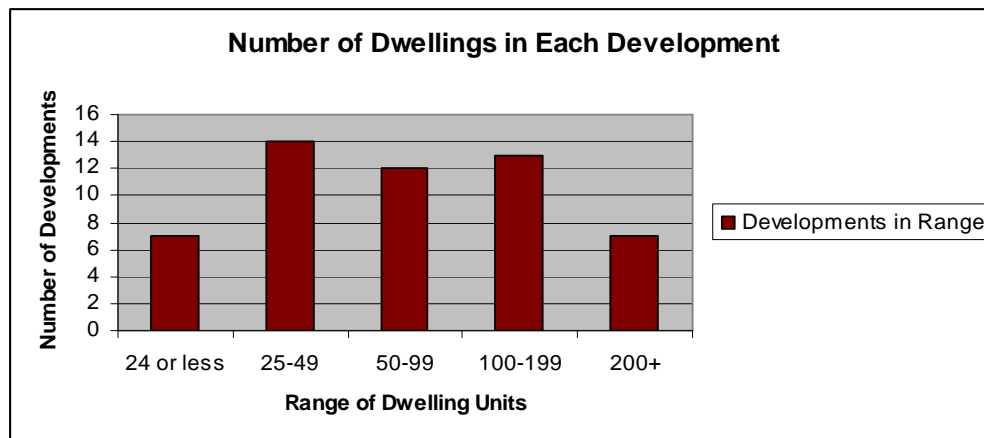
Dates	Total DU	Town-houses	Townhouses as percent of total DU
1950	725	0	0
1957	1900	6	Less than 1
1960	6525	6	Less than 1
1965	14100	575	4
1970	21925	3825	17
<b>1975</b>	<b>32250</b>	<b>6825</b>	<b>21</b>
1980	43900	7925	18

Townhouse builders could provide diverse layouts for prospective homebuyers by rearranging a few variables in each development, such as the location and type of parking provided, the number of homes in a group, and how each home related to adjacent units, streets or driveways. Other SFA variables included the types of amenities provided, like pools and clubhouses, the location and landscaping for common open space areas, the size of units, whether they were one or two-stories, and signs or gates at the entrance to the development. For example, a project with individual entries facing common open space areas could quickly be distinguished from another development with individual entries facing streets. Some variations were more prevalent than others and therefore appear to have been more marketable in Scottsdale during the study period.

### *Size and Density of Developments and Home Sizes*

Scottsdale's townhouse developments range considerably in size from small complexes with less than 25 homes, to several large complexes with hundreds of homes. Many of the 56 developments fell into two ranges of 25-49 (14) and 100-199 (13), indicating the variations in the scale of local developments. In addition 45% of the total attached homes surveyed between 1960-1974 - 2664 out of 5871 homes - are located within just seven large developments; 1) Villa Monterey, 882 units, 2) Chateau de Vie, 590 units, 3) Hallcraft Villas Scottsdale Two, 260 units, 4) Hallcraft Villas, 252 units, 5) Scottsdale House, 236 units, 6) Laguna San Juan, 232 units, and 7) Continental Villas, 212 units.

**Figure 3. Size of Developments**



In terms of the number of plats per developments, the vast majority (88%) had just one plat while only seven had more than one plat. The largest development, Villa Monterey, tops the list with nine plats in the development. Golden Keys and Chateau de Vie projects also have multiple plats.

As you might expect, the density of the typical attached housing developments was greater than most suburban single family detached developments but less than most garden apartments and condominium flat developments. The largest density range category locally was 34 plats with 7-9 units per acre (41%). However a number of projects were built at the lower suburban residential densities of 3-6 units per acre. A small percentage of plats (7%) had more than 20 units per acre which is comparable to local 2-story apartment densities or to more urban townhouse densities. Figure 4. on the following page shows the number of plats in each density range.

The sizes of each townhouse unit were typically smaller than the average single family detached homes locally but they were not all that different in size from detached housing in other communities. In Scottsdale the largest number of plats, 34 out of 81 plats or 41%, fell into the 1500-1999 square foot range for dwelling units. In 1969 the average size of a single family home in America was 1585 square feet (Wilson, 2002). Several developments had townhomes with more than 2000 square feet making them comparable in size to local single family detached developments of the period. Scottsdale townhomes typically had two or three bedrooms and featured a "slab-on-grade" style with homes being one or two levels with no basement.

