
A SETTING OF INDIVIDUALITY



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A SETTING OF INDIVIDUALITY

THE PERFECT MIXTURE:

HOW TO COMPOSE PRIVATE COMMUNITIES

More than just a house: a complete lifestyle

Golf Course Community

Waterfront Living

Retirement Village

Traditional Suburban Development

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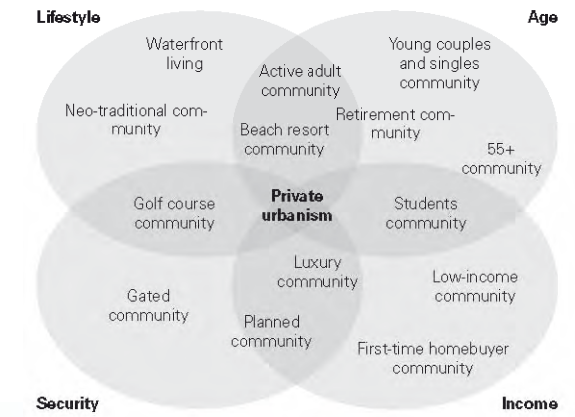
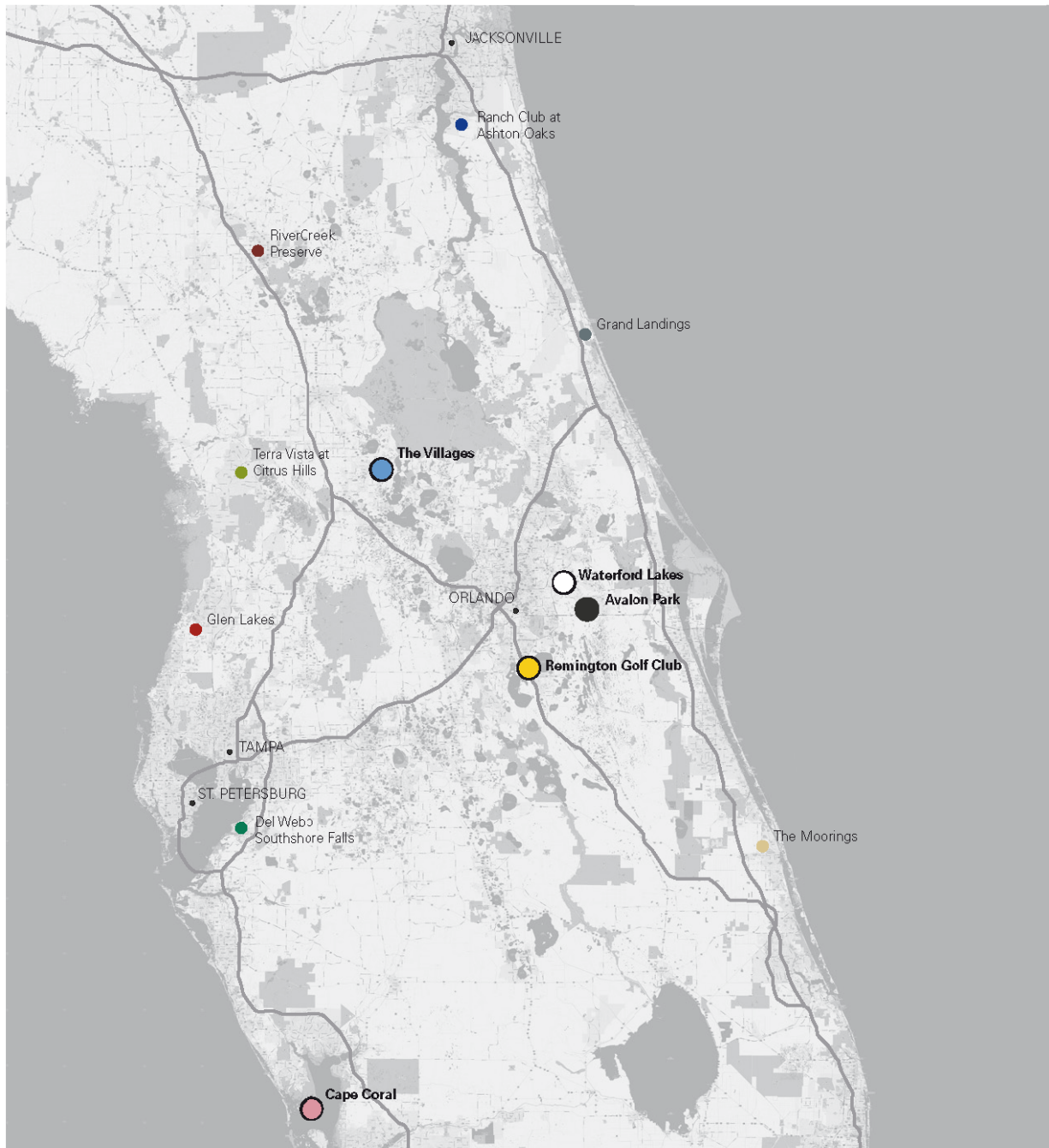
THE PERFECT MIXTURE: HOW TO COMPOSE PRIVATE COMMUNITIES

