

Devco Helps Community Plan for Future Generations

By Blessing Logan

If someone were to ask you about Talking Stick Golf Course or Casino Arizona, chances are pretty good that you be able to tell them at least a little about either of these enterprises based solely on their name, but what if someone asked you about Salt River Devco? Would you be able to tell them why Devco was created and what the company does for the community and its landowners?

When the Pima Freeway was created, the tribe and many landowners quickly saw the need to develop an enterprise whose sole purpose was to deal with land development; one that would go out and seek quality development and would have the expertise to know and network the land affected by the creation of the freeway. The Community sought to establish an enterprise that would assist landowners with the development of their land with intentions that would best benefit both the landowners and their community. In 2000, Council created the Salt River Property Development and Asset Management Company via Ordinance #SRO-266-00 and Salt River Devco was established.

Devco was created to serve the tribal government as a pro-active economic development enterprise-

Community allotted land that runs along the community's western boundary (Pima Road) makes up what is referred to as the Pima Corridor and has become a prime area for commercial development since the creation of the Pima freeway. One of Devco's responsibilities is to assist landowners with the development of this land.

When Devco was first established however, there was a bit apprehension among landowners. Many thought that because Devco was a Community enterprise, they would be required to utilize them for development. Office of Public Affairs and Landowner Relations Manager Claire Miller says that simply isn't true. "We are a resource for landowners." Miller stated that the revenue generated by Community enterprises funds not only the enterprises themselves, but also the tribal government's general fund. "We're like every other enterprise," said Miller. "Every enterprise that is set up generates money. It keeps enough to operate and the excess goes to the community." For landowners "If Devco develops, it (taxes paid by developer) would come back into the community. It would regenerate into the general fund."

Another one of Devco's responsibilities is to manage the assets of the community, which includes the Chaparral Business Park, the Salt River Outdoor Company, and the Double Tree Ranch office buildings of Scottsdale.

Lastly, Salt River Devco is in charge of all outside acreage owned by the community, including land between Phoenix and Tucson. Devco assesses all land owned by the Community for value and possible development.

Devco dedicates its time and resources to planning and developing high quality businesses for the community and its landowners-

Two of Devco's most frequently asked questions are: What will the Community look like once all planned development is completed? And, Will there be any land left for future generations?

Devco is proud to say that yes, there will be enough land for our future generations. In fact, Devco says that all development will occur within the commercial land boundaries strictly set forth by Community zoning maps. All allotted lands will remain family owned. All community owned lands will remain the property of the Community. The

Community will always have its land base. Devco also stated that the Community has established areas specifically for housing, natural resources and open space, and that developers will never touch any of them.

Community zoning maps show that the area on the western (Pima Corridor) and northern boundaries of the Community are the primary areas set aside for development. The Community is conveniently located near Scottsdale, Tempe, Mesa and Fountain Hills and the freeway provides easy access from all directions, which makes these two boundaries developmentally ideal.

When it comes to maintaining the Community's appearance, Devco is dedicated, as are many developers, to ensuring the beauty and serenity of the desert be showcased in the architecture of the new developments. "We have the opportunity to create a place of distinction," said Devco President David Fordon on Devco's recently completed video. "The architecture will reflect the great culture of the community. Our job at Devco is to ensure that it uses great environmental techniques and nature's wisdom to guide construction, so that when you come into the commercial development along the corridor, you'll know right away that you're on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community."

The mission of Salt River Devco is to provide long-term income, pride in development choices and new employment-

According to the Devco website (saltriverdevco.com), the Devco dream is to create a "new network of economic communities that acknowledge the past, prosper in the present, and flourish in the future." By bringing economic development, an increased flow of revenue, job opportunities for Community members, and nature-based architecture to the developments, Devco is indeed living out its dream.

Devco is dedicated to bringing high quality businesses and companies to the Community, and works hard to ensure that those companies and businesses are also bringing quality employment to its members. "There are going to be so many career opportunities," said Miller when speaking about Devco's Seven Generation development plan. "There's going to be other possibilities and opportunities in space exploration, biomedical, new science, the next generation-robotics type business and companies, telecommunications and entertainment."

Miller stated that Devco is committed to bringing opportunity to the Community. Devco wants Community members to be informed and understand what they (Devco), as an enterprise of the Community, do on a daily basis. Miller welcomes Community members to attend public hearings and informational meetings hosted by Devco, especially if they have questions or concerns regarding the company and its plans for the future. Miller says that she is also willing to meet with Community members one on one at the company's main offices to further explain the company, its history, and its plans for the future. Devco's recently completed informational video will be shown at the Community's next Quarterly meeting and Miller urges all those interested, to come out and see it. "Those who attend our meetings have always been very, very supportive," said Miller. "And we feel good about that."

Services Available by Salt River Devco

Business and Lease negotiation

Landowner relations/assistance

Creative lease structuring
Project marketing for business agreement
Analysis of land uses based on location of land on the corridor

Devco staff

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