



THE ROLLING GREENS COMMUNITY

Planning for a Community with Social and Ecological Value

THESIS ARCHIVAL NOTE

The following thesis project, entitled The Rolling Greens Community, was composed over the course of the 2022-2023 academic school year. The Thesis Program, as contained here, was initiated and completed in the fall semester as a part of the LA 763: Landscape Architecture Thesis Research and Programming course. Supplemental material, including the Thesis Boards and the Thesis Presentation documents, were generated in the spring semester as a part of the LA 772: Landscape Architecture Graduate Thesis Design Studio studio. Any inconsistencies between the different documents, in terms of research and design, should be excused per the evolution of the project across the two semesters.

THE ROLLING GREENS COMMUNITY

Planning for a Community with Social and Ecological Value

A Design Thesis Submitted to the
Department of Landscape Architecture
North Dakota State University

By

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In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Landscape Architecture

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May 2023
Fargo, North Dakota

Thesis Proposal

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Abstract

Over the last few years the number of golf courses that have closed has grown exponentially. The understanding that golf courses aren't of the highest priority needs to get out to the people who it matters most to. The value of the land is increasing with the rapid expansion of cities and population of our country grows. The growing prices of maintaining that expensive land is a major part of the closure of the courses which leaves large tracts of land, typically in more developed parts of cities, that just sits around overgrowing and becoming an eyesore. This begs the question "Is there an alternative use for this land that would better serve the people and the city?"

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Narrative and Project Emphasis

The golf course in many cities is seen as a heart of recreation and life, but also a piece of land that boosts a cities value through as a soucre of city income and personal property value. What happens when you take that away? I am looking to create a solution to this question by digging into the data that supports the need for Hawaii and what alternative use will provide the most successful outcome economically, socially, politically and environmentally.

This reasearch will investigate areas that have golf courses that have permenantly closed along with the cause of it, and what the other existing issues within their respective communitites such as poverty rates, struggles within the economy, and state planning issues. This will in the end define what the given location should provide in a solution to best fit its community.

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Justification

I have been very passionate about the sport for years. It all started when I joined my middle school team and found peace in mind being outdoors and felt the challenge of each course where they all develop their own personalities almost. This passion grew as I kept playing the sport and started working at my home course learning about the inner workings and what it takes to maintain all the land and keep it in pristine condition. This led to the desire to explore golf course design and that was my push to go into the Landscape Architecture program. This all led up to this past summer where I had the opportunity to work with a Landscape Architecture firm in Pinehurst, North Carolina where golf is the town's history. It was there that I realized that there would be a challenge to change the use of that land due to the courses' ties to the community, but there is so much land and the time and money spent on maintaining all of its courses is exponential and if for any reason it became too much to maintain could there be an alternative use for the courses if they were ever to close?

The realization of how much land there is in courses looks substantial when it is manicured and well maintained but the scale of it seems emphasized when they close down and the plant life starts to grow out and there is an absence of people. I got to experience that emptiness of that when I visited closed courses near Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and in Overland Park, Kansas. This emptiness further pushed my thoughts of what the possibilities of what could become of the acres of land these courses stood on. That brings me to this thesis. What can be done for the courses and based off the location of the course what is the answer for this plot of land?



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Research

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Plan for Research

Case Study Analysis

Contemporary Golf Course Repurposing

- Deer Creek Golf Course, Overland Park, Kansas
- Skywest Golf Course, San Francisco, California
- Heron Bay Golf Course,

Contemporary Mixed Income Communities

-
-
-

Historical Community Analysis

- Wonderland Park, California
- The Sea Ranch, California

Qualitative Research

- the number of golf courses in the country
- the number of those that have closed
- the money spent on the courses that have

closed

- increase the quality of Life
- Needs a mixed income community
- Social spaces for communities



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Case Study Typologies

Typologies to be studied

- **Community Planning**
- **Parks and Recreational Spaces**
- **Residential Design**
- **Environmental Planning**

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Case Study Analysis

During this portion of the research a number of case studies will be looked into for the basis of how they have conducting there reasoning for moving forward with new developments on these closed courses and the quantitative data of what the economic, social and . These case studies include a Deer Creek Golf Course in Overland Park, Kansas, Sky West Golf Course in San Fransisco,. These are sites that have faced this new development within the last 3 years.

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Contemporary Golf Course Repurposing Case Studies

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Case Study #1 : Deer Creek Golf Course

Project Typology:

Community Planning

Residential Design

Context: Deer Creek Golf Course, located in Overland Park, Kansas, is a 158 total acre course that closed in February of this year. The community uses this land for a majority of its storm water management and still provides a walking path for the community.

