

Appendix E. Palm Desert Tract Development Summaries

Residential Tracts Discussed in This Appendix

Palm Village
Palm Desert
Palm Dell Estates
Deep Canyon Ranch
Panorama Ranch
Pines to Palms Estates
Shadow Mountain Park
Palm Vista
Palm Desert Estates
Shadow Hills Estates
Silver Spur Ranch
Palm Desert Highlands
Desert Garden Homesites
Sandpiper
Shadow Village [California Dream Homes]
Desert Lily Estates
Halecrest Country Club Village
Sands and Shadows
Palm City [Palm Desert Country Club]
Shadow Mountain Golf Estates
Desert Stars
Eldorado Highlands
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Marrakesh Country Club
Del Safari Country Club [Avondale Golf Club]
Deep Canyon Tennis Club
Palm Desert Tennis Club
Ironwood Country Club
Corsican Villas
Sommerset

Name/Number	Palm Village
Date	1933
Developer	William A. Johnson; Mollin Investment Company; Palm Village Land Company (I.C. Stearns and Ralph Hoffman)
Architect	Charles Gibbs Adams (landscape architect); Cleo Blanchet
Boundary	North of Highway 111 (near intersection with State Route 74)
Development History	<p>Considered the first residential subdivision in what is now Palm Desert, the origins of Palm Village began when developer William A. Johnson, president of the American Pipe & Construction Company, began acquiring land on the former Gillette Ranch site situated near the intersection of Highway 111 and State Route 74 in 1933.¹ By 1935, Johnson had subdivided about 50 lots in what was to be known as Palm Village.² To design tract features such as the subdivision's distinct curvilinear street layout, either Johnson or the subsequent developer hired notable Southern California landscape architect Charles Gibbs Adams. The streets were not formally graded until 1939.³ Of Palm Village's initial layout, a 1949 article remembered it to be "one mile long and half a mile wide, and looking like nothing human."⁴ It appears that only a few, if any, homes were constructed prior to 1938.⁵</p> <p>Around 1938, the Mollin Investment Company took over management of Palm Village from Johnson, who later sold his interest in the tract to Mollin in 1942. It was at this time that construction of the subdivision began in earnest.⁶ In November 1939, the layout of Palm Village was underway, advertised locally as "a new and unique community for people desiring desert homes."⁷ The 330-acre tract was completed with graded streets, tree-lined parkways, and waterlines. Local Coachella Valley architect Cleo Blanchet was chosen to design an administration building, and at least six bungalows were constructed for use as furnished model homes to entice interested buyers around this time.⁸ By January 1940, Palm Village was officially opened for sales, and plans had been</p>

¹ Historic Preservation Committee, "History and Tour;" HSPD, "Palm Desert Milestones," 26.

² J. Wilson McKenney, *Desert Editor:...the Story of Randall Henderson and Palm Desert* (Georgetown, California: Wilmac Press, 1972), 116.

³ Fairchild Aerial Surveys, Flight C-6060, September 27, 1939 – December 7, 1939, and Flight C-5582, January 13, 1939, available through UC Santa Barbara Library Geospatial Collection, accessed December 2024, <https://www.library.ucsb.edu/geospatial/aerial-photography>.

⁴ Olive Orbison, "Background of Palm Village Is Told By Writer," *Indio News* February 17, 1949 (on file at HSPD).

⁵ HSPD, "Palm Desert Milestones," 26; "Background of Palm Village Is Told." Newspaper articles from 1940 mention construction of the first homes in Palm Village, after the Mollin Investment Co. had taken over the development (e.g., "New Palm Village Development Now Open," *Desert Sun* January 12, 1940).

⁶ McKenney, *Desert Editor*, 116.

⁷ "Palm Village Starts Near Indio," *Palm Springs Limelight-News*, November 18, 1939.

⁸ "Palm Village Starts Near Indio."

	<p>approved for at least eight homes in the neighborhood to be constructed on spec by contractors from Salt Lake City and Hollywood.⁹ The subdivision's deeds included racially restrictive covenants and additional covenants to restrict architectural design, a pattern common across Southern California and the United States at that time.¹⁰</p> <p>By the end of 1940, Mollin advertised recreational opportunities at the Palm Village Club, "an informally organized, closely restricted club designed to offer sports facilities to residents, members and their guests."¹¹ The subdivision also featured a swimming pool for its members and residents, comprising a portion of the old Gillette reservoir. Despite an extensive public relations campaign launched by Mollin during the 1940s, only about a dozen modest homes were constructed in Palm Village by 1945. These homes were constructed in vernacular iterations of the Moderne, Modern, and Minimal Traditional styles.¹² Federal Housing Authority (FHA) loans were available, indicating Palm Village adhered to FHA guidelines, particularly through the developers' use of curvilinear streets, modest footprints, and conventional architectural styles.</p> <p>During World War II, development of Palm Village came to a halt, and the partially-developed subdivision became the home of a temporary military instillation that was later dismantled in 1944. After the war, Mollin resurrected its sales campaign, and many of Palm Village's lots filled out with smaller, affordable homes intended for a more year-round clientele. The push to attract permanent residents to the desert (rather than the seasonal crowd) was spurred by the efforts of the Palm Desert Corporation, another development company that had by this point begun developing other lands in the area that would soon become Palm Desert. As such, Palm Village grew to become a diverse mixture of both small and large homes, apartment buildings, commercial lodges, and architecturally significant homes in the postwar years. Its homes were often constructed by individual homeowners, typically humble iterations of the Spanish Revival, Ranch, or Minimal Traditional designs, although Moderne and Mid-Century Modern examples were built as well.</p> <p>The Mollin Investment Company liquidated in 1948, after which time Palm Village became even more unrestricted, eventually becoming the predominant neighborhood of Palm Desert's working class and people of color.¹³ Between</p>
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⁹ "New Palm Village Development Now Open," Palm Village display advertisement, *Desert Sun* January 12, 1940.

¹⁰ Luke Leuschner, personal communication regarding previous deed research, December 2024.

¹¹ "Palm Village Season To Open," *Los Angeles Times* November 10, 1940

¹² "Palm Village Season To Open;" "Desert Community Properties Selling," *Los Angeles Times* December 1, 1940.

¹³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 Enumeration Data, accessed December 2024 at ancestry.com.

	<p>1946-1956, the development of Palm Village took place under I.C. Stearns and Ralph Hoffman's Palm Village Land Company, which purchased the remainder of the Gillette Ranch for expansion.¹⁴ In 1951, Palm Village officially became part of Palm Desert with an honorary declaration. By that point, Palm Desert had replaced Palm Village as the area's geographic identifier on regional maps.</p> <p>Homes constructed in the neighborhood under the Palm Village Land Company were even more varied and vernacular in style than in years prior, however a few notable Modernist residences such as the Rudolph Schindler-designed Maryon E. Toole residence (1948; CoPD Landmark #6) and the Miles C. Bates House designed by Walter White (1954, CoPD Landmark #8) were constructed in Palm Village during this period.¹⁵ White also designed a selection of smaller houses in the Palm Village neighborhood, including a cluster of spec homes developed by Charles Gibbs. One of the neighborhood's latest developments was the multi-family Tripalong Apartments (extensively altered), which were developed in 1958 by prominent Palm Desert resident and actor William Boyd, also known as Hopalong Cassidy.¹⁶</p>
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Name/Number	Palm Desert
Date	1946
Developer	Palm Desert Corporation
Architect	Tommy Tomson; Kaufmann, Lippincott, and Eggers
Boundary	South of Highway 111
Development History	<p>Although it is hard to imagine given the community's growth and expansion, "Palm Desert" was foremost the creation of a single corporation, the Palm Desert Corporation (PDC), which conceived of the community, laid its streets and infrastructure, and sold the land for the hundreds of homes which were inevitably built. The bulk of Palm Desert's footprint south of Highway 111 dates to the community's inception in 1946.</p> <p>Led by Clifford "Cliff" Henderson, the PDC hired the landscape architect Tommy Tomson (also the brother-in-law of Cliff) to plan the community, which was to be built on an empty alluvial fan south of Highway 111.¹⁷ Tomson imagined a large subdivision consisting of multiple neighborhoods, a downtown strip, and</p>

¹⁴ HSPD, "Palm Desert Milestones," 40; Orbison, "Background of Palm Village Is Told By Writer."

¹⁵ Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects* (New York: Reinhold, 1960), 190; Welter, *Walter S. White*, 64-65.

¹⁶ "Palm Desert's 'Tripalong' Apartments Completed, Newest Project in Palm Desert," *Desert Sun*, November 1, 1958.

¹⁷ Steven Keyton, "The Glamorous Gardens of Tommy Tomson: Part Two," *Eden* 19, no. 1 (Winter 2016), 17.

	<p>various civic properties. His design for the community was situated alongside both Highway 74 and Highway 111 and featured gracefully curved streets meant to align with the existing Palm Village subdivision. The firm Kaufmann, Lippincott, and Eggers was hired by the PDC to design a private club (the Shadow Mountain Club) and various PDC facilities.</p> <p>The PDC began construction in the summer of 1946, beginning with water infrastructure supplied by a trio of wells and the Shadow Mountain Lake, a reservoir designed as a recreational “boating lake.” The PDC’s tract opened for sales on November 16th, 1946, at which point nearly sixteen miles of streets had been laid but, except for Cliff’s personal home, a single house had yet to be built.¹⁸ This first portion of the tract which opened was Unit #1, which consisted of the community immediately south of Highway 111 and included commercial lots (including the downtown strip El Paseo) and lots for multi-family housing, but it mostly consisted of larger estate-sized parcels known as the “Shadow Mountain Estates.” While lots quickly sold in Unit #1, the PDC was busy constructing Unit #3, which opened for sales in early 1947 and also consisted of more exclusive estate lots. It was on these two units, which were located between Highway 74 and Portola Avenue, that the community’s most architecturally significant homes would be built by the likes of Walter S. White, Cliff May, Henry Eggers, Albert Frey, and H. E. Weston.</p> <p>While the PDC’s branding and sales program was directed towards the establishment of higher-end estate homes, two units of the entire consisted of smaller lots and were intended to be more affordable. Unit #4, which was east of Portola Avenue, and Unit #6, which was west of Highway 74, both contained more affordable lots and catered to middle-class seasonal residents and families alike. Unit #4 opened in early 1947, but Unit #6 did not open for another two years, in early 1949.¹⁹</p> <p>The PDC controlled all aspects of the community’s development through the Palm Desert Community Association, which set restrictive building requirements, reviewed architectural plans, and even policed the community’s racial makeup (also enforced by racial covenants) to ensure the appearance of a “high-class” community.²⁰ To this day, Palm Desert’s racial and socioeconomic geography can be traced to the development patterns set and policed by the PDC.²¹</p>
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¹⁸ Luke Leuschner, “Palm Desert: A Sellable Dream on Forsaken Land, Part I,” *The Hourglass*, Fall 2021.