Figure 4. Density Ranges

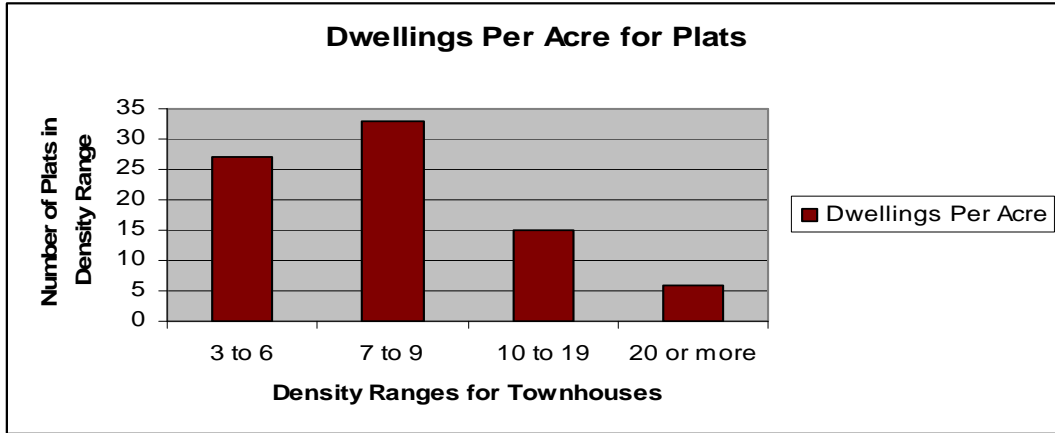
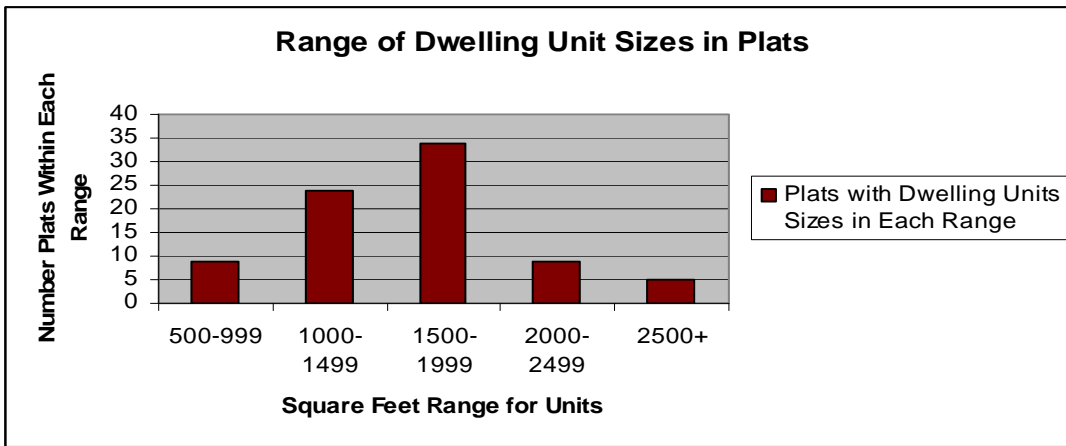
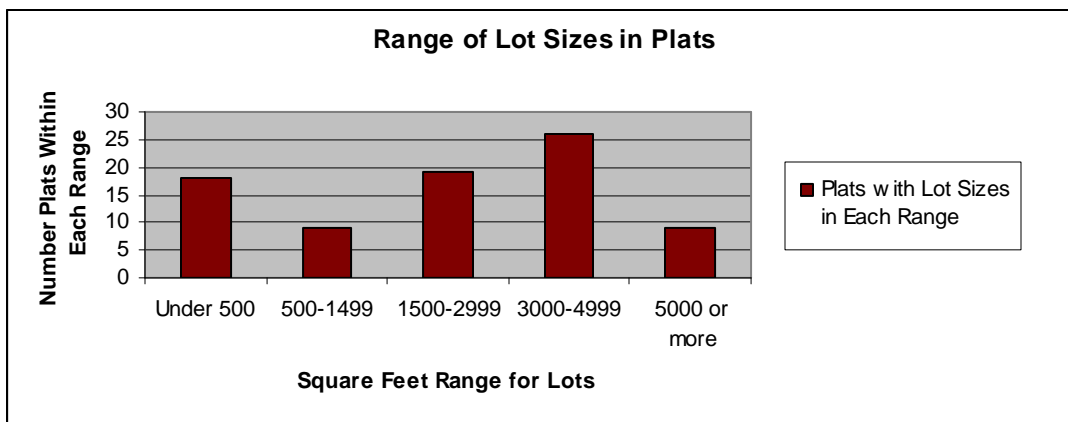