Private communities are housing developments that are planned and built by private companies or individuals rather than by the government. Because they play such an important role in Florida's present land development, competition is rife between them. As a result, each community specializes and caters to a very specific target group. This results in homogeneous communities which thrive on marketing. This chapter exposes the vast array of possible combinations and then analyses the basic characteristics and land use of the private communities in Florida using five concrete examples, one from each typology identified.



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	Equestrian Club	Boat Club	Spa	Fitness Center	Walking	Tennis	Pool	Clubhouse	Land preservation	Trails	Community garden	
H Homestead	●			●	●	●	●	●	●			Glen Lakes, FL 34613
C Condominiums		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	The Moorings, FL 32904
R Retirement				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	The Villages, FL 32256
P Planned			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Avalon Park, FL 32828
G Gated	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Terra Vista at Citrus Hills, FL 34442
GB Green Building				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Del Webb Southshore Falls, FL 33572
C Coastal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Cape Coral, FL 33904
R River				●	●	●	●	●	●			RiverCreek Preserve, FL 32615
L Lake	●	●		●	●	●	●	●				Ranch Club at Ashton Oaks, FL 32092
G Golf		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		Remington Golf Club, FL 32134
R Resort				●	●	●	●	●		●		Grand Landings, FL 32164

More than just a house: a complete lifestyle

Florida's private communities come in all shapes and sizes. Moreover, each community complements their offer with a dazzling array of amenities, creating a complete package to suit every lifestyle. Their product can be tailored to specific age groups, income levels, entertainment options and lifestyle choices. Within the many possibilities, we have chosen five key examples based on their unique use of land (waterfront living and golf-course community), demographics (retirement villages), efforts for sustainable development (neo-traditional community), in addition to a traditional suburban development as a comparison point.

Infinite Choices

The diagram on top maps out the different types of private communities in relationship to the characteristics of the buyer. The table above takes 11 types of private communities in Florida (listed on the left) and matches them to the amenities offered (listed on top). Almost every combination is possible.