¹⁹ “Reservations Being Taken for New Palm Desert Unit,” *Desert Sun*, January 14, 1949.

²⁰ Palm Desert Community Association applications, Clifford W. Henderson Collection, Historical Society of Palm Desert.

²¹ Leuschner, “Palm Desert,” 2021.

	<p>While the PDC sold hundreds of lots and dozens of homes were built, Palm Desert's growth was never as extravagant as the corporation had hoped. Other subdivisions including Panorama Ranch, Palm Dell, and a revamped Palm Village were also established during this time (frequently profiting off the PDC's marketing and infrastructure), in many cases offering similar amenities at a more affordable buy-in.</p> <p>In 1956, the PDC was liquidated to a consortium headed by real estate magnate Howard Ahmanson, and the Palm Desert Sales Company was formed to subdivide and sell the residual land. The PDSC was less concerned with cultivating a high-end image of Palm Desert, and many of the larger parcels were developed with condominiums and spec homes.</p>
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Name/Number	Palm Dell Estates
Date	1946
Developer	Amos and Nell Odell; Dan Dunlop
Architect	
Boundary	Park View Drive to the north, Fred Waring Drive to the south, Fairhaven Drive to the west, and Monterey Avenue to the east
Development History	<p>Palm Dell Estates was a subdivision developed by Amos and Nell Odell, a couple that owned acreage adjacent to the Palm Village area and were engaged in date farming and other ranching activities. (The name "Palm Dell" is clearly a take on the Odell name.) Another owner, Dan Dunlop of Long Beach, was noted in later newspaper articles, but it is unclear what his stake was.²²</p> <p>Construction on the subdivision began in 1946, and streets and infrastructure were completed in the spring of 1947. At the time, Palm Desert itself was under construction and not as widely known, and thus Palm Dell initially associated itself with Rancho Mirage and "Greater Palm Springs." The prominent Palm Springs realtor Culver Nichols was hired as the sales agent, with Rancho Mirage pioneer Don Cameron as the on-site salesperson.</p> <p>The subdivision was originally intended to be 160 acres (a quarter section), consisting of four quadrants with a central circular park. (It was noted during construction that the landscape architect J.A. Gooch of Armstrong Nurseries was consulting on the park design, but it is unclear if his design was completed or if he had any role in the subdivision layout.²³) However, only the southeast forty-acre quadrant was subdivided, and it appears that the park and community facilities were never completed. Only three houses were built by</p>

²² Don Cameron, "What Goes on In Palm Valley," *Desert Sun*, March 14, 1947.

²³ Don Cameron, "What Goes on In Palm Valley," *Desert Sun*, April 4, 1947.

	1953, and ultimately the residual land was sold off and empty lots were filled in over ensuing decades.
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Name/Number	Deep Canyon Ranch
Date	1946 ca.
Developer	Philip Boyd
Architect	
Boundary	Fairway Drive to the north, Mockingbird Trail to the south, Portola Avenue to the west, and Deep Canyon Road to the east
Development History	<p>Deep Canyon Ranch was a subdivision owned and developed by Philip Boyd, a prominent landowner in the area who originally owned the land as part of thousands of acres of his namesake “Deep Canyon Ranch,” which later became a wildlife preserve and research center.</p> <p>In the fall of 1946, as the Palm Desert Corporation was working on the construction of their streets, Boyd filed to create “Deep Canyon Ranch Properties” with the clear intention of creating his own subdivision.²⁴ It is unclear exactly when streets were laid in his subdivision, but the first house was built in 1951. Deep Canyon Ranch was directly connected to Palm Desert Corporation’s Unit 4 neighborhood, which was intended as a more affordable and family-oriented neighborhood. The subdivision was expanded twice, once in 1955 and then again in the late 1950s.²⁵ Boyd never tried to develop spec houses, he simply sold lots to people who then built their own houses.</p> <p>Lots in the subdivision were typically of larger size, with some estate-sized properties at the eastern end of the development. A handful of homes were built, typically in modern Ranch styles, including the Randall Henderson house (John Outcault, 1962) at 74555 Old Prospector Trail and the C. Larabee house (1956) at 74701 Old Prospector Trail, but the subdivision was not filled out until much later.</p>

Name/Number	Panorama Ranch
Date	1948
Developer	John Harnish
Architect	Barry Frost
Boundary	To the north by Highway 111, to the south by Fairway Drive, to the west by Abronia Trail, and to the east by Deep Canyon Road
Development History	Panorama Ranch was developed by John Harnish, a former Los Angeles-based engineer and builder, in the wake of development by the Palm Desert

²⁴ [Deep Canyon Ranch Properties legal notice], *Desert Sun*, September 20, 1946.

²⁵ [Article about development in Palm Desert], *Desert Sun*, January 10, 1956.

	<p>Corporation.²⁶ It was located immediately east of the Palm Desert Corporation's Unit #4, which was intended to be the more affordable and family-oriented portion of the development. Panorama Ranch, while having restrictions similar to those of the Palm Desert Corporation and its own community association, was intended to be more affordable like Unit #4.</p> <p>Although planning appears to have begun as early as 1946, streets and utilities were laid at the end of 1948 and the subdivision was filed at that time. At the center of the subdivision, Harnish built a "Sports Corral" in 1949 with a swimming pool, barbeque area, and recreation facilities such as a shuffleboard court. A sales office was built on Highway 111 alongside a date shop, which was housed in a Quonset hut and known as the Panorama Date Market.²⁷ There were also three model homes built as part of the development campaign, all designed by local architect Barry Frost. The first was the Steel-Lite home, a prefabricated structure located at the corner of Panorama Drive and Peppergrass Street and completed in 1949. This was followed by two small "contemporary" homes, one at 73349 Chicory Street and 45618 Panorama Drive (both 1949).²⁸</p> <p>The subdivision, which opened in January of 1949, never saw particular success. Around a dozen homes were built in the first years, and then in 1953 Harnish hired builder Adrian Schwilck to design and build the "Pool-Side Homes," a cluster of eight small modern homes surrounding a communal pool (which was the original Sports Corral pool). It appears that Harnish gradually sold the land to other developers, first to a developer named James L. Russell, who purchased the residual subdivided land and sold it under the name "Palm Desert Heights," which was a short-lived effort.²⁹ In 1956, a man named John Adams purchased the residual twenty acres of land and created Palm Desert Estates, and Panorama Ranch organically filled out in the following years as lots were sold to individual buyers and spec builders.³⁰ Monte Wenck, who developed the adjoining Shadow Hills Estates in 1956, was particularly instrumental in filling the former Panorama Ranch with spec homes. By the end of the 1950s, the neighborhood was almost completely developed.</p>
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Name/Number	Pines to Palms Estates
Date	1953
Developer	Hal Kapp and Ted Smith

²⁶ "New Subdivision Now Under Way East of Village," *Desert Sun*, January 7, 1949.

²⁷ "Col. Ellsworth Exclusive Agent," *Desert Sun*, November 24, 1950.

²⁸ Advertisement for Steel-Lite home, *Desert Sun*, April 1, 1949.

²⁹ "Russell Opens Desert Offices," *Desert Sun*, November 23, 1953.

³⁰ "Adams Buys 20 Acres, Plans New Subdivision," *Desert Sun*, December 4, 1956.

Architect	
Boundary	Santa Gertrudis Drive [Bel Air Road] from Highway 74 to Alamo Drive
Development History	Pines to Palms Estates was a small tract that consisted only of Bel Air Road (originally Santa Gertrudis Drive) and appears to have been developed by Ted Smith and Hal Kapp (Desert Property Consultants). The subdivision map was created in 1953, however nothing was developed on the land until 1957, when the adjacent Palm Desert Highlands (1957) was subdivided by Kapp and Smith. At this time, the street was renamed “Bel Air Road” and essentially became part of Palm Desert Highlands. ³¹ The tract was never advertised under its name, and nothing was built on it until Palm Desert Highlands was developed.

Name/Number	Shadow Mountain Park
Date	1954
Developer	Shadow Mountain Park Inc.
Architect	
Boundary	The streets of Shadow Lake Drive and Mountain View Avenue
Development History	<p>In 1953, the Shadow Mountain Club was sold by the Palm Desert Corporation to a group of its members which formed Shadow Mountain Park Inc as the new ownership entity.³² Almost immediately, the new corporation set about an improvement and development campaign which included the subdivision of surplus land on the northern border of the club into a tract named Shadow Mountain Park. The landscape architect Tommy Tomson, who had laid out Palm Desert and the Shadow Mountain Club, designed an initial scheme which was not realized.³³</p> <p>The subdivision was filed with the county in 1954, and by the beginning of 1955 the streets and utilities had been constructed, and the tract was opened for sales, first to members of the Shadow Mountain Club.³⁴ Homes in the subdivision were expected to be custom-built and of higher architectural design in character with the adjacent subdivisions previously developed by the Palm Desert Corporation. Lot sizes ranged, with the larger estate lots flanking Shadow Lake Drive (many of which directly faced the club grounds) and smaller lots available on Mountain View Avenue.</p> <p>One of the first homes to be built in the new subdivision was the Stanthony Corporation’s “Hospitality House,” a modern show house designed by architect William Bray intended to advertise the appliance company’s products. Publicity</p>

³¹ “County Planners to Have 15 Desert Area Matter,” *Desert Sun*, May 11, 1959.