History: Earlier this year a plan was proposed for rezoning and construction of four apartment buildings on 10.8 acres of the site while also focusing on fixing the sites erosion issue and keeping a portion of the existing golf course along with adding a new clubhouse and pro shop to support it. This proposal was rejected because community members didnt think the apartments fit the context of their neighborhood and that the large parking lots would create more water pollution. They have since passed a new plan to use the land to create 70 single family houses and leave 128 acres of open land. This is all proposed for this projects phases 1-4. Phase 5 has not been yet planned out so this may contain more for the community.

Contribution to Thesis: Investigating the community guidelines for new development and the process gone into the new proposal, looking into the land value changes with new houses, and reasoning for allowing some multifamily housing and not other.

Conclusion: Deer Creek Golf Course being changed to become single family housing represents one solution to the closure of the courses, and it highly favors the communities input although the community lacks social and economic issues.



PLT2022-00027
Preliminary Plat - Highlands of Deer Creek

OVERLAND PARK
KANSAS
ABOVE AND BEYOND. BY DESIGN.

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Case Study #2 : Skywest Golf Course

Project Typology:

Community Planning

Environmental Planning

Parks,

Context: Skywest Golf Course, located in San Francisco, California, is a 128 total acre course that closed in 2020. It is currently in the development stages with the Landscape Architecture firm Kimley-Horn.

History: The site of Kimley-Horn's newest project was once a basic municipal golf course the course is occasionally used as a water detention area. The land was minimally changed from its original nature to design the layout of the course.

Contribution to Thesis: Investigating the community guidelines for new development and the process gone into the new proposal, looking into the land value changes with new houses, and reasoning for allowing some multifamily housing and not other.

Conclusion: Investigating the process that Kimley Horn is going through to make their own changes to the communities land to provide new amenities will show the proper way to go about my own process.



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Case Study #3 : Heron Bay Golf Course

Project Typology:

Community Planning

Residential Design

Context: Heron Bay Golf Course, located in Locust Grove, Georgia, is a 150 total acre course on a 220 acre site that closed in 2019. The community largely relies on this land for recreation and water management. The course is the reason for a good portion of the people who live there. The company that currently is in works with the community and developers working on finding a solution that fits everyones need but the community members has turned down all the proposed development plans to this point.

History: This course was developed in 1997 with a deed planned out for for the 150 acres that the course takes up to not be redeveloped into anything whatsoever. The deed has been brought in to a lawsuit and is being handled by a judge to enforce the deed even though the 220 acres of land being bough is supposedly voids the deed.

Contribution to Thesis: Investigating the community guidelines for new development and the process gone into the new proposal, looking into the land value changes with new houses, and reasoning for limiting the amount of retail space available for change.

Conclusion: Deer Creek Golf Course being changed to become single family housing represents one solution to the closure of the courses, and it highly favors the communities input although the community lacks social and economic issues.



THE MEDALLION MALL AT HERON BAY

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN



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Contemporary Mixed Income Community Case Studies

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Historical Analysis

This portion of the research searches through golf courses of the past that have transitioned to alternative uses and have become successful and accepted by their respective community for their uses. It will look into how the changes took place and the reasoning behind the changes.

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Historical Site #1 : Loose Park

Project Typology:

