

Wickenburg Ranch ramps up construction

By Jeanie Wright, Editor | Posted: Wednesday, October 8, 2014 10:05 am

In approximately 90 days, Wickenburg Ranch (WR) will transition from existing mainly on paper into a fledgling development including streets, model homes, a sales office and an operating golf course.

Construction is well under way in preparation for the February 2015 opening. WR is a project of real estate developer M3 Companies, which broke ground before the economic downturn of 2007-08. At that time, only an 18-hole golf course had been constructed. The entire project was shuttered, and the course lay dormant until recently. Now, with the water turned on and groomers at work, the green links are hard to miss from Highways 93 or 89, north of Wickenburg.

Meanwhile, the construction site resembles an ant den as about 130 workers employed by a variety of contractors simultaneously work on streets, sidewalks, landscaping, leveling lots and other projects. Forms were in place early last week for the five model

homes, which will be constructed by Shea Homes along with a sales office, according to M3 Companies Manager of Vertical Construction Rich Newman. The first buildings on WR will be closest to Highway 93, just south of the intersection with State Route 89. In the same area, the main entrance, including decorative walls and landscaping, will appear along with a roundabout which has been approved by the Arizona Department of Transportation. Construction of the roundabout will begin this week. (See related story). The traffic circle will be designed similar to the two already in place in Wickenburg, Newton said. Power lines near the entrance will be buried. "Our intent is to dress it up," Newton said.

Tennis courts will be a near-term project close to the entrance and model homes, and a clubhouse will come later. A driving range, which will also serve as a concert lawn, is just down the hill from the models and clubhouse site. The elevation changes constantly within the WR property, as the lots and course nestle into the rolling desert. "Eighty percent will be what we refer to as view lots," Newton said.



Construction of sidewalks, curbs and streets has begun at Wickenburg Ranch. Model homes are underway, and main entrance and roundabout construction will occur this month. The M3 Companies/Shea Homes development will open in February 2015.

Most of the 90 lots in Phase One will be positioned around the sales office and clubhouse area, overlooking the first and 18th holes. Leveling for the adjacent Phase Two is already underway, but the number of lots is unknown until permitting is concluded in December, Newton said. Both will include single-family homes.

Shea Homes is M3 Companies' development partner and will construct the houses as well as the clubhouse, gate house and other amenities. The number of homes built will depend on demand after sales begin in February. "We should be able to stay ahead of the curve," Newton said. WR will be a Trilogy community, similar in quality and design to Trilogy Vistancia, located south of Loop 303 near Happy Valley Road in the West Valley. Whether the golf course will be open to the public or to members of other Trilogy communities is still under review, Newton said.

The long-term plan includes up to 14 more housing phases, some of which could include multi-family units. A fire/police station, equestrian center, parks, lakes and continuation of walking paths are also in the long-range plan. Two wells built to town standards currently exist within the development, as well as two irrigation wells. According to Newton, they are expected to meet demand of the new development for quite some time. A sewage treatment facility will also be built on site.

A Shea Homes office will be placed at Valentine and E. Wickenburg Way, in the corner of the Gold Nugget. It is expected to open in November. Members of the community and prospective buyers will be welcome to visit the office for information.