³² “Palm Desert Club Sold to Members,” *Los Angeles Mirror*, November 30, 1953.

³³ Shadow Mountain Club, “Artist’s Conception of the New Shadow Mountain Park,” *Sun Spots*, October 1953.

³⁴ Shadow Mountain Club, “Homesites on Club Grounds Available Soon,” *Sun Spots*, January 1955.

	<p>for the home was extensive, and Shadow Mountain Park also featured the home in many of its advertisements.³⁵ Completed in 1956, the home was located directly next to the gates of Shadow Mountain Club (which also doubled as the western entrance to the subdivision) at 73745 Shadow Lake Drive.</p> <p>A selection of custom-built homes was constructed shortly after Shadow Mountain Park's opening. These included the Jack Blair residence (1957) at 73905 Shadow Lake Drive and George Walling residence (1956) at 73911 Shadow, both designed by modern architect John P. Moyer. The developer Eugene Roberts also built a trio of modern homes on Shadow Lake Drive, and a few other homes were built by other owners. The most significant home built in this period was the Robert Overpeck residence (1956), a small modernist home designed by A. Quincy Jones disciple Warren Frazier Overpeck for his brother. Around a dozen homes were built in the subdivision in the first ten years of its existence, and it was filled out in ensuing decades.</p>
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Name/Number	Palm Vista
Date	1955
Developer	Ted Smith
Architect	
Boundary	Fred Waring Drive to the north, Rancho Grande Drive to the south, Monterey Avenue to the east, and Fairhaven Drive to the west
Development History	Palm Vista was a small subdivision developed by prominent Palm Desert realtor and developer Ted Smith in 1955. There appears to have been no unified vision or form for the neighborhood, and that lots were sold for relatively low prices, and then built out in the mid- to late-1950s with Mid-Century Modern homes by a variety of speculative builders.

Name/Number	Palm Desert Estates
Date	1956
Developer	John Adams
Architect	
Boundary	El Camino to the north, Candlewood Street to the south, Deep Canyon Road to the east, and Abronia Trail to the west (not inclusive of the triangle between Abronia Trail, Panorama Road, and Candlewood Street)
Development History	Palm Desert Estates was a small tract of a few streets developed by John Adams on twenty acres that was formerly part of Panorama Ranch. Adams purchased the land at the end of 1956, and then subdivided it shortly thereafter. ³⁶

³⁵ Shadow Mountain Club, "'Hospitality House' to be Previewed," *Sun Spots*, April 1956.

³⁶ "Adams Buys 20 Acres, Plans New Subdivision," *Desert Sun*, December 4, 1956.

	<p>According to a newspaper announcement, Adams had plans to develop a set of homes and apartments designed by the architect John Outcalt.³⁷ However, only one Outcalt-designed house was built at 45432 Panorama Drive (1957), and when Adams built himself a house at 45468 Panorama Drive (1957), it was designed/built by of Patten & Wild.</p> <p>A few homes were built by individuals on Panorama Drive, but it appears that Adams mostly sold land to developers who built apartments and condominiums, which included an apartment complex at 45325 Panorama Drive (1962), the Village Green condominiums designed by Harold Bissner and Robert Pitchford at 45413 Sunrise Lane (1961), and an apartment complex designed by architect Robert Ricciardi at 45301 Deep Canyon Road (1964).</p>
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Name/Number	Shadow Hills Estates
Date	1956
Developer	Monte Wenck
Architect	Charles W. Doty
Boundary	Highway 111 to the north, Fairway Drive to the south, Deep Canyon Road to the west, and Toro Peak Road to the east
Development History	<p>Shadow Hills Estates was a tract created by developer Monte Wenck, a prominent resident of Palm Desert who went on to own the Shadow Mountain Club. Wenck appears to have purchased most of the land for the tract in 1954, and immediately began planning for a subdivision.³⁸ Initially, it appears that Wenck intended to build a tract of Cliff May Homes in partnership with the prominent developer Clifford Henderson, but only one such property was built, at 74540 Monteverde Way.³⁹</p> <p>Between 1955 and 1956, Wenck subdivided his acreage into Shadow Hills Estates. Except for the street Monteverde Way, which was excluded from the subdivision and consisted of estate-sized lots, the subdivision was intended to be a more affordable and to contain a variety of homes and apartments. It was directly adjacent to Palm Desert Corporation's Unit #4, Panorama Ranch, and Palm Desert Estates, all of which contained a more a diverse and affordable selection of homes.</p>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Helen Anderson, "Palm Desert," *Desert Sun*, September 27, 1954.

³⁹ Advertisement for Cliff May Homes, *Los Angeles Times*, March 13, 1955. Contracts, correspondence, and plans for the Henderson-Wenck partnership are in the Clifford W. Henderson Collection at the Historical Society of Palm Desert.

	<p>Wenck clearly intended to develop many of the homes himself, beginning with a model home designed by architect Charles W. Doty⁴⁰ at 45630 Deep Canyon Road (1956). Between 1956 and 1962, Wenck built dozens of modern homes in Shadow Hills Estates from a variety of plans which were likely designed by Doty. In addition, a selection of builders like M. L. Beard and Charles White also developed homes (often building the same models, which suggests that they were allied with Wenck) within the subdivision. Wenck, Beard, and White also built these homes on empty lots in surrounding subdivisions, therefore diffusing the character of the Shadow Hills tract into the surrounding neighborhoods.</p> <p>These homes were modern, smaller, and targeted towards a more affordable demographic. In addition, Wenck also developed a series of apartment buildings, including the Shadow Hills Apartments (1960) at 74550 Shadow Hills Road, an apartment complex at 74602 Shadow Hills Road (1963), and another complex at 74601 Shadow Hills Road (1966).⁴¹</p> <p>Apart from the properties developed directly by Wenck and his associates, a number of individual homeowners also purchased lots and built their own houses. As was typical of the neighborhood, the homes were smaller in size but were occasionally designed by prominent architects in such instances as the George Mitchell house (Walter S. White, 1957) at 74581 Peppertree Drive or the Roy Adamson house (John Outcalt, 1959) at 74614 Peppertree Drive.</p> <p>By the mid-1960s, Shadow Hills Estates was almost completely developed with homes and a selection of apartments. Additionally, Wenck and his associates had also succeeded in developing many of the empty lots in adjoining subdivisions, thereby giving the whole neighborhood a highly developed and Mid-Century Modern character.</p>
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Name/Number	Silver Spur Ranch
Date	1956
Developer	Adrian and Mercedes Schwilck; Sol Lesser
Architect	

⁴⁰ Advertisement for Shadow Hills Estates model home, *Desert Sun*, March 16, 1956. Doty appears to have been the architect for many, if not all, of the homes developed in and around Shadow Hills Estates built by Wenck and his colleagues, but further documentation is needed to confirm. Many of the homes appear to be the same model as the one he is confirmed to have built, and many others are generally consistent with his work during this period.

⁴¹ The apartment complex developed by Wenck at 74601 Shadow Hills Road (1966) appears to be a design by architect Richard Dorman, for it is a near exact copy of the Dorman-designed Fairview Cottages built by Wenck immediately prior. Further documentation is needed to confirm this attribution, however.

Boundary	Haystack Road to the north, Portola Avenue to the south, Arrow Drive/Chia Drive to the west, and Portola Avenue to the east. (Does not include Corsican Villas, Ironwood Park, or the houses along Agave Lane.)
Development History	<p>Silver Spur Ranch was the creation of Adrian Schwilck, a builder and developer who had previously done work in Panorama Ranch, and his wife Mercedes Schwilck, who provided funding for much of the venture. In 1955, the couple began purchasing land from Alvasina Nolan, a homesteader who owned hundreds of acres of land on the upper slope of Palm Desert, and who had previously refused to sell her land to the Palm Desert Corporation.⁴² The Schwilcks' land purchases from Nolan and others ultimately totaled around 600 acres.</p> <p>Development on the subdivision began in 1956 with the laying of streets and infrastructure, the construction of a sales office (47550 Silver Spur Trail), and the construction of a model home (47845 Sun Corral Trail). From the beginning, the branding of the development was intended to evoke a ranch-type atmosphere. Much of the early architecture was designed in a modern Ranch style and horse facilities were also constructed.</p> <p>The Schwilcks developed a few dozen homes (particularly along Sun Corral Trail and Little Bend Trail) themselves in phases between 1957 and 1959, while at other times allying with spec builders to develop other portions of Silver Spur. In some cases, individuals purchased land and built their own houses designed by significant architects such as Cliff May, Walter S. White, and Howard Lapham.</p> <p>Adrian Schwilck appears to have acted as the architect for the homes he developed himself, while other architects such as Earl Kaltenbach designed the homes developed by partnered builders. Although the development claimed to target an exclusive clientele, houses ranged in size and price, from affordable seasonal homes to larger estates, and architecture and construction was policed by a homeowner's association. The Palm Springs realtor Tony Burke was brought on by the Schwilcks to act as the sales agent, and he himself lived in the house at 73408 Little Bend Trail.</p> <p>In 1957, the singer Bing Crosby purchased a sixteen-acre parcel of land at the southernmost point of development's landholdings and built a home for himself designed by architect Howard Lapham. Crosby subdivided his land into four parcels, and a selection of his friends constructed neighboring houses, including</p>

⁴² Oral History with Adrian Schwilck, May 22, 1980, *Historical Society of Palm Desert*, accessed via https://archive.org/details/capdhs_000102.