Community Planning

Environmental Planning

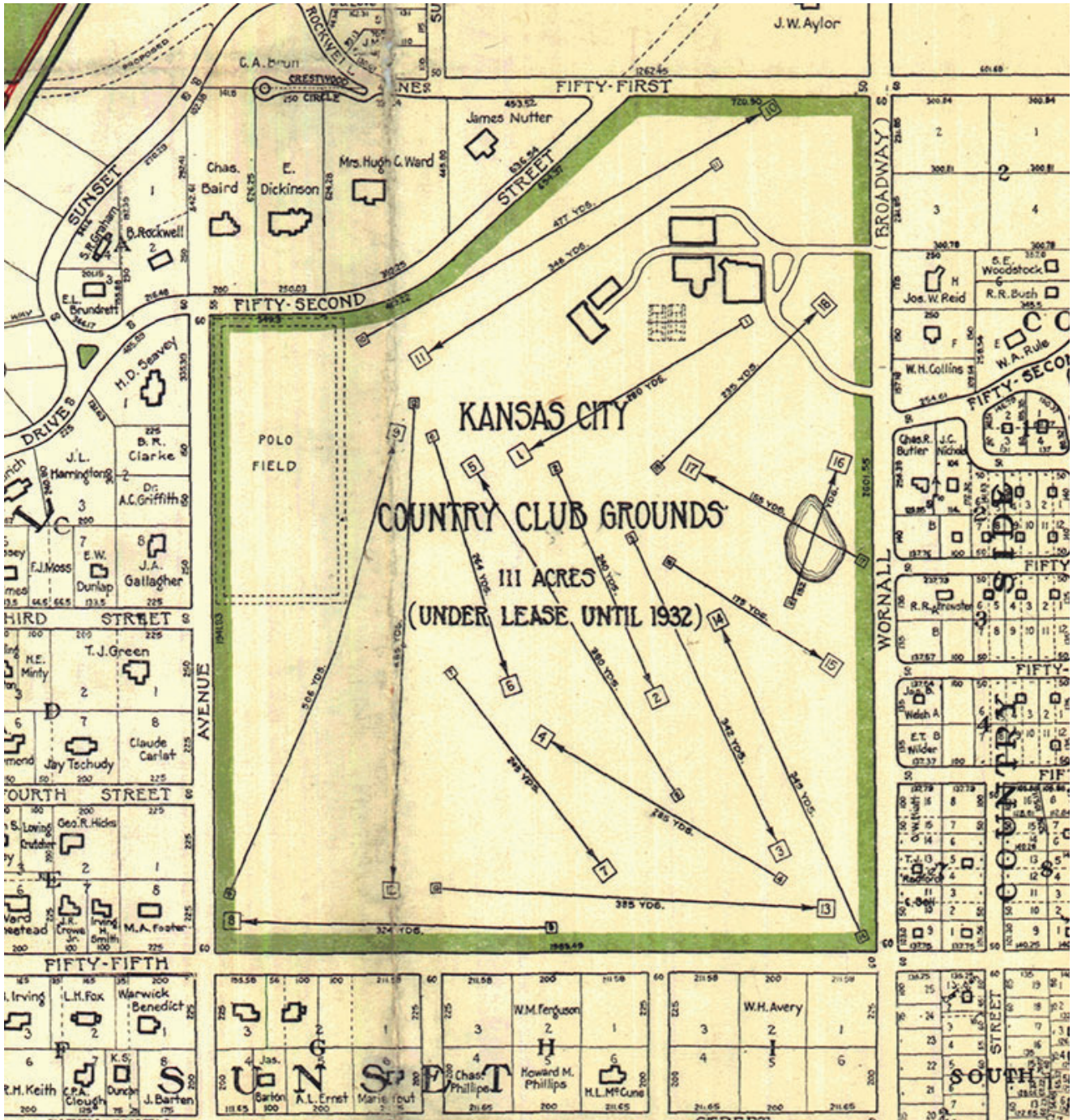
Parks and Recreation

Context: Loose Park, located in Kansas City, Missouri, is a 75 acre park that is one of the cities most historical and popular parks. It serves the city as the third largest park in Kansas City and provides ammenities like a lake, Civil War markers, sports courts, and picnic areas.

History: The original site for Loose Park is what the old site of Kansas City's First Country Club. The original country club was created in 1895 when the rolling hills of a farmers pasture were added to the existing start of the course. After the great war and an exchange of property by the hands of widows the grounds of the current Loose Park to the city. The country club then moved out of the city and with the pristine and manacured land owned by the city the park faced a new design in 1926.

Contribution to Thesis: Investigating change of a golf course to a city park and how it was accepted by the city in the time of its transition and comparing that to how those changes are looked at in todays society.

Conclusion: Loose Park gives a historical insight on have to seamlessly shift one local ammenity to an entirely new use.



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Qualitative Research

Qualitative research will be conducted to break down the needs of the Sunol Valley, the requirements for a new addition to an existing community, and what is found to be successful creating social spaces to introduce people back into society. This research will look into experiences with working on affordable income housing, focusing on the human experience in a community and the comfort of social spaces.

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Design

Thesis Proposal

Major Project Elements

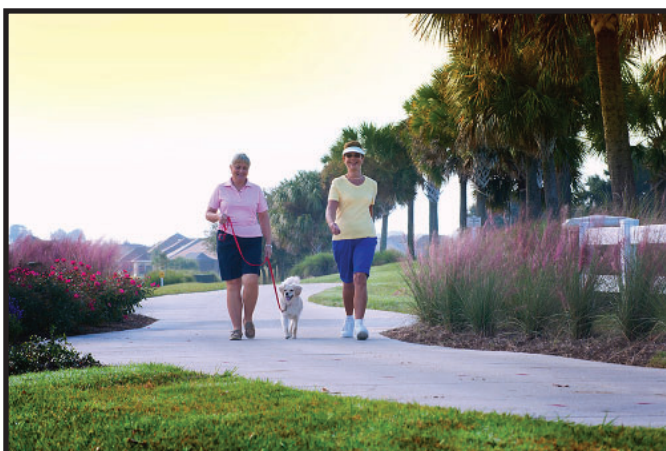
Some of the major projects elements that are part of the proposed design will be affordable income multifamily housing units possibly within a mixed use building, an educational compenent to further explain to the residents and guests the history of the land and the reasons of its closing, the last major element being a trails and recreational uses for the community.