Figure 5. Unit Sizes



Average lot sizes for townhomes were smaller than detached homes. Figure 6. shows the number of plats in five different ranges of lot sizes.

Figure 6. Lot Sizes



One of the main reasons for some developments having small to mid-size lots is due to the large open space amenities within the townhouse developments. Therefore looking at lot sizes along

can be deceptive if other features in the development are not considered. The highest number of plats falls into the 3000-4999 square feet range which is comparable to the 7-9 units per acre medium density range described above.

*Other Design and Construction Characteristics*

Townhouse developments vary in the way parking is provided, both in terms of type and location. Figure 7, shows that many developments provided 2-car carports (46%) and fewer complexes had 2-car garages. Carports were more common than garages for this use category but further study of each plat on the type and location of the parking provides a clearer picture. Parking is the most convenient and accessible when it is connected to the home or is immediately adjacent to the home. Parking, covered or uncovered, that is in a separate area from homes is less convenient since it requires residents and visitors to walk to the unit. Additional examination of each plat reveals that some of the carports are located on the side of the unit, some are directly to the rear of each unit, and some carports are in the less convenient separate covered parking areas.

**Figure 7. Carports and Garages: Numbers of Plats by Carports and Garages**

Parking	Number	Percent
1-Car Carport	21	26
<b>2-Car Carport</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>46</b>
2-Car Garage	21	26
None	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	

Construction materials for walls do change over time according to a comparison of 5-year intervals for the 81 plats surveyed. Figure 8. shows that painted block walls were the most common wall material in the late sixties but this changed to stucco covered walls becoming predominate in the early seventies. Some of the ‘frame wood’ walls for the early seventies in the assessor’s data may also include stuccoed walls. Upon field inspection of the various developments, the wall materials within each development were not always uniform, due to some builders varying materials from one front façade to the next to provide a more semi-custom look to their homes.

**Figure 8. Number of Plats for Each Wall Type by Five-Year Intervals**

Interval/ Type	1960-64	1965-69	1970-74	Total
<b>8" Stucco</b>	7	6	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>
Frame Wood		1	14	15
8" Painted Block	9	<b>17</b>	3	29
Slump Block		4	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>81</b>

### Site Layouts

The Scottsdale Historic Preservation SFA housing survey, 1960-1974, distinguished four site layout typologies for Scottsdale townhouse developments. These are: 1) Traditional rows, 2) Attached homes in curvilinear or staggered layouts, 3) Townhouse clustering, and 4) More than one housing type in a development. The varying layouts are readily apparent from looking at recorded plats, aerial photos and direct observation. Figure 9. shows the mix of layouts used in the SFA plats.

**Figure 9. Layouts: Numbers of Plats by Layout Type**

Major Layout Types	Number	Percent
<b>1. Traditional Rows</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>85</b>
2. Curvilinear or Staggered	6	7
3. Clustering	5	6
4. More Than One Type Housing	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>84*</b>	

Note\* - Some plats have two types of layouts

The *traditional row* arrangement includes townhouses in rows along streets with or without open space in the rear, and townhouses in rows with front entries facing common areas with parking either in the rear or separated from buildings. Almost half the plats (48%) were in traditional rows along streets with the entries and parking from streets (sub-type 1a.). Figure 10. shows an example of this sub-type of traditional row layouts.