	<p>Jimmy Van Heusen, Phil Harris, and Randolph Scott.⁴³ Although Crosby's name was frequently mentioned in publicity materials, he never held a stake in the development, and was essentially removed from the neighborhood. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy infamously stayed at Crosby's house in Silver Spur Ranch.⁴⁴</p> <p>The initial phase of development (1956-1959) was relatively successful, and by the end of the decade a few dozen homes had been built. In 1959, the movie producer and real estate developer Sol Lesser purchased a majority stake in the venture, and Schwilck went on to develop the Shadow Mountain Fairway Cottages.⁴⁵ Lesser and his consortium of associates hired the architect William Krisel to design homes, a clubhouse, and master plan for a new, massive phase of development that was to take advantage of all landholdings. However, these grand plans were almost entirely unrealized, and only about a dozen of the Krisel-designed homes were constructed.</p> <p>In 1962, Schwilck, reeling on success from the Shadow Mountain Fairway Cottages, purchased back the majority stake in Silver Spur Ranch for a considerable markup.⁴⁶ Working with the architect Richard Harrison, he built dozens of duplexes and homes, developing the entirety of Feather Trail, Birdie Way, and the lower portion of Silver Spur Trail, while simultaneously building on empty lots distributed throughout the neighborhood. Schwilck also intended to develop recreational facilities and built a clubhouse and pool (now part of Corsican Villas) designed by architect Robert Ricciardi. However, partially due to a glut of development in the mid-1960s, many of these properties remained unsold for years, and Schwilck ultimately lost the development to foreclosure.</p> <p>The foreclosure ultimately stymied any further planned development and remaining lots were filled in piecemeal over ensuing years. In the 1970s, Ironwood Country Club (including the Crosby properties) was developed partially on land originally part of the Silver Spur landholdings, as was the Corsican Villas.</p>
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Name/Number	Palm Desert Highlands
Date	1957
Developer	Hal Kapp and Ted Smith (Desert Property Consultants)
Architect	John P. Moyer
Boundary	Bel Air Road and Skyward Way from Highway 74 to Alamo Drive

⁴³ Jack Smith, "Crosby in Surprise Marriage," *Los Angeles Times*, October 25, 1957.

⁴⁴ "Officials Will Welcome JFK At City Airport," *Desert Sun*, March 22, 1962.

⁴⁵ "Planning Ready for Silver Spur," *Desert Sun*, October 16, 1959.

⁴⁶ "\$2,500,000 Ranch Goes to Schwilck," *Desert Sun*, July 6, 1962.

Development History	<p>Palm Desert Highlands was a small subdivision developed by realtors/developers Hal Kapp and Ted Smith (Desert Property Consultants) on land on the southernmost slope of Palm Desert not owned by the Palm Desert Corporation, to the west of Silver Spur Ranch (which was also being developed at this time). An existing subdivision named Pines to Palms Estates (consisting only of one street) was informally conjoined with Palm Desert Highlands, becoming Bel Air Road. The only street which was technically part of Palm Desert Highlands per the subdivision map was Skyward Way despite homes only being built on Bel Air Road.</p> <p>Kapp and Smith had developed a handful of small subdivisions around this time, including Desert Garden (1957) and Palm Vista (1955). While those were more affordable, Palm Desert Highlands was intended to be a more exclusive development, with real estate advertisements touting it as the “Bel Air of the Desert” because of its estate-sized lots, imposing views, and emphasis on “individually designed” homes.⁴⁷ Although only one street was laid out, it appears that Kapp and Smith had intentions of expanding the subdivision, as surrounding streets (namely Somera Road) were graded but not paved or subdivided.</p> <p>The architect John P. Moyer seems to have been allied with the subdivision, and although Kapp and Smith did not develop spec homes, four Moyer-designed homes were built by a selection of contractors and advertised by the subdivision. Each house was custom and individual in order to avoid the appearance of a tract.⁴⁸ Kapp built a house for himself at 72907 Bel Air Road (1962), and then another Outcalt-designed house at 72980 Somera Drive a few years later (1965).</p> <p>Only about a dozen homes were built, some by individual homeowners, but many by contractors who then sold the homes through Desert Property Consultants. The neighborhood would fill in through the following decades and adjoining tracts like Eldorado Highlands (1963) and Highland Palms Estates (1964) created more of a neighborhood environment instead of a few estate homes positioned atop the Palm Desert slope.</p>
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Name/Number	Desert Garden Homesites
Date	1957
Developer	Eugene Roberts
Architect	John Outcalt

⁴⁷ “Palm Desert Highlands Proves Slogan of Palm Desert,” *Desert Sun*, March 15, 1958.

⁴⁸ Advertisement for Palm Desert Highlands, *Desert Sun*, April 19, 1958.

Boundary	All of the street Garden Square, and four lots on the east side of Lantana Avenue
Development History	<p>Sometime in the mid-to-late 1950s, the developer and contractor Eugene Roberts purchased a parcel of land from Randall Henderson that was originally part of the Desert Magazine landholdings. In 1957, Roberts developed this tract as a single circular street known as “Desert Gardens.”</p> <p>Roberts worked with the architect John Outcalt and developed five homes designed by the architect between 1957 and 1959.⁴⁹ Outcalt also built and designed a house for himself at 45530 Garden Square (1959). Homes were modern in style, smaller, and intended for a more affordable audience, and Desert Property Consultants (Hal Kapp and Ted Smith) were brought on as sales agents. The homes built in the 1950s were primarily the ones developed by Roberts, but a few individuals purchased empty lots and built their own homes. The southern half of the subdivision was developed by the end of the 1950s, and lots were filled in with other houses in ensuing decades.</p>

Name/Number	Sandpiper
Date	1958
Developer	Western Land and Capital Company; George Osborn and William Kemp
Architect	William Krisel and Dan Palmer (Palmer & Krisel)
Boundary	El Paseo to the north, Pitahaya Street to the south, Edgehill Drive to the west, and Highway 74 to the east
Development History	<p>After the liquidation of the Palm Desert Corporation (PDC) in 1956, the Palm Desert Sales Company (PDSC) quickly began selling leftover parcels of land to a variety of developers and builders, many of whom built condominiums, apartments, and spec homes. In 1958, the Western Land and Capital Company, a company based in Newport Beach, purchased a large parcel of land at the corner of Highway 74 and El Paseo, on which stood only the Palm Desert Fire Station (now the Historical Society of Palm Desert) built by the PDC.⁵⁰</p> <p>The Western Land and Capital Co hired the prominent Mid-Century Modern firm Palmer & Krisel to design a condominium development on the site. William Krisel’s design featured “circles” of duplex condominiums arranged around a communal pool, barbeque, and lawn area. The design represented the height of the Mid-Century Modern style, with extensive use of breezeblock, shadowblock, clerestory windows, dramatic overhangs, sharp angles, and the use of the latest home technologies. The condominiums were terraced and sited to preserve privacy for each unit while maintaining views into the interior</p>

⁴⁹ “Desert Gardens Set to Open,” *Desert Sun*, February 6, 1959.

⁵⁰ Jim West, “Sandpiper,” in *William Krisel’s Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism*, eds. Chris Menrad and Heidi Creighton (Kaysville, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 2016), 88.

	<p>of the circles and onto the surrounding mountains. Krisel also designed the landscape while the decorator Vee Nisley was commissioned for interior design.⁵¹</p> <p>Even more innovative than Krisel's Mid-Century Modern design was the idea of the condominium itself, which was largely untested in the late 1950s. In fact, Sandpiper was not initially conceived of as a condominium development but as a development of co-operative apartments which shared communal facilities, maintenance, and seasonal amenities like turndown services.</p> <p>As the developers of Sandpiper would come to find out, however, the development's combination of stark architecture, relative affordability, and recreation proved a massive success. Almost immediately after the construction of Sandpiper began in 1958, developers across the Coachella Valley replicated the model, which became widespread by the mid-1960s. One example of this was the 1959 Sands and Shadows development designed by Harold Bissner immediately adjacent to Sandpiper, which similarly featured a circular arrangement of Mid-Century Modern condominiums.⁵²</p> <p>The first four phases of Sandpiper were completed between 1958 and 1960 and quickly sold out. The development was photographed by Julius Shulman and featured in a variety of national publications in addition to extensive coverage in the local press, further promulgating its vision and popularity. In 1961, the developers George Osborn and William Kemp (both residents of Sandpiper) took over the project, retaining Krisel for the design of additional units. Circles #5-12 were completed between 1961 and 1965 in Krisel's iconic Mid-Century Modern style, but unlike the first circles the units were larger and sold as condominiums.⁵³</p> <p>Between 1965 and 1969, Kemp continued to develop additional circles (#13-17) without the involvement of Krisel, moving away from the stark Mid-Century Modern design of the earlier phases but still preserving the general idea and layout of the community.⁵⁴ By the time that the entire parcel of land was developed in 1969, 306 condominium units had been completed and Sandpiper had established itself as a vital precedent to mid-century development across the Coachella Valley.</p>
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⁵¹ West, "Sandpiper," 99-102.

⁵² "Sand and Shadow Work Underway," *Desert Sun*, September 11, 1959.

⁵³ West, "Sandpiper," 112.

⁵⁴ West, "Sandpiper," 115-116.