Multi-Family Affordable



Educational Center

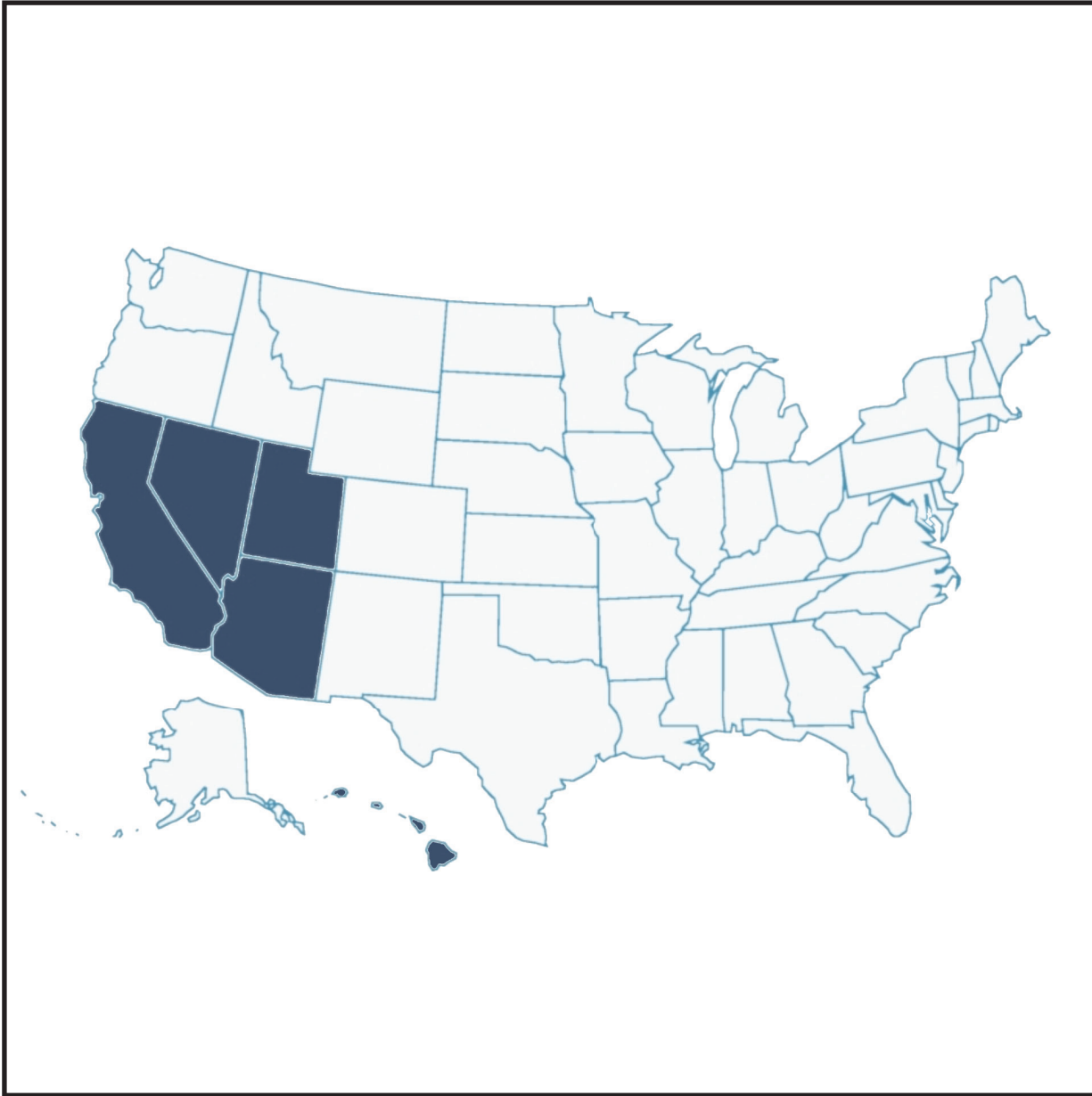


Community Walking Paths

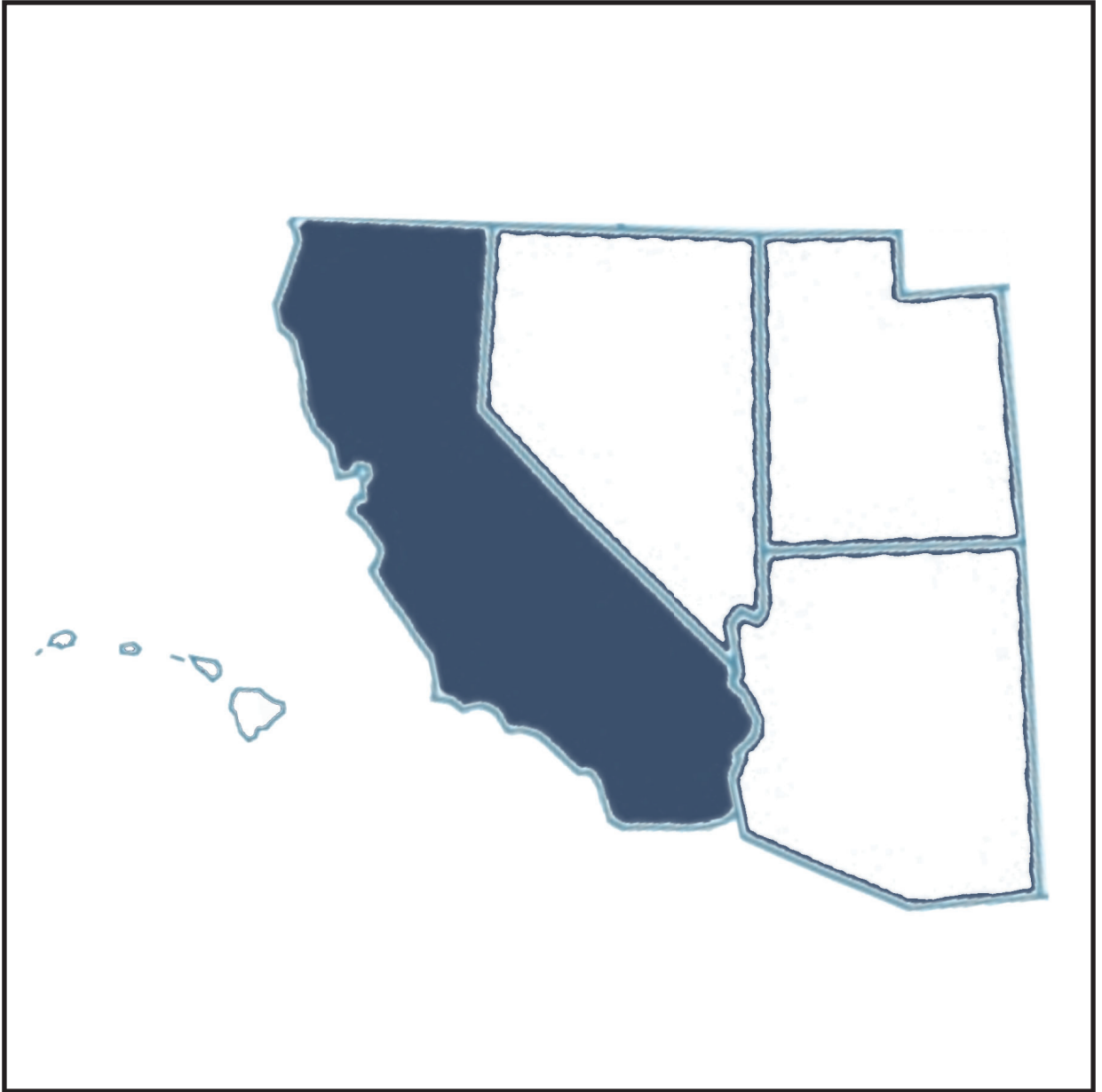
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User Description

The users or clientele of this thesis is the people of American Southwest. In theory the clients would be a combination of the people who require a more affordable living situation, those still looking for a recreational or educational experience from the land. People who need to be educated on why the previous site failed and how to make improvements on the next site.