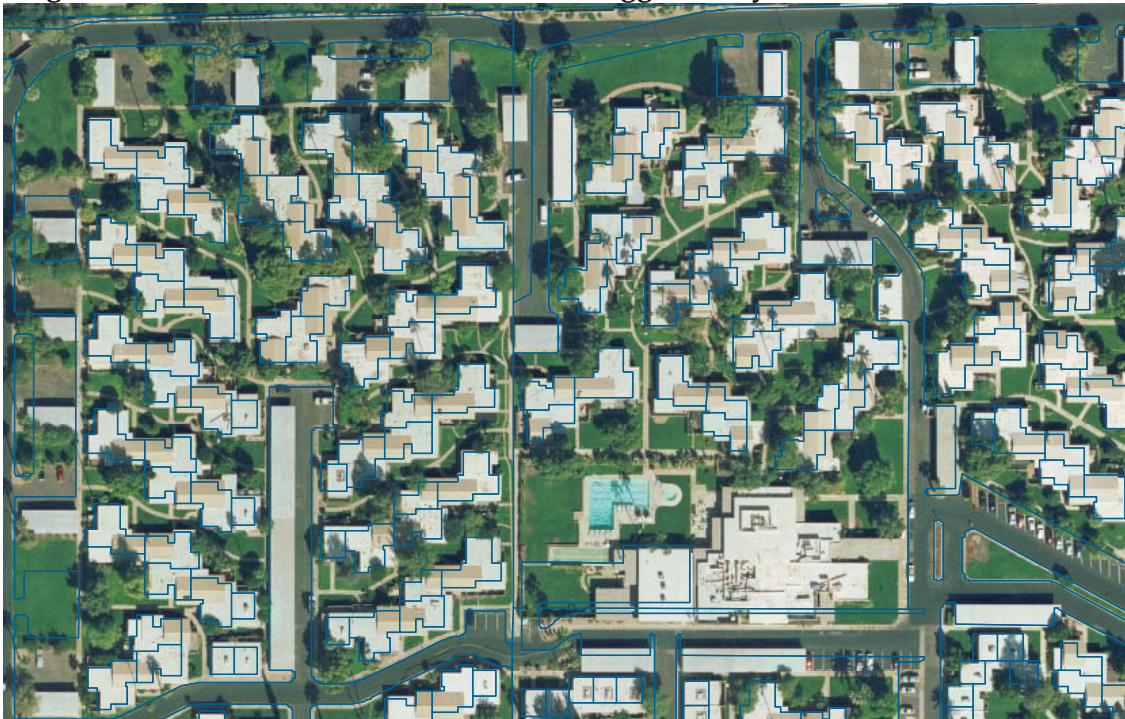
The attached home with *curvilinear* street layouts have front entries and parking facing the street, sometimes including open space in the rear or between buildings. Curving streets can be found in Golden Keys, Briarwood and Sandpiper developments and in portions of Villa Monterey. Another variation from traditional rows is the *staggered unit* layout that has front entries facing common areas with parking in the rear or separate from lots. Figure 11. illustrates the staggered layout used at Scottsdale House.



**Figure 10. Aerial for Portion of Villa Adrian Illustrating Traditional Row Layout**



**Figure 11. Aerial of Scottsdale House of a Staggered Layout**



*Townhouse clustering* presents townhouses clustered around a common driveway courtyard with open space around the clusters, or with townhouses in clusters with front entries facing common areas and with parking areas in the rear or separate from buildings. The clearest example of clustering around a common driveway was observed at Scottsdale Park Villas in McCormick Ranch as illustrated in Figure 12.

**Figure 12. Scottsdale Park Villas with units clustered around a common driveway**



Finally, layout variations include townhouse site layouts where there is more than one housing type in an attached subdivision through the use of a mix of housing types, such as combining townhouses with patio homes, twins, zero lot line homes or single family detached homes. The majority of the units are homes with one or more walls abutting walls of adjacent dwellings, so this alternative layout is still considered attached by the study definition. One zero lot line/patio home subdivision was observed for the period - El Dorado Hermosa. However, since this development was already surveyed and included in the prior 2002 survey of postwar single family neighborhoods, we did not include this development in the current survey data to avoid duplication. A couple of small projects did have more than one type of dwelling, because they had both townhouses and a detached single family dwelling, but this was a rare layout approach.