Name/Number	Shadow Village [California Dream Homes]
Date	1958
Developer	Sproul Homes Inc; Walker and Pauline Boltz
Architect	
Boundary	Desert Star Boulevard and Erin Street to the north, Fred Waring Drive to the south, Portola Avenue to the west, and Florine Avenue to the east
Development History	<p>Shadow Village was a large-scale housing development created by Sproul Homes Inc and later completed/rebranded by California Dream Homes. Sproul Homes was a national housing developer that had originated in 1949 in New Mexico and by the end of the 1950s was advertising as “one of the ten largest builders in the United States,” developing communities across the western United States. They specialized in large tracts targeted towards the post-war nuclear family, building affordable tract homes that could be financed by VA and FHA loans. The homes they built were typically Mid-Century Modern in design, and they occasionally worked with such noted architects as A. Quincy Jones and Frederick Emmons, particularly in tracts they developed in Las Vegas.⁵⁵</p> <p>Sproul Homes acquired a large parcel of agricultural land in Palm Desert at the northeast corner of Portola Avenue and Fred Waring Drive [Avenue 44] around 1958. At that time, very few developments existed north of Fred Waring Drive, except for Unit #10 of Palm Village and Palm Dell Estates, both of which were sparsely developed. Historically, the land in this area was used for date farming and other agriculture, as was the case with the land purchased for Shadow Village. Scattered ranch houses, like the Odell Ranch House (Herbert Burns, 1948) were typical of this area, but there was no unified development until Shadow Village.</p> <p>Development of the tract began in 1958 with the laying of infrastructure and streets, which generally followed a sweeping curve. The construction of homes also commenced in late 1958, and the model home opened in February of 1959 directly on the corner of Fred Waring Dr and Portola Ave.⁵⁶ While no architect is apparent based on current documentation, all of the homes were designed in a Mid-Century Modern style typical of post-war development and other tracts built in Palm Desert around the same period, including Shadow Hills Estates (1956) and Desert Stars (1961). Advertisements noted that there were seventeen designs in total, all of which contained three bedrooms and two bathrooms and cost a mere \$16,750.⁵⁷</p>

⁵⁵ Dave Cornoyer, “Jones and Emmons: Modernism for the Masses,” *Docomomo US*, August 3, 2020.

⁵⁶ Shadow Village full-page advertisement, *Desert Sun*, February 13, 1959.

⁵⁷ Full-page advertisement for Shadow Village, *Desert Sun*, February 13, 1959.

	<p>Holiday Realty Corporation, a real estate firm that specialized in tracts in and around the Coachella Valley, was hired by Sproul to act as exclusive sales agents. As with other developments with Sproul Homes, these homes were targeted towards families and pre-approved for FHA and VA loans. Open houses were arranged every weekend with free balloons and ice cream “for the kiddies,” and advertisements emphasized the family-oriented features of the homes, like the lunch counter that was standard in every home, or their proximity to churches.⁵⁸ Actor and resident Hopalong Cassidy attended the grand opening of the tract in February of 1959, and the first homes were sold in the weeks following.⁵⁹</p> <p>As noted in newspapers, plans for Shadow Village called for upwards of 500 homes to be constructed in addition to recreational facilities. Around sixty homes were completed or under construction by the end of 1959, with many of them had sold, and plans under preparation for successive phases. However, for reasons which are unclear, Sproul Homes sold the development and residual land in the spring of 1960 to Walker and Pauline Boltz, a husband and wife who had developed tracts in Palm Springs.⁶⁰</p> <p>The Boltzes retained the Shadow Village name and broke ground on a new phase of development in the summer of 1960, building what they called the “California Dream Homes.” Almost exactly like the homes built by Sproul Homes, these were affordable and modern tract homes that could be financed by FHA loans. Through the early and mid 1960s, the Boltzes developed dozens more homes and duplexes, and by 1965 the Shadow Village tract was entirely developed with well over a hundred houses and duplex units.⁶¹</p> <p>Shadow Village proved to be a success, and it quickly became one of the first and only family-oriented neighborhoods in Palm Desert. The homes south of Highway 111 built on land owned by the Palm Desert Corporation (and later owners) had primarily been reserved for high-class seasonal residences. The large number of families present in the tract likely influenced the decision to build the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School (E. Stewart Williams, 1963, demolished) and the Palm Desert Middle School (1968) directly adjacent.</p> <p>Shadow Village not only outlaid significant housing stock affordable and welcoming to families but pushed the northern boundary of Palm Desert (still</p>
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⁵⁸ Full-page advertisement for Shadow Village, *Desert Sun*, March 27, 1959; Full-page advertisement for Shadow Village, *Desert Sun*, May 1, 1959.

⁵⁹ “‘Hoppy’ Gets Some Assistance,” *Desert Sun*, February 26, 1959.

⁶⁰ “Dream Homes Buys Shadow Village Lots,” *Desert Sun*, May 31, 1960.

⁶¹ It is unclear if the Boltzes reused the same house plans created by Sproul Homes or if they hired their own architect. Regardless, the architect of this phase of development is also unknown.

	<p>unincorporated in the 1960s) further than it had been before. From the 1960s onward, development would increasingly happen in the undeveloped desert to the north of Palm Desert, epitomized by Palm City [Palm Desert Country Club], which would break ground only a few years later.</p> <p>Established as a family neighborhood, tracts developed in the 1970s and 80s adjacent to Shadow Village would continue to uphold this character. At some point in the 1980s, the entire block of Shadow Village facing Fred Waring Dr stretching from Portola Ave to Florine Ave was demolished as part of a project to widen Fred Waring Dr. Otherwise, the general character of the neighborhood has largely remained the same as an affordable, family-oriented region of Palm Desert.</p>
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Name/Number	Desert Lily Estates
Date	1958 ca.
Developer	Unknown
Architect	Ross Patten (Patten & Wild)
Boundary	Desert Lily Drive to the west, Willow Street to the north, and Tamarisk Street to the south, four lots deep to the east
Development History	<p>Desert Lily Estates was a very small tract developed by an unknown developer, consisting only of sixteen lots. It appears that the land was purchased from the Palm Desert Sales Company (who had liquidated the Palm Desert Corporation), and the developer proceeded to develop this small subdivision using the existing plan for Palm Desert Unit #10 by Tommy Tomson. The Palm Desert Sales Company developed Unit #10 shortly after Desert Lily Estates and reflected the missing parcel sold for Desert Lily Estates on their subdivision map.</p> <p>Desert Lily Estates was targeted towards a more exclusive clientele, with larger lots that were in the vicinity of Palm Desert's finest homes. It appears that Desert Lily Estates was allied with the design/build firm Patten & Wild, of which Ross Patten was the designer. The firm designed and built six homes in the tract for a variety of clients/spec builders. By the end of the 1960s, less than half of the lots were developed in the tract, which was filled in through ensuing decades.</p>

Name/Number	Halecrest Country Club Village
Date	1959
Developer	Golconda Development Company; Hale Company
Architect	L.C. Major and Associates
Boundary	Merle Drive to the north, Gary Avenue to the south, Rebecca Road to the west, and Clifford Street to the east

Development History	Halecrest Country Club Village was first announced in 1959 as an ambitious \$60 million retirement community similar to the scope of the ill-fated Palm City, and was to contain hundreds of homes, a shopping center, hotel, eighteen-hole golf course, and even a landing strip. ⁶² However, by the time ground was broken on the community in 1960, it was to be a series of fourteen single-family homes grouped around a central pool. ⁶³ Ultimately, only nine groupings of about a dozen homes each were built. The homes were built as affordable single-family tract homes designed in a simplified Mid-Century Modern style, and it appears that they were mostly purchased by families. Although Halecrest Country Club Village is among the least known and documented mid-century tract in Palm Desert, it was featured on the cover of a 1962 issue of Life Magazine for a story titled "Opening Up the Desert for Living." ⁶⁴
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Name/Number	Sands and Shadows
Date	1959
Developer	Neill Davis
Architect	Harold J. Bissner; Robert Pitchford (Bissner & Pitchford)
Boundary	Irregular (see aerial)
Development History	In 1959, with the growing popularity of the condominium and co-operative apartment model, the Pasadena-based developer Neill Davis hired the modern architect Harold J. Bissner to design a development on a parcel of land adjacent to Highway 74. ⁶⁵ Much like Sandpiper, Bissner designed a circle of Mid-Century Modern condominiums wrapped around a central pool and lawn area. Arranged in nine triplexes, the first circle of twenty-seven units was completed in 1959. A second phase, this time designed by both Harold Bissner and Robert Pitchford, commenced in 1963, and was also Mid-Century Modern in style but featured flat roofs instead of pitched roofs. ⁶⁶ At least one additional circle of Sands and Shadows was planned but never completed.

Name/Number	Palm City [Palm Desert Country Club]
Date	1960
Developer	Marnel Development Company
Architect	William F. Bray

⁶² "Officials Reveal Plans for Senior Citizens Project," *Desert Sun*, July 28, 1959.

⁶³ "Halecrest Set for Big Preview," *Desert Sun*, December 16, 1960.

⁶⁴ LIFE Magazine, March 23, 1962.

⁶⁵ "Sand and Shadow Work Underway," *Desert Sun*, September 11, 1959.

⁶⁶ Advertisement for Sands and Shadows Unit #2, *Desert Sun*, March 2, 1969; Original brochure for Sands and Shadows, ca. 1959, Historical Society of Palm Desert Collections.

Boundary	Hovley Lane to the north, Fred Waring Drive to the south, Virginia Avenue to the west, and Warner Trail/Washington Street to the east
Development History	<p>Now known as Palm Desert Country Club, the large development at the eastern border of Palm Desert was originally conceived as Palm City. In 1960, developers Nel Severin and H. Marshall Secrest (Marnel Development Company) announced plans for “Palm City,” an 1,800-home retirement community with a population upwards of 4,000. The development was to feature a variety of housing types (single-family residential, condominiums, and apartments) recreational facilities, a golf course, shopping center, medical-dental building, and community pools. Homeownership in Palm City was limited to residents older than fifty, and it was intended to be affordable for seniors on a fixed income.</p> <p>Rather than a new subdivision within an existing city, the development initially positioned itself as an entirely new city. Severin and Secrest purchased over 550 acres of land for the project in the undeveloped desert hinterlands straddling Palm Desert and La Quinta. Although Palm City attempted to stand on its own, it quickly became associated with Palm Desert, which itself was still an unincorporated community.</p> <p>The project was approved in the summer of 1960, and the construction soon began on the first unit, consisting of the shopping center, homes, the first holes of the eventual eighteen-hole golf course, and “cooperative apartments” (condominiums). From the very beginning, the development was marketed as an “Active Retirement” community with its ample recreational activities, which included the golf course, swimming pools, an “arts and crafts center,” shuffleboard, horseshoe pits, and social events.</p> <p>Homes in the development, which were all built by Marnel Development Company, had three standard floor plans and nineteen total designs in a generic Ranch style typical of post-war tracts. Similarly, the cooperative units (which were planned to total 400 units) were one- and two-story buildings in a Ranch/Mid-Century Modern style consisting of one- and two-bedroom arrangements. The developers prided themselves on the efficiency and standardization of home construction, noting their construction rate of ten houses a day and their grand plans to deliver a city of 4,000 people in one year.⁶⁷ Homes were arranged to face the golf course on winding streets each named after a different American state, with recreational facilities interlaced throughout.</p>

⁶⁷ “New 1800 Home Development Set,” *Desert Sun*, July 8, 1960.