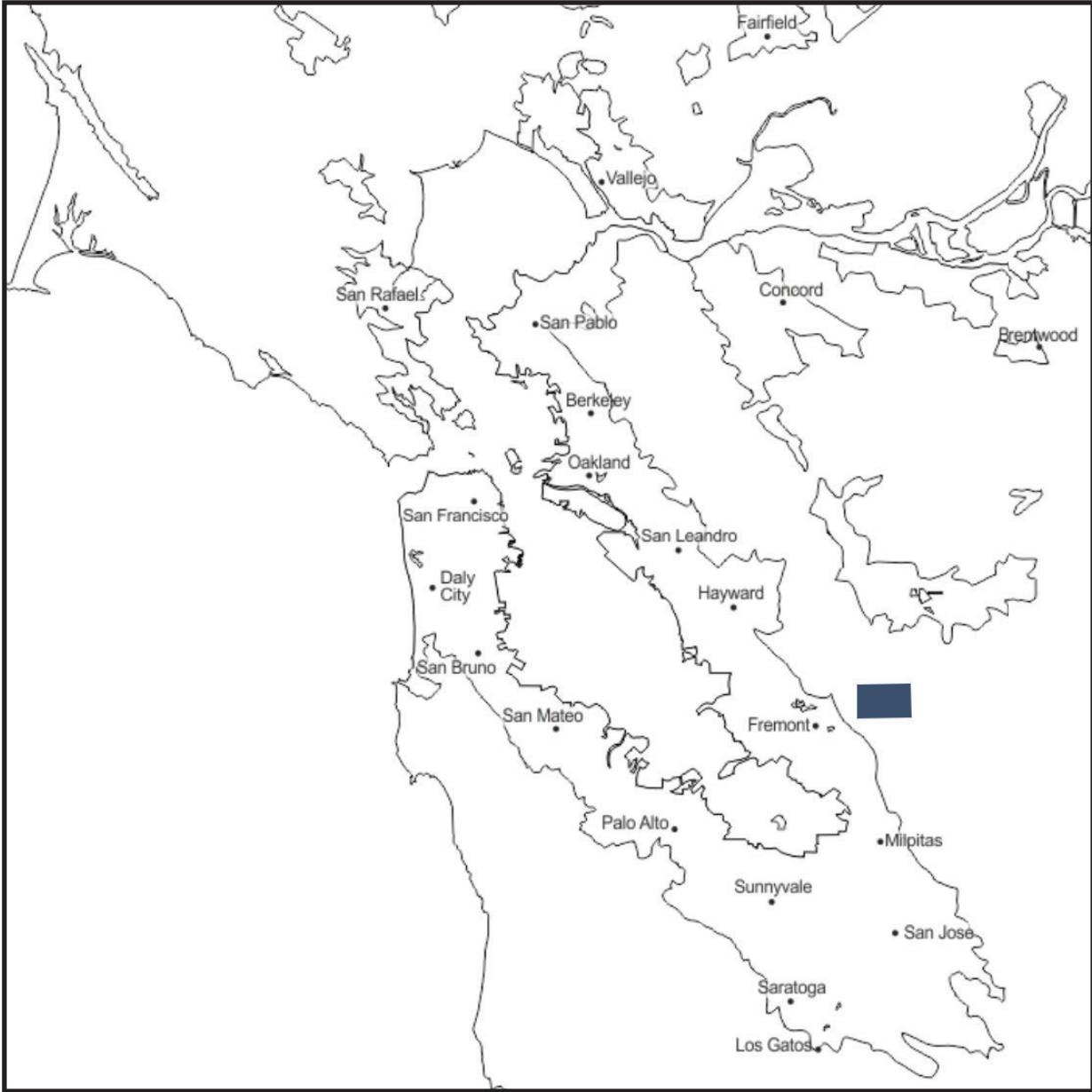
Country Map w/Region Containing Site



Region Map w/State Containing



State Map w/ County Containing Site



Bay Area Map w/ Approximate Site

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Project Goals

Research Goals

- Using analytics to ultimately prove that the land that golf courses once thrived on need to provide an alternative use.
- Researching the requirements for a healthy community.
- Solidifying the ratios of developed outdoor spaces (and what makes them comfortable) and open outdoor spaces along with their connection in to the community.

Design Goals

- Providing the community with an option for affordable housing without resulting to only single family development.
- Creating community or social spaces to mesh the existing community of Sunol with those inhabiting the new proposed community
- Providing the community with basic needs it may not already have (ie. Public Transit Hub, Educational Value, Mobility)
- Bringing an aesthetic beauty back to an unmaintained area.

Thesis Research

Landscape Performance

In most landscape performance evaluations people look for quantifiable numbers that show increases or decreases in value that show that the landscape in question is successful. In an average community one may look at the users financial status, personal successes, and rank in the world to evaluate if it is a successful community. In my evaluation of the case studies and research that was conducted it is not as clear to justify the creation of a community by a numerical value, especially in one that offers affordable housing where looking at the people could have a different outlook if they are transitioning and trying to create a better life for themselves and their family. The performance goals are all on a more personal level because the landscape performance of this thesis is focusing on the success of the people of the interactions of the people in their community and room for involvement and self growth. Through the research it has been found that in a community with affordable housing needs to be able to support the community members that have struggled in the past and support them. To create the support the people need spaces to connect to other people and make lasting relationships.

Landscape Performance Programming Element	Requirement	Exceeds Requirement	Meets Requirement	Below Requirement	Unaccepted
Housing		45%	40%	35%	30%
Open Space		67.5 Acres 25%	56 Acres or 20%	45 Acres or 15%	33.75 Acres or 10%
Developed Landscape		15 Acres	12.5 Acres	10 Acres	7.5 Acres
Walkability		A comunal spot within a 3 minute walk of every resident	A comunal spot within a 5 minute walk of every resident	A comunal spot within a 7.5 minute walk of every resident	A comunal spot within a 10 minute walk of every resident
Lighting		1 street light every 60 feet	1 street light every 70 feet	1 street light every 80 feet	1 street light every 90 feet
Educational Spaces		4 Available spaces	3 Available Spaces	2 Available Spaces	1 Available Space
Large Social Spaces		5 Spaces placed inside and Outside	4 Spaces placed inside and Outside	3 Spaces placed inside and Outside	2 Spaces placed inside and Outside
Roads		7 Acres	8 Acres?	9 Acres?	10 Acres?
Parking		3 spaces for every unit	2 spaces for every unit	1 space for every unit	