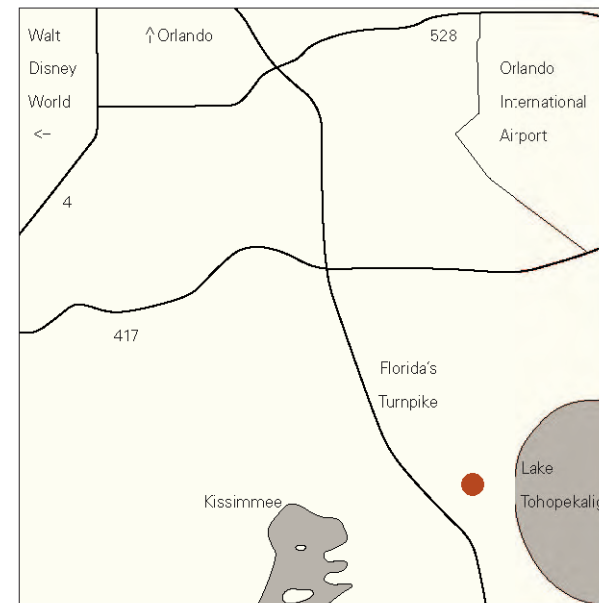


Golf course community

The idea behind a golf-course community is to live directly on a golf course. As a result, houses are arranged in clusters between the golf links. The development of the course in itself is not profitable. However, the investment pays off with the price premiums that a house on a golf course commands. A large number of retirees live on golf course communities, as their free time allows them to play often.

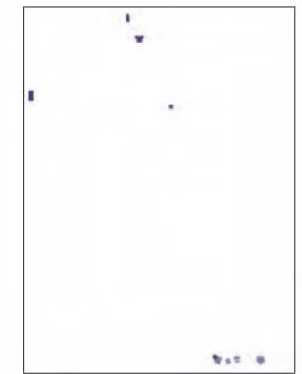
Facts

Location: 2995 Remington Boulevard, Kissimmee, FL
 Population: 1275
 Number of households: 673
 Racial composition: 32% white, 55% hispanic, 9% black
 Amenities: restaurant, shop, golf school, swimming pool, banquets, weddings

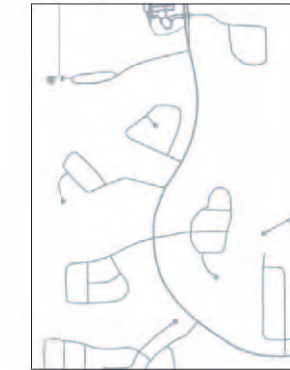




1 Buildings



2 Center



3 Street Network



4 Parking lots



5 Nature



6 Public green

Islands in a sea of green

The houses in a golf course community are arranged in compact clusters between the golf links. A main connector road provides access to these clusters, which in turn have smaller roads, mostly with dead-ends and cul-de-sacs. The roads and houses are organically shaped to better integrate them with the surrounding golf-course. The ratio of green versus built space is almost 1:1. However, the public space is monofunctional: only for playing golf. Very little other amenities exist.