	<p>The pre-opening for the development happened in February of 1961, with only four model homes completed. The interior designer C. Tony Pereira, noted for his work on the Ocotillo Lodge in Palm Springs, was commissioned to design the interiors of the model homes as well as the model apartments, which opened in April of 1961.⁶⁸ The shopping center, a Mid-Century Modern design, and medical-dental buildings were completed around this time, and retirees began moving into their homes in the late spring of 1961. The first unit, consisting of 450 homes, was completed in 1961, and the second unit, to consist of 463 homes and 184 cooperative apartments, was inaugurated in November of 1961.⁶⁹</p> <p>A little more than a year after opening for sales, the population of Palm City had reached 850 residents, and the social development of the community also continued. The Palm City Homeowners Association was created in 1962 to govern and advise the community, and ground was broken on the first church, St. John's Lutheran Church, in 1963.⁷⁰</p> <p>While the developers claimed that Unit 1 of Palm City had sold out, it appears that they had difficulty selling and developing the second unit, and totally abandoned plans for the third unit. It was reported that Marnel had suffered a loss upwards of \$2.5 million. Severin and Secrest sold the entire project at the end of 1963 to Frank Goodman and Robert Farrer, two Oakland-based developers.⁷¹ Goodman and Farrer initiated a new campaign to rid the development of its "old folks home" image, first by dropping the age requirement, and then by renaming it "Palm Desert Country Club Estates" to capitalize on Palm Desert's image as an upper-class resort community.⁷² With the change, the development became fully integrated into Palm Desert, and therefore pushed the formal boundaries of the city further east than had ever been done.</p> <p>By the end of 1965, the first two units of Palm Desert Country Club were totally complete, and the new developers focused on selling existing stock before building anything additional. Their new advertising campaigns abandoned all mention of a retirement community, instead promoting it as an affordable place to live the lifestyle typical of nearby high-class country clubs.</p>
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⁶⁸ "Palm City Cooperative Opening Set," *Desert Sun*, April 21, 1961.

⁶⁹ "Grand Opening Continues at Palm City's New Unit," *Desert Sun*, November 7, 1961.

⁷⁰ "Executive Council for Palm City Homes Voted," *Desert Sun*, March 16, 1962; "Lutherans Witness Groundbreaking Rites," *Desert Sun*, November 27, 1963.

⁷¹ "Palm City to Change Image," *Desert Sun*, January 6, 1964.

⁷² "Palm City-Palm Desert Draw Nearer," *Palm Desert Post*, January 30, 1964.

	Although Goodman and Farrer claimed to have plans to build the third unit of Palm Desert Country Club as planned by Palm City, the only thing they appeared to have developed were its streets. The empty streets sat vacant for about a decade, when another developer built a few dozen homes in the mid-1970s, and the developer John D. Lusk built out the remaining lots in the late 1970s with his “Lusk Homes,” which were vaguely Spanish-inspired tract homes typical of the period. ⁷³
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Name/Number	Shadow Mountain Golf Estates
Date	1960
Developer	Shadow Mountain Golf Club
Architect	
Boundary	The streets of White Stone Lane and Flagstone Lane, in addition to the lots on the west side of Portola Avenue between Fairway Drive and Grapevine Street, and lots on a portion of the north side of Grapevine
Development History	Shadow Mountain Golf Estates was a small tract developed as part of the Shadow Mountain Golf Club, consisting of two streets within the golf course itself and a selection of lots on the periphery streets. Given its exclusive location and view within/facing the golf course fairways, the tract was intended to be developed with high-class estate homes. However, only a very small selection of homes was built. The design/build firm Patten & Wild built three modern estate homes on Flagstone Lane designed by architect Christer Barlund between 1964 and 1965, and the realtor Richard Kite built a home on White Stone Lane. The tract was eventually developed in ensuing decades, and the later homes were also estate sized.

Name/Number	Desert Stars
Date	1961
Developer	Charles White (White and Associates)
Architect	Charles W. Doty
Boundary	The street of Davis Road and a portion of Homestead Road and Beverly Drive, Davis Drive, and Prairie Drive.
Development History	Desert Stars was a small subdivision consisting of twenty-two homes developed by builder Charles “Bud” White and designed by architect Charles W. Doty. The subdivision (filed as Tract 2130) appears to have laid around 1960 and consisted solely of twenty-two lots on Homestead Road and connecting streets Beverly Drive, Davis Drive, and Prairie Drive. According to original sales brochures, the architect Charles W. Doty was solely responsible for the design of the homes, which White and Associates

⁷³ Advertisement for Lusk Homes, *Desert Sun*, December 9, 1977.

	<p>constructed between 1961 and 1962. They were typical Mid-Century Modern tract homes of the 1960s, with butterfly, pitched, and flat-roofed models, and unlike the nearby Palm Desert Highlands, were intended to be more affordable. Prices varied from either \$18,950 and \$19,950 for the 2-bedroom or 3-bedroom models, respectively.⁷⁴</p> <p>Construction was fully completed on the homes in 1962 and the Desert Stars subdivision (as defined by the tract map) was fully developed. However, White would soon go on to develop the upper portion of Prarie Drive with his Highland Palms Estates development two years later, in 1964. It appears that the homes developed as part of Desert Stars were either not initially sold, or that they were later grouped in as part of Highland Palms Estates for marketing purposes. There was scarcely any marketing for Desert Stars, and future advertisements for Highland Palms Estates noted a number of homes that was only possible given the inclusion of homes built for Desert Stars.</p>
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Name/Number	Eldorado Highlands
Date	1963
Developer	Stanton Graham
Architect	Stanton Graham
Boundary	North side of Homestead Road, from Highway 74 to Alamo Drive
Development History	<p>Eldorado Highlands was a small tract of twenty homes developed by developer-contractor-architect Stanton Graham immediately adjacent to Palm Desert Highlands. (In fact, the original sign for Palm Desert Highlands was repurposed for this new tract.)</p> <p>Like its predecessor neighborhood, Eldorado Highlands was marketed as an upper-class neighborhood with imposing views, larger lots, and “individual” houses. Although they were designed and built at once by Graham, each home had a different façade, with styles and influences ranging from “Greek, Roman, Mediterranean, Oriental, or Spanish.”⁷⁵ While Graham apparently acted as architect for the homes, the interior designer Noel F. Birns was brought on as the color consultant and decorator for the model homes.</p> <p>The set of twenty homes was completed in 1964 and Graham did not develop anything further. An adjoining subdivision, Highland Palms Estates (1964) was developed almost contemporaneously and mirrored the eclectic historicist architecture of Eldorado Highlands.</p>

⁷⁴ Advertisement for Desert Stars, *Desert Sun*, January 4, 1962.

⁷⁵ “Subdivision Departs from Usual Palm Grove,” *Desert Sun*, December 14, 1963.

Name/Number	Highland Palms Estates
Date	1964
Developer	Charles “Bud” White and Syd Crossley (Highland Palms Development Company)
Architect	Charles W. Doty (attribution)
Boundary	The street of Prarie Drive
Development History	<p>Highland Palms Estates was a joint venture between contractor Charles “Bud” White and Syd Crossley, who developed the subdivision and sixteen homes in 1964 by continuing the streets laid by White in 1961 for his Desert Palms tract. While White had developed the initial tract (Desert Stars) under his own company, he partnered with Crossley for this phase.</p> <p>It appears that the architect Charles W. Doty was responsible for the design of the homes, however further documentation is needed to confirm this attribution. Doty had designed the homes built for Desert Stars only a few years prior, and many of the homes built for Highland Palms appear to be similar models. Whereas Desert Stars was exclusively built with Mid-Century Modern tract homes, Highland Palms was built in a variety of styles, including Grecian-influenced homes (which may have been inspired by Stanton Graham’s adjacent Eldorado Highlands being developed at the same time).</p> <p>The subdivision was opened in 1964 and advertised as “designed for family living,” and were slightly more affordable than its Eldorado Highlands and Palm Desert Highlands counterparts, while still more expensive than the homes built for Desert Stars.⁷⁶ White and Crossley never went on to develop any houses in the subdivision after the homes built in 1964, although the streets were expanded (namely Beverly Drive) and developed in ensuing decades.</p>

Name/Number	Marrakesh Country Club
Date	1967
Developer	Johnny Dawson
Architect	John Elgin Woolf and Robert Koch; Richard A. Harrison; Theodore Robinson
Boundary	Portola Avenue to the east, Amir Drive to the west, Haystack Road to the south, and Grapevine Lane to the north
Development History	<p>In 1967, the developer Johnny Dawson leased the 155-acre parcel of land known as Haystack Mountain Ranch from Elisabeth Stewart, a famous swimsuit designer who had inherited the property from her father Edgar W. Stewart.⁷⁷ The Ranch was a humble operation with only two small houses and a horse corral, but by the 1960s it was one of the largest and most centrally located undeveloped parcels of land south of Highway 111. Dawson, who was noted for</p>

⁷⁶ “Highland Palms Estates Presents Unique Desert Dwellings with Preview Opening and Party Today,” *Desert Sun*, July 24, 1964.