#### *Architectural Styles*

Architectural styles of Scottsdale townhouses vary depending on surrounding neighborhoods, but what could broadly be termed as Southwest styles are the most common. Photographic analyses of the range of architectural elements evidenced in Scottsdale's townhouse landscape indicate three broad categories of architectural styles. These are defined primarily according to overarching styles identified in previous postwar housing surveys in Arizona. Yet, since only some of the draft architectural *sub-styles* from these other surveys applied to the townhouse developments in Scottsdale, several sub-styles were deleted as non applicable to this townhouse study.

The typology developed for single family ranch home neighborhoods also did not include many late modern styles or modern sub-styles from early seventies architecture. Therefore, additional modern sub-styles were specifically developed for a typology of Scottsdale postwar *townhouse* architecture. The three main categories of architectural styles that apply to townhouses in Scottsdale are: 1) Ranch House Related, 2) Post-WWII Popular Revival and 3) Modern. For a quick summary, these three stylistic categories are listed along with their sub-styles in Figure 13. below.

**Figure 13. Scottsdale Townhouse Typology**

<b>I. Ranch House Related Styles</b>	<b>II. Postwar Popular Revival Styles</b>	<b>III. Modern Styles</b>
California Ranch	Popular Spanish Colonial	International
Spanish Post Ranch	Popular Mission	Contemporary
Los Ranchos	Popular Pueblo	Southwest Modern
Post Ranch	Popular Monterey or Mediterranean	Post Modern
Character Ranch	Popular Territorial	
Combination	Popular Second Empire	
	Popular Classical	

Despite the development of architectural style categories for Scottsdale townhouses, the overall practice of choosing architectural elements seems to have been market driven. Builders borrowed design elements from past or current housing styles that they liked or felt would be the most marketable for their location and target buyers. Thus, townhouse development styles in Scottsdale do not often fit the terms vernacular or common since the façades do not have the least expensive façade treatments. In a way, townhouse developments could appropriately be called semi-custom homes. Also, further consideration of some developments has led staff to conclude that the term ‘vernacular’ still applies to some Scottsdale townhouse developments that lack specific elements for them to fit into one of the three main style categories because they essentially lack the characteristics of the broad style categories or their defined sub-styles.

Several developments were identified as having Ranch House Related architectural style but these were in the minority for styles observed. The townhouse sub-styles for Ranch House Related Styles correspond to the same sub-styles identified in previous Arizona surveys and studies of single family detached subdivisions in Scottsdale, Phoenix, Mesa and Tucson. On the other hand, the projects identified as Post World War II Popular Revival sub-styles are not generally complete or authentic replications of earlier historical styles. Instead of fully embracing original styles, their features serve more as visual references to an historic original, hence the term *popular* revival. In addition, developers often used more than one Popular Revival sub-style within the same project to add variety, such as the use of several sub-styles in the front facades for Villa Monterey.

Deviating even further are the Modern sub-styles, which are not as clearly identifiable in townhouses as they are in non-residential modernist structures using characteristic steel and glass

curtain walls and which are devoid of all ornament. Many of the sub-style names used by architectural critics and authors for the icons of post-modern or late-modern architecture – such as brutalism, expressionism, high-tech or deconstructivism – clearly have no local representatives in townhouse development styles. Therefore, we found it more useful to name and define a short list of modern local sub-styles that match the characteristics of the population surveyed. Scottsdale townhouses that clearly have modern characteristics, that do not fit into the Ranch House Related or Popular Revival styles, have been categorized as Modern for this SFA survey.

It should also be noted that some developers changed the architectural styles they used for their developments. A transition from Popular Revival to Modern styles can be observed over time in the phases used for the larger developments, such as the styles used for various phases of Chateau de Vie. In fact, sometimes the change from a Popular Revival to a Modern façade can be observed from one house to the next in developments that vary the appearance of each unit to offer greater variety for the buyer. Developments that exhibit more than one main style of architecture have been identified as having a mix of styles such as ‘Popular Revival/Modern’.

A complete description of the three architectural style types and each of the sub-styles in evidence can be found in Appendix B. since the text and the photos of the various style examples are too lengthy to include in this context.

**Appendix A. Excel Spreadsheet of 1960-1974 Scottsdale Townhouse Characteristics, Layouts and Styles**

**Appendix B. Architectural Styles for Postwar Single Family Attached Housing in Scottsdale, 1960-1974**

**Appendix C. Classification of Townhouse/Attached Housing Site Layouts**