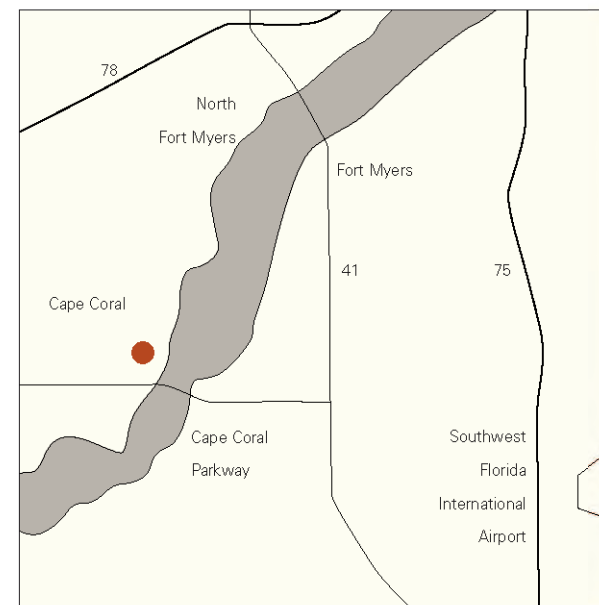
Waterfront Living

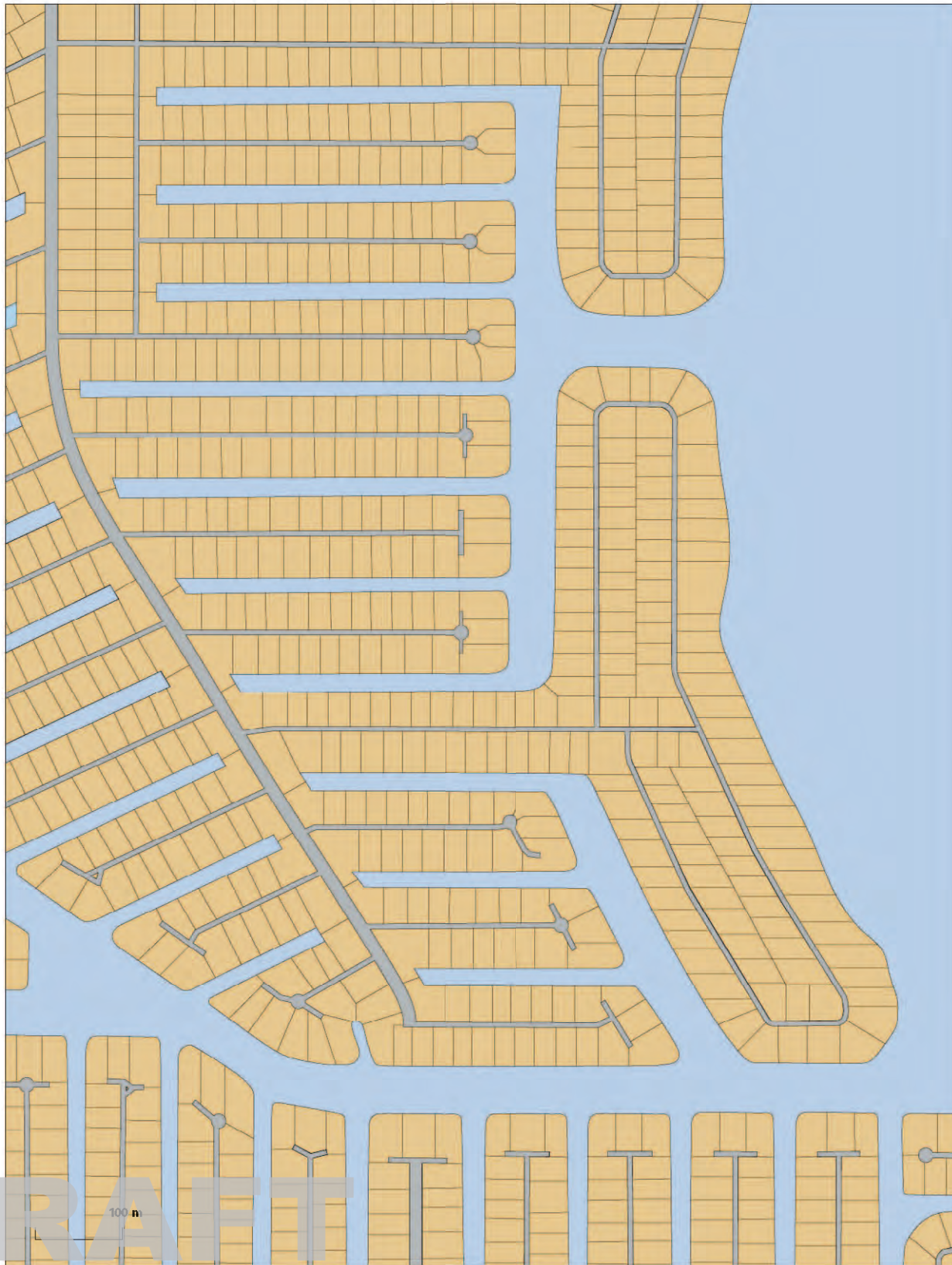
One of the most extreme forms of land development in Florida is the waterfront or canal house. Here, massive earth movements are undertaken to maximize the length of the coast line, allowing its residents to park their boats directly in front of their houses. This community also appeals to retirees, specifically boat fanatics.