This matrix has been created to guide the design frame work and was created from the analysis of the case studies from the case studies, from stories shared at sessions at the 2022 American

Society of Landscape Architects National Conference and other papers written about the needs of communities. Each element has a different impact on peoples day to day use and interaction which determined the amount of spacial allocation. An important factor in a lot of today's communities is the mobility within a community which not only keeps the community close, but it keeps the community healthy as a side benefit as well.

Thesis Research

Project Funding Introduction

In recent years the availability of funding for community projects and landscape architecture as a whole has become more and more readily available. The Federal Government has made the accessibility and understanding of how to get the money through their branches and departments easier for the average person to understand. Programs like the Department of Housing and Federal Administration have their own requirements that help set the criteria of what is needed in the design to access that money.

Through the California Department of Housing website showed that there a number of grants that can be applied for to assist in community development. A these grants provide predecided requirements to include in a design which designate a portion of the housing in the design to have a percentage available to those of who make the affordable income wage which is substantially higher in California than any other state. These percentages fall between 45% affordable pricing and ten of that being targeted for transitional age adults. These grants include the Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships, and No Place Like Home Grant. Along with grants from the state each project also has outside funding or assistance from non-profits and private donors. Companies like ULI and Habitat for Humanity work solely on communities that struggle with housing and assist in finding funding agencies or developers to work with.

Thesis Research

Project Funding Options

Federal Funding

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – \$3.3 billion.

(The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) provides annual grants on a formula basis to states, cities, and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.)

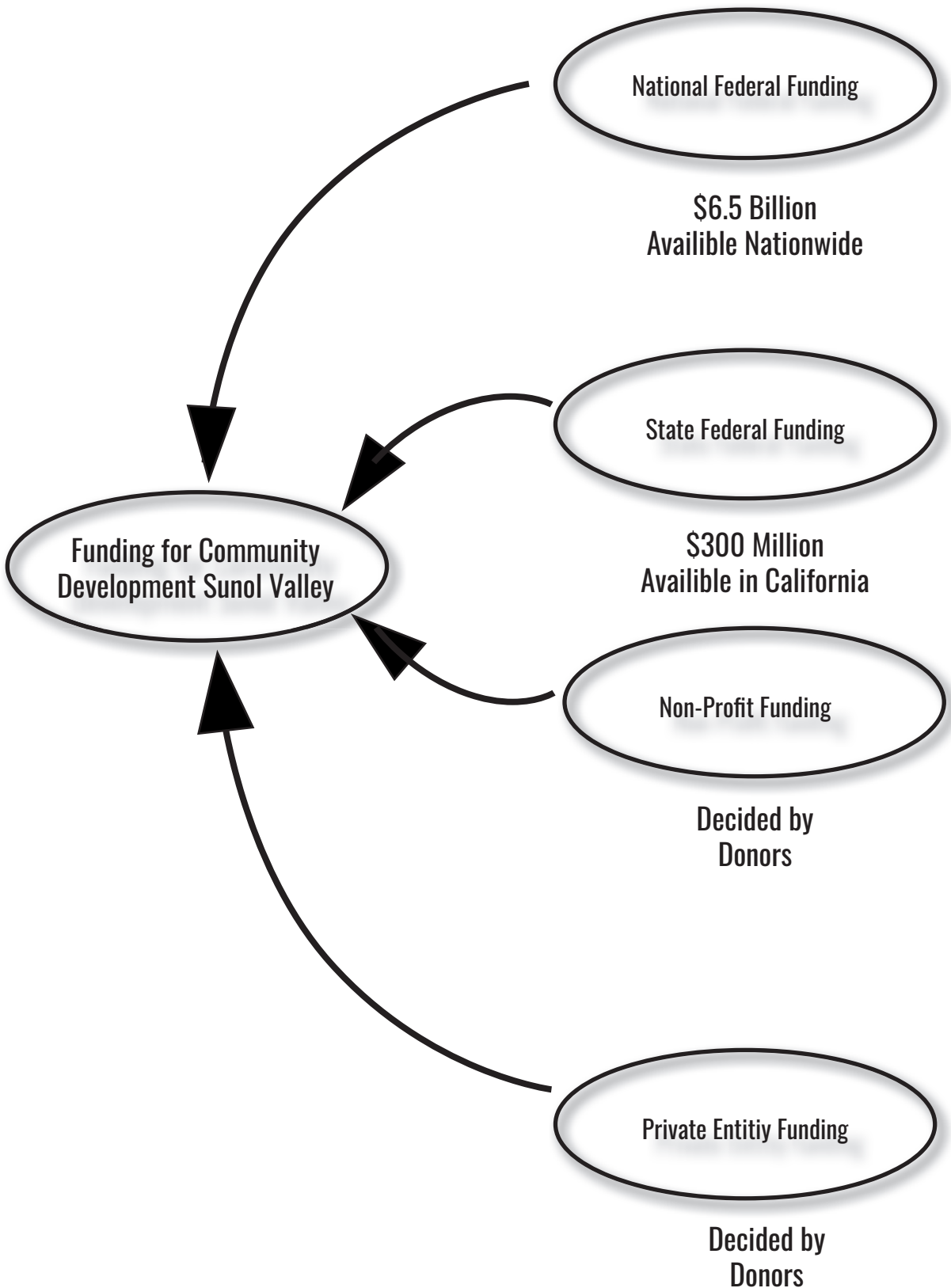
- HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) – \$1.5 billion.