⁷⁷ “Dawson Tells of Condominium Plan,” *Palm Desert Post*, December 28, 1967.

	<p>catalyzing country club development with his Thunderbird Country Club (1951), Eldorado Country Club (1957), and Seven Lakes Country Club (1964), envisioned a full-size country club in Palm Desert.⁷⁸</p> <p>Dawson hired the architect John Elgin Woolf and his partner Robert Koch to design the development in Woolf's quintessential Hollywood Regency style, along with the golf course architect Ted Robinson, who was responsible for the land planning and golf course. Initially, the country club was to be known as the "Mountain Lakes Country Club," but after Woolf exhibited his design which featured a pink color scheme, the name "Marrakesh" (the Moroccan city famed for its pink walls) was suggested to Dawson and became the official name.⁷⁹</p> <p>Woolf's design and scheme was notable for its exuberant style as well as its comprehensiveness. He designed everything for the community, from its clubhouse to its condominiums to its lampposts, all in his signature Hollywood Regency style. From the very beginning, the development was to be built out completely with condominiums, and Woolf designed four models ranging in size and design.</p> <p>Construction began in the fall of 1968 on infrastructure, administration/security buildings, and the golf course, all of which were completed in 1969. Beginning late in 1969, construction on condominiums began and were phased out over a period of ten years in twenty-to-forty-unit increments, and finally completed in 1979 at a final tally of 364 units.⁸⁰ Each section of condominiums also featured a central pool area and pool pavilion (a Woolf specialty), and were wrapped around the eighteen-hole golf course designed by Robinson.</p> <p>In 1970, after difficulty sourcing the working drawings from Woolf, the modern architect Richard A. Harrison was commissioned to redesign the clubhouse. Construction on the clubhouse began in 1970 and was complete in 1972, at which point the first residents had moved into condominiums. Velma Dawson, Johnny Dawson's ceramicist wife noted for creating the Howdy Doody marionette, was responsible for the interior design of the clubhouse and a selection of units.</p> <p>Marrakesh instantly became the most prominent country club in Palm Desert. In the years immediately following, clubs like Del Safari Country Club (1969) and Ironwood Country Club (1972) would kick off, but Marrakesh was the first. Due</p>
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⁷⁸ James Munn, "We're the Dawsons!," *Palm Springs Life*, September 20, 2021, <https://www.palmspringslife.com/velma-wayne-dawson/>.

⁷⁹ "Introducing Marrakesh Country Club," *Palm Springs Life*, September 1968.

⁸⁰ Luke Leuschner, *Marrakesh Country Club: Historic District Nomination*, Version 1: February 2025, 15-18; "Final Phase for Marrakesh Project Given Approval," *Desert Sun*, March 30, 1977.

	in part to Dawson's reputation, many units were sold well before their completion, and the club was activated with a variety of social and sporting events even in its earliest years. Marrakesh's unique Hollywood Regency design also embodied shifts occurring in the architecture trends of the 1960s and 70s and was one of the earliest country clubs in Palm Desert – a typology that would define development of the following decades.
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Name/Number	Del Safari Country Club [Avondale Golf Club]
Date	1969
Developer	M.G.G. Corporation [George Glickley, Burton Graham, and Daniel McLachlan]
Architect	John F. Galbraith
Boundary	Frank Sinatra Drive to the north, Country Club Drive to the south, Eldorado Drive to the east, and Sweetwater Drive to the west
Development History	<p>In 1968, the businessmen George Glickly and Burton Graham purchased a 240-acre parcel of barren desert land from a woman named Sophia Maloof. At that point, Palm Desert's unincorporated boundaries were about as far Hovley Lane, but this land was much farther north. Graham and Glickley, friends who were members of Bermuda Dunes Country Club and had also together owned the Bermuda Dunes Airport, announced a large-scale country club development with custom homes, condominiums, a clubhouse, eighteen-hole golf course, and other typical amenities.⁸¹</p> <p>In the very beginning of the project, the Palm Springs architect William F. Cody was hired for the design, but he was soon replaced by the Pasadena architect John. F. Galbraith. The golf course developer and designer Jimmy Hines was hired to oversee the design and construction of the golf course. The name of the development was initially announced as The Safari Country Club in the beginning of 1969 but was soon refined to the Del Safari Country Club.⁸² The development was branded around an African theme with streets named after African places, spear motifs on the main gate, and a central clubhouse that resembled a fort. Galbraith's design for the clubhouse was a unique circular stucco structure atop an artificial hill with commanding views of the entire Coachella Valley.</p> <p>Construction began on the golf course and clubhouse in the spring of 1969 and was completed by the beginning of 1970s. Despite the advanced construction timeline and the project's grand ambitions, the project began to face issues in 1970. Construction began on an early phase of twenty-one condominiums at the end of 1970, and only a few custom homes were built (those of the</p>

⁸¹ "Luxurious Golf Club Due Soon," *Desert Sun*, March 4, 1969.

⁸² "Luxurious Golf Club," *Desert Sun*, 1969.

	<p>developers). Ultimately, only about sixty condominium units were completed of an intended 500, and the project went bankrupt by the mid-1970s. In 1986, a new owner renamed the club Avondale Golf Club.⁸³ Despite the failure of its initial vision, lots were developed over ensuing decades and the membership filled out, and buildings like the clubhouse attest to a distinct period of 1960s development in the Coachella Valley.</p>
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Name/Number	Deep Canyon Tennis Club
Date	1971
Developer	El Dorado Homes; Rowland Sweet and C. L. Cleland
Architect	
Boundary	To the east of Highway 74, between Bursera Way and Amber Street/Ambrosia Street, consisting of development inside of Frank Feltrop Drive
Development History	<p>The Deep Canyon Tennis Club was a large-scale condominium development initiated by developers Rowland Sweet and C. L. Cleland on a fifty-eight-acre parcel on the upper slope of southern Palm Desert. The land was originally part of the Palm Desert Corporation's landholdings, although it was never subdivided or developed previously. Sweet and Cleland originally proposed a 400-unit condominium development designed in a modern style and consisting of two-story buildings.⁸⁴</p> <p>The plan, which signaled a departure from the low-density single-family estate homes typical of surrounding neighborhoods, triggered some citizen backlash, although it was approved in October of 1971 with only a slight reduction to 360 units.⁸⁵ Construction progressed through 1972, although by this time it was under the control of El Dorado Homes, a large-scale development company which appears to have purchased the development from Sweet and Cleland.</p> <p>The first phase of the Deep Canyon Tennis Club opened at the end of the summer of 1973. At that time, only the clubhouse facilities, ten tennis courts, and less than half of the planned 360 units had been completed. The architecture, unlike that presented in initial plans by Sweet and Cleland, was an ambiguous southwestern style with stucco walls and Spanish tile roofs. Models ranged in size, beginning at \$29,950, making them affordable within the seasonal economy context.</p> <p>For reasons which are unclear, the development would not be complete until 1979, when the final phase of the condominiums was constructed and sold. In</p>

⁸³ Avondale Golf Club, "Our 50th Anniversary," <https://www.avondalegolfclub.com/legacy>.

⁸⁴ "PD Condominium Project to Offer Swimming & Tennis," *Palm Desert Post*, July 8, 1971.

⁸⁵ "Planners Approved Deep Canyon Club," *Palm Desert Post*, October 7, 1971.

	total, it had ten tennis courts, twelve pools, six paddleboard courts, extensive landscaping, and a central clubhouse with a tennis pro shop and various amenities. ⁸⁶
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Name/Number	Palm Desert Tennis Club
Date	1971
Developer	John and Beverly Fletiz
Architect	John Outcalt
Boundary	Homestead Road to the north, Mesa View Drive to the south, Center Street to the west, and Alamo Drive to the east
Development History	<p>Initially idealized as the “Palm Desert Racquet Club,” the Palm Desert Tennis Club was a 100-unit condominium development created by developer John Fleitz and his wife Beverly Baker Fleitz, a prominent tennis athlete who had been top-ranked in the 1950s.⁸⁷ The Fleitzes purchased the twenty-acre parcel from fellow tennis player George Alexander.⁸⁸ The land had previously been undeveloped and had never been a part of another subdivision, although it was adjacent to such tracts as Palm Desert Highlands, Eldorado Highlands, Highland Palms Estates, and Desert Stars.</p> <p>While tennis-oriented developments had originated in Palm Springs prior to World War Two with the Racquet Club and the Palm Springs Tennis Club, a wave of these developments proliferated in the eastern Coachella Valley in the 1970s with the widespread adoption of the condominium model. Whereas golf-oriented country clubs necessarily required large quantities of land, tennis clubs could be built on smaller parcels. Contemporary with the Palm Desert Tennis Club were the nearby developments Deep Canyon Tennis Club (1971) and Corsican Villas (1973), which similarly featured condominiums planned around tennis courts and clubhouse.</p> <p>The Palm Desert Tennis Club was designed by architect John Outcalt on a twenty-acre parcel off Mesa View Drive, an area of southern Palm Desert which was rapidly being developed, particularly with the arrival of Ironwood Country Club only a few years later. Outcalt designed the development in an ambiguous southwestern style typical of the 1970s, with stucco walls and Spanish tile roofs. The site planning featured 100 condominium units split into five circles, each surrounding a small pool. Community facilities included a clubhouse, large communal pool, eight tennis courts (one with a stadium for events), and various other recreational amenities like an indoor handball court and billiard’s room.</p>

⁸⁶ “Deep Canyon Club Offers Round the Clock Security,” *Desert Sun*, October 30, 1973.

⁸⁷ “103-Unit Racquet Club Planned in Palm Desert,” *Desert Sun*, August 19, 1971.

⁸⁸ Ginny Smith, “Desert Larking,” *Desert Sun*, June 21, 1973.