Facts

Location: 5819 Driftwood Parkway, Cape Coral, FL
 Population: 2075
 Number of households: 748
 Racial composition: 90% white, 8% hispanic, 0% black
 Amenities: yacht club, shops, restaurants, orthopedics, photographer

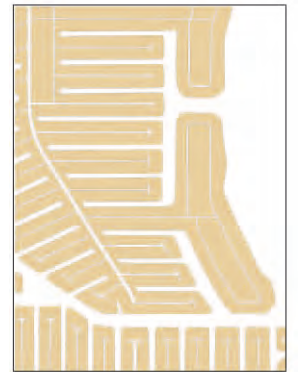
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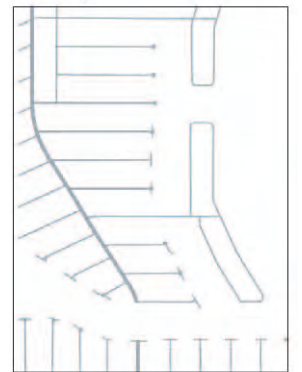


Fingers of Land

The structure of the typical waterfront community has long, thin fingers of land with a road in the middle. This enables plots to have street access on one side and waterfront views on the other. Waterfront communities are relatively expensive to build: there are big earth movements involved and the canals take up a lot of space. As a result, no green public space is provided. The only amenity is boating, with some communities having a marina.



1 Buildings



2 Street Network



3 Water

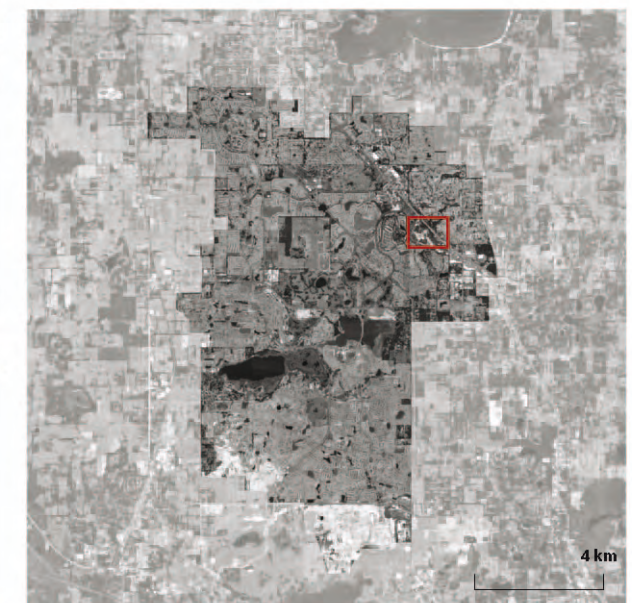
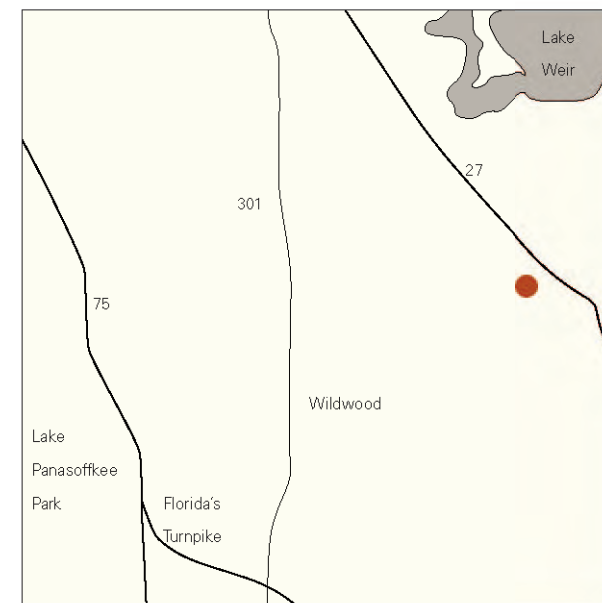


Retirement Village

Retirement villages attract people from all over America to retire in sunny Florida. Because their residents have unlimited free time, this type of development is loaded with amenities and activities such as restaurants, shops, swimming pools, movie theaters and golf courses. The residents are part of what is known as the "third age," retired but definitely not old. Everything is controlled and choreographed to make the residents feel young and healthy. People under 55 are not allowed.