(The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides funding to states and localities that communities use - often in partnership with local nonprofit groups - to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people.)

Nonprofit Funding

- Partnerships with Habitat for Humanity and ULI

(Habitat for humanity and ULI are organizations that assist communities on developing homes for those who need them. These organizations would be available to help when figuring out how the community would mesh.)



Thesis Research

Research Results

The Sunol Valley Golf Course is a golf course in Sunol, California that has been closed for 5 years now. According to local residents the city has no plans to change the use of the existing land that continues to grow out with vegetation. With the growing population around the Bay Area there is a large movement of outward expansion. This outward expansion could lead to the city of Sunol and the Sunol Valley Golf Course provides an ample amount of unused and unplanned space.

The reason for its closure was the expenses to keep the course running whether that meant the upkeep of the grass, the watering of the turf over the course of a drought, or the salaries of those who need to maintain the 250 acres of land. This meant a vital piece of the community was taken away from the people living there.

One of the best solutions that was found for the sense of community that was lost is by creating spots for the community to go and socialize. A solution that has been tested in the researched case studies is extending community living into the empty land and although that solution creates a spot for some of the community to go it doesn't necessarily create a place of the entire community to gather. The best solutions have been those that don't just create single family homes extensions but those that bring people together through social programming elements.



Digging into what defines the success of a site of a community, and a mixed income community to be more exact, the research lead to the key components and programming elements or ideologies behind the design aspect of this thesis. A community is defined by its identity which comes from its forms of the community's layout, the open spaces and its people. How the people use that land and interact within it gives a communities an even further depth. The people that reside in the community no matter the social status are still people who need to socialize, maintain activity, inform others of their stories, and build relationships. All of these ideas have to seamlessly be combined to create the optimal community, not only to create an average community but one that will focus on helping people break the barrier from needing the affordable housing by reintroducing them into society and getting them the support of the community

Thesis Conclusion

Thesis Conclusion

Project Takeaways

Over the course of the thesis process there have been a lot of takeaways of the process of developing a community and the finding of a viable use for a permanently closed golf courses that benefits the as many parties as possible without affecticting the existing ecological systems. When taking the process of developing the community into account the consideration of who will be living there, how the interaction of the existing community will happen with the new community, and what ammenities are necessary and what ones provide needed benefit to the people. Looking into the finding the viable uses the difficulty was finding a uses that keeps the existing community connected and to the new community through the ammenities. The last and one of the most imprtant aspects was keeping the the existing ecological systems in tact. This lead to lots of controvesy in the design development of the project on where the line of where the future houing development stood and how that would change the shaping of the current ecology that was set. It was an experience that forced research and pushed boundaries of my current knowled and created new experience for learning about planning.

Appendix

Thesis Resources

Main Thesis Idea Resources

Kotecki, P. (n.d.). Before and after photos show how dead golf courses are being transformed into housing, parks, and Flood Protection Systems. Business Insider. Retrieved October 13, 2022, from <https://www.businessinsider.com/american-golf-courses-redevelopment-transformations-2018-8>

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Peters, A. (2019, March 5). Need land for parks and housing? there are plenty of useless golf courses to repurpose. Fast Company. Retrieved October 13, 2022, from <https://www.fastcompany.com/90315242/need-land-for-parks-and-housing-there-are-plenty-of-useless-golf-courses-to-repurpose>

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New twist in planned redevelopment of former Heron Bay Golf Course in Coral Springs and Parkland. TAPinto. (n.d.). Retrieved October 13, 2022, from <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/coral-springs/sections/real-estate/articles/new-twist-in-planned-redevelopment-of-former-heron-bay-golf-course-in-coral-springs-and-parkland>

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<https://ontopoftheworldcommunities.com/amenities/walking-biking-trails/>