



New adult community boasts 'outdoor living'

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Estrella's first adult community will focus on keeping boomers in shape and in touch with nature.

Province Estrella, billed as a 600-acre "village" for adults ages 55 and older, broke ground in the Goodyear master-planned community in April.

Nestled in the desert-laden hills of Estrella, Province will boast about 1,800 home sites, lakes and numerous amenities near Westar Drive and Estrella Parkway.

Engle Homes, the builder, plans to begin selling homes this fall after it completes its 14-home model complex.

"The landscaping package we have is set up for outdoor living," said Carl Mulac, president of the Arizona Division of Engle Homes. "A lot of the plans will have great views of the lakes and open space."

The National Association of Home Builders voted Engle Homes' Province Maricopa in the Southeast Valley the Best Active Adult Community in America last year.

"We've taken the best of the best, gotten a lot of homeowner input and expanded," Mulac said, referring to the Goodyear project. The result is a growing home buyer interest list.

"It has "more (people) than any other community we've ever done" he said. "This has surprised us all."

Adult-style living continues to be in demand, with consumers older than 55 estimated to account for nearly 20 percent of new single-family home sales in 2007, according to the home builders association.

For Province, it's about giving people what they want in an area ripe for living, Mulac said.

"The West Valley is just growing strong and it's a beautiful setting," he said. "This is already a well-established, master-planned community that Province is only becoming a part of."

Amenities will include a fitness center, indoor lap pool, cyber café, crafts wing, entertainment lounge and sport courts.

The home sites, all single level, will range from "lock-and-leave" houses to large, luxurious estates.

Planners swapped out a golf course - often considered a staple in such communities - for lakes that create their own natural ecosystem. More than 30 percent of the entire property will be dedicated to open space.

Mulac said it just made more sense.

"A lot of our research shows that only 20 percent of people who buy a golf course community are golfers," he said. "People usually buy property on a golf course for the open space . . . (We'd) rather have the lakes for this."

Marisa Maggio-Harelson, a spokeswoman for Engle Homes, said the new community is "all about connecting with life."

"Staying fit, enjoying outdoor living . . . making intimate social connection and being plugged into the digital age," she said.

"That's what this community offers."

Many people interested in such a community are not even retired yet, she said, but are seeking an active, stress-free lifestyle.