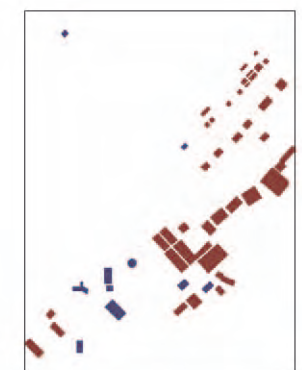
Facts

Location: The Villages, FL 32162
 Population: 75'000
 Number of households: 38'983
 Racial composition: 97% white, 1% hispanic, 0% black
 Amenities: restaurants, shops, banks, golf cart man, post office, bowling, hairdresser, church, health center, supermarket, movie theater, dentist, vitamine shop, town hall, police, golf course, recreation centers





1 Buildings



2 Center



3 Street Network



4 Parking lots



5 Nature



6 Public green

Forever on Vacation

Retirement communities have a clearly discernible center where amenities are concentrated. This center incorporates some aspects of Disney, including a main street with a square at the end. Close to the center, there are large retail structures surrounded by parking lots. The homes are arranged further out in traditional suburban fashion. Plots, however, are especially homogeneous; almost every family is the same size: two. The center is reached via a second network of streets for golf carts, which operate independently from cars.

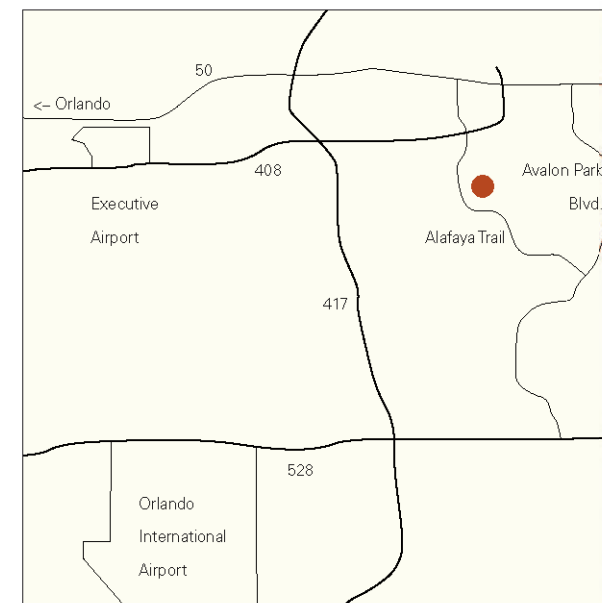


Traditional Suburban Development

This type of development is the most common in Florida. Its origins date back to the 1950's with the proliferation of the automobile and the baby-boom. Even though the basic typology has not changed, suburbia is increasingly being planned by private developers. Within the traditional suburban development, we can distinguish between gated communities and private (but not gated) ones. Very little amenities, if any, are provided.

Facts

Location: Waterford Lakes, Mark Twain Blvd, Orlando, FL
 Population: 885
 Number of households: 240
 Racial composition: 63% white, 23% hispanic, 7% black
 Amenities: Supermarket, post office, bank, sport club, dentist, pediatrics





Cul-de-sac-land

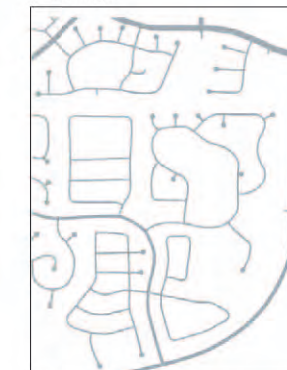
Traditional suburban developments are extremely land intensive. The street network is laid out so there is no through traffic. Only the residents that live there drive on that street. The result is a high concentration of cul-de-sacs and closed circuit roads, making the entrance easy to control via a gate or a control point. The structure of suburbia is completely dependent on the car. People not able to drive are totally excluded.