	<p>The Palm Desert Tennis Club opened for a preview and sales in the summer of 1973, followed by a grand opening in October of 1973 attended by numerous tennis stars.⁸⁹ Prices for the three-bedroom units began at \$42,500, placing them in the higher end, but the development appears to have quickly sold out by the end of 1973.</p>
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Name/Number	Ironwood Country Club
Date	1972
Developer	Silver Spur Associates (Robert M. Haynie, Jack A. Vickers, Arnold Palmer)
Architect	William F. Cody; Francisco J. Urrutia
Boundary	Irregular (refer to aerial)
Development History	<p>In the 1950s, the southernmost development on the slope of Palm Desert was Silver Spur Ranch, a subdivision that consisted of largely middle-class Ranch style homes at the base of Deep Canyon. The Silver Spur landholdings, however, were significantly larger than the subdivision itself, totaling approximately 600 acres. Further south, above the subdivision adjacent to the mouth of Deep Canyon, the singer Bing Crosby and a group of his friends had built estate homes. This, however, was the only development on this portion of land owned by Silver Spur.</p> <p>In 1959, the developers, Adrian and Mercedes Schwilck, sold their stake in Silver Spur to a consortium headed by movie producer Sol Lesser, who imagined a sprawling development with hundreds of homes and a grand clubhouse all designed by modernist architect William Krisel. These plans, which never materialized, were to be on the land above Silver Spur around the Crosby estate. Lesser's plans for the expansion of Silver Spur Ranch were the last for this portion of land until Ironwood Country Club, developed beginning in the 1970s. In 1962, Schwilck purchased back his stake in Silver Spur Ranch but not all of the land, and it appears that Lesser retained much of the land to the south of the development.</p> <p>While Schwilck initiated a failed expansion of Silver Spur in the mid-1960s, it seems that plans were being conceptualized for a large-scale country club development on the land that was previously part of Silver Spur's landholdings. In 1972, a plan was announced by Silver Spur Associates (not to be confused with the company that developed Silver Spur Ranch), a consortium headed by Robert M. Haynie and Jack A. Vickers, for a large \$90 million country club.⁹⁰ At the time, landholdings were reported at 900 acres, which appears to have</p>

⁸⁹ Ginny Smith, "Desert Larking," *Desert Sun*, June 21, 1973; Alice Marble, "The Net Set: Tennis News," *Palm Desert Post*, October 11, 1973.

⁹⁰ "Silver Spur Homeowners Discuss \$90 Million Plan," *Palm Desert Post*, February 10, 1972.

	<p>included land that was formerly Silver Spur Ranch property and land from other sources.</p> <p>The prominent architect William F. Cody was brought on as the architect and planner for the development (then unnamed) which was to include three golf courses, a clubhouse, over 3000 housing units ranging from estate homes to condominiums, tennis facilities, and numerous other amenities. At this time in Palm Desert, numerous other country clubs (of varying sizes) had been developed or were in development, including Marrakesh Country Club (1968), Del Safari Country Club (1968), and Deep Canyon Tennis Club (1971), although this new development would be larger than any of them.</p> <p>After some citizen backlash from the organization Concerned Citizens of Palm Desert, a resulting settlement lowered the density of the development, and ground was broken at the end of 1972.⁹¹ At the beginning of 1973, the development was officially named “Ironwood Country Club,” and ground was formally broken. At this time, according to numerous articles, the famous golfer Arnold Palmer had joined in as an investor in the project, and from then on, he would be cited in publicity about Ironwood.⁹² Palmer and another famous golfer, Jack Nicklaus, worked with golf course architect Desmond Muirhead on the design of the three courses.⁹³</p> <p>The preview opening of the development was held in November of 1973, at which point the clubhouse and five model condominium units were completed, and the first golf course was under construction. Development on the residential component of Ironwood was phased out over a period of nearly ten years and featured a variety of home sizes and types, ranging from one-bedroom condominiums to large estate homes. While the architect of the earliest condominium phases (1972-1973) is unclear, the architect Francisco J. Urrutia, a disciple of William Cody who likely got the job through his office’s initial involvement, designed many of the successive phases. The condominiums, priced in the higher range, were designed in a Late Modern style hybridized with a generic southwestern palette (stucco walls and Spanish tile roofs), and interior design services were offered by the management.</p> <p>The developers also built dozens of “Fairway Homes” designed by Urrutia, which were large single-family estates. Much later, Ironwood sold homesites for owner-built estates, which would come to surround the Bing Crosby estate once part of Silver Spur Ranch.</p>
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⁹¹ “Silver Spur Opposition Withdrawn,” *Desert Sun*, September 21, 1972.

⁹² “Stars to Initiate Course,” *Desert Sun*, February 3, 1973.

⁹³ “Silver Spur Becomes Ironwood Country Club,” *Palm Desert Post*, May 3, 1973.

	<p>Development on the country club largely came to an end in the early 1980s. By 1982, only 975 homes had been built despite Ironwood's authorization to build 1,700, and their initial aspirations to build over 3,000.⁹⁴ At the time, the developers cited both a slow economy and concerns about the overuse of the club's facilities. Later units would be planned and built, as soon as 1984, but Ironwood was eventually complete by the end of a ten-year development campaign.</p> <p>Ironwood Country Club, however, became the city's preeminent country club, reorienting development of the southernmost slope of Palm Desert. In the ensuing years, private country clubs (of an even higher level) were built immediately adjacent, including The Reserve Club, Bighorn Golf Club, and Stone Eagle Golf Club.</p>
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Name/Number	Corsican Villas
Date	1973
Developer	Biddle-Kavanaugh Development Company; Pacific Lighting Properties Inc
Architect	Barry Berkus and Associates
Boundary	The street Desert Circle Drive and connecting streets
Development History	<p>Corsican Villas was a 130-unit condominium development built on a twenty-acre parcel originally part of Silver Spur Ranch. In the mid-1960s, Adrian Schwilck, the developer of Silver Spur Ranch, oversaw a development campaign to build out the neighborhood, including a clubhouse (a Mid-Century Modern design by architect Robert Ricciardi), communal swimming pool, and small golf course, all completed in 1963. The campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, as Schwilck lost the development to foreclosure, and the bank liquidated the properties.</p> <p>The developers behind Corsican Villas, Biddle-Kavanaugh Development Company and Pacific Lighting Properties Inc, purchased a portion of this liquidated land in the ensuing years which included the former golf course, clubhouse, and swimming pool. Other portions of land which were formerly Silver Spur Ranch were also sold and developed at this time, including parcels which would become Ironwood Country Club.</p> <p>In 1973, the Corsican Villas were announced on this land and ground was broken in February of that year.⁹⁵ Like many other contemporary developments, including the Palm Desert Tennis Club (1971), Deep Canyon Tennis Club (1971), and Sommerset (1971, also developed by Biddle), Corsican</p>

⁹⁴ "Ironwood Cuts Home Total by 40 Percent," *Desert Sun*, February 19, 1981.

⁹⁵ "Corsican Villas Started," *Desert Sun*, February 16, 1973.

	<p>was to be a condominium development complete with tennis courts, a pool, and clubhouse. The two-story buildings were designed by prolific architect Barry Berkus A.I.A. in a Late Modern style with some Spanish elements, and the two- and three-bedroom units began at \$27,950.⁹⁶ The land that once contained the Silver Spur golf course was redeveloped for Corsican, although the original Silver Spur clubhouse and pool were updated and repurposed as the clubhouse for the new development.</p> <p>The first unit, consisting of eighty units, was completed in 1973 and was quickly sold, and a second unit of fifty units began in 1976, and were sold out by the beginning of 1977.⁹⁷</p>
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Name/Number	Sommerset
Date	1977
Developer	Biddle Development Inc; M & T Inc
Architect	Morris-Lohrbach & Associates (architecture), Frank Radmacher & Associates (landscape)
Boundary	West of Highway 74, Desert Flower Drive and all connecting streets except for the three cul de sacs east of Desert Flower Dr between Starburst Drive and Sommerset Drive
Development History	<p>Sommerset, also known as Sommerset Garden Home, was a 193-unit condominium development on a thirty-three-acre parcel on the upper slope of southern Palm Desert. It was the creation of Biddle Development Inc (who had partnered in developing Corsican Villas immediately prior) in partnership with M & T Incorporated. The condominium units, which were marketed as townhomes or “garden homes,” were to be surrounded by eleven swimming pools and tennis courts and were anticipated to attract both permanent and seasonal residents.⁹⁸ Details, from landscaping to interior finishes, were intended to be of utmost quality, and the units were on the higher end, ranging in price from \$77,990 to \$87,990 for a variety of floor plans.⁹⁹</p> <p>Ground was broken for the first unit of Sommerset in the fall of 1977, with four model units open to the public and sales beginning in the spring of 1978. Immediately successful, three units followed: the second in the spring of 1978, the third in the winter of 1978, and the fourth in the fall of 1979. Successive phases were also more expensive, and by the fourth and final phase, units were</p>

⁹⁶ “Corsican Villas Mark Opening,” *Desert Sun*, April 13, 1973.

⁹⁷ “Corsican Villas Sets Final Phase,” *Desert Sun*, January 30, 1976; Advertisement for Corsican Villas final liquidation, *Desert Sun*, January 12, 1977.

⁹⁸ “Ground Broken in Palm Desert for Sommerset Garden Home,” *Desert Sun*, October 21, 1977.

⁹⁹ “‘Finishing Touches’ Added to Models,” *Desert Sun*, March 3, 1978.

	beginning at \$114,000. ¹⁰⁰ By the end of 1981, only a dozen units for sale were remaining, and all units had been constructed. ¹⁰¹
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¹⁰⁰ "Sommerset Features Recreation," *Desert Sun*, July 30, 1981.

¹⁰¹ "Sommerset: 13 Left," *Desert Sun*, November 14, 1981.