1 Buildings



2 Retail and entertainment



3 Street Network



4 Parking lots



5 Nature



6 Public green



Neo traditional community

A neo-traditional community aims to recreate the past as the ideal for future living. Houses are arranged in small neighborhoods, ideally within a five-minute walk of the town center. The town center provides all the basic daily needs like pharmacies, bakeries, supermarkets and banks. Office space and schools are also provided, allowing its residents to live, learn, work and play without the stressful commute.

Facts

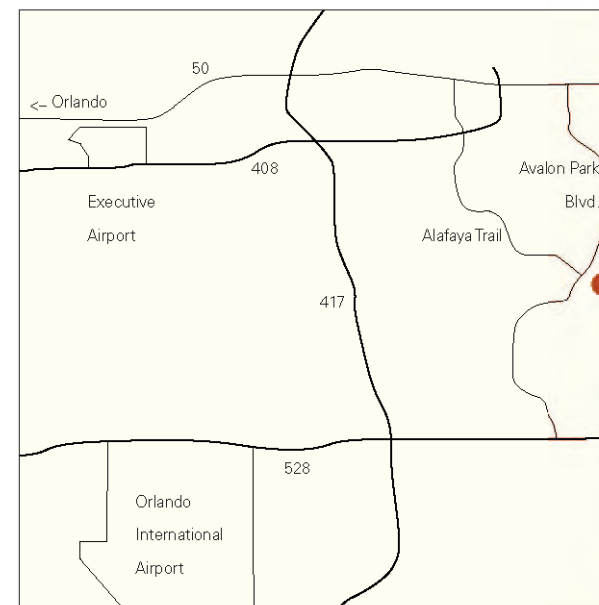
Location: Avalon Park, Orlando, FL 32828
 Population: 11'000
 Number of households: 4831
 Ratial composition: 54% white, 28% hispanic, 8% black
 Amenities: YMCA, baseball, tennis, swimming pool, parks, supermarket, bakery, restaurants, doctors, bank, pharmacy, gas station

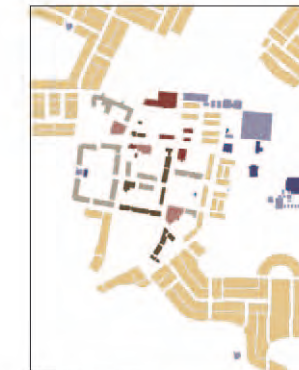


Max, lives in an apartment building of Avalon Park
 "The benches by the lake are perfect!"



Chrystel, sister of a resident of Avalon Park
 "The bakery is awesome!"





1 Buildings



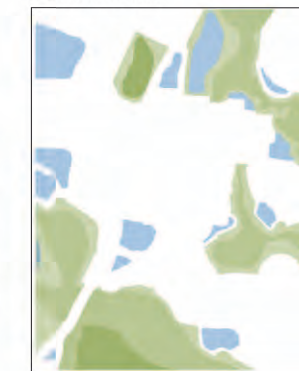
2 Retail and entertainment



3 Street Network



4 Parking lots



5 Nature



6 Public green

Back to the Future

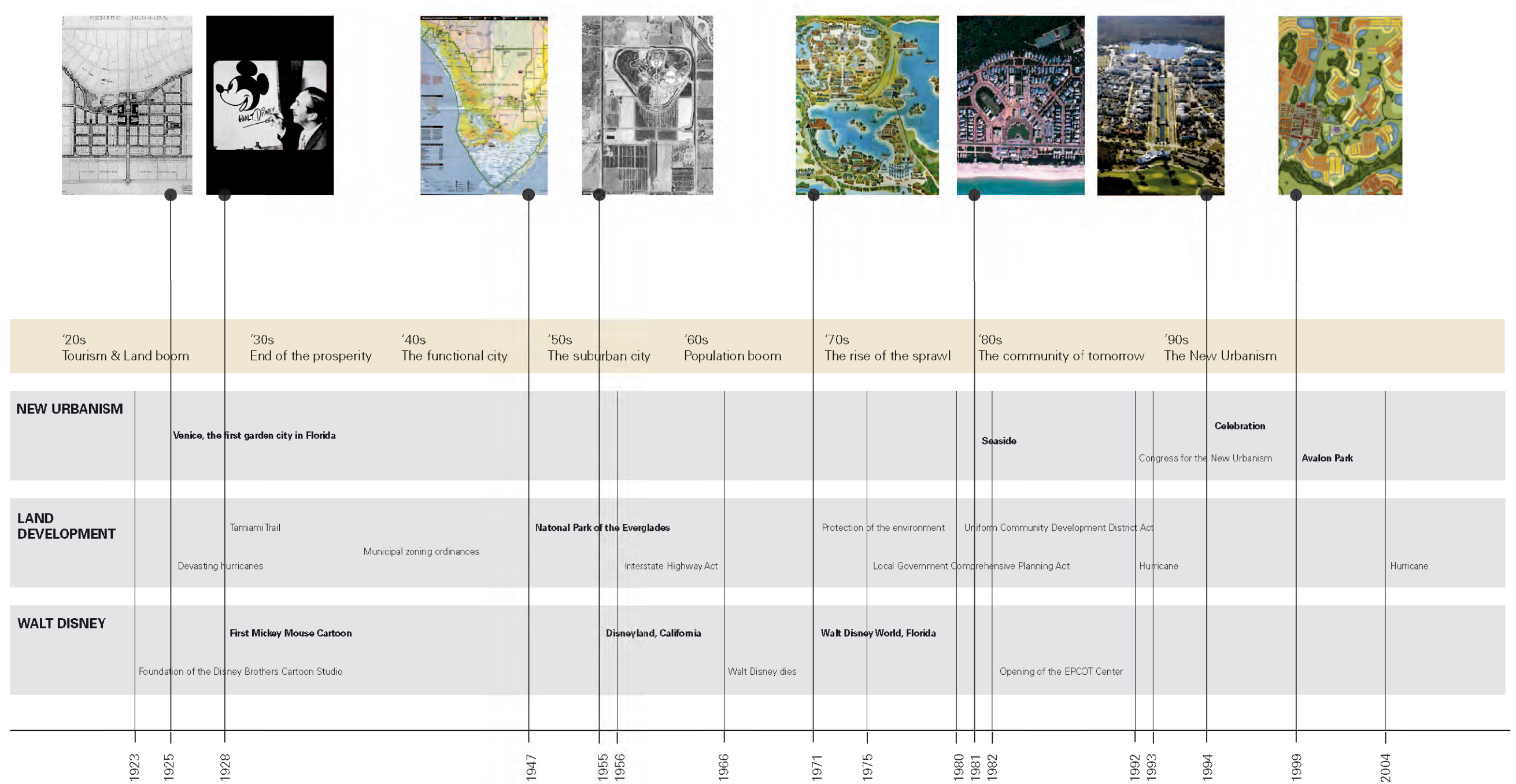
Neo-traditional developments look to the small-town past to model their communities. There is a clearly discernible center which accommodates all of the daily needs such as schools, office space, supermarkets, pharmacies, banks, restaurants, retail, among many others. A key concept is never having to move away from the community. Children can walk to school, adults can work in the center, empty-nesters can move into small apartments and there is assisted living for the elderly.

PARADIGMS AND PROTAGONIST OF PRIVATE URBANISM

Florida's present housing development patterns are a result of three parallel histories. Having previously had a very low population density, the state's lands were subdivided into large tracts of land. Chapter 190 of the Florida Statutes provides a legal basis for private individuals and corporations to establish self-government. This combination was crucial in attracting Walt Disney, which in turn provided the fantasy-like, artificial-world component to the mix. In fact, The New Urbanist community of Celebration provides a direct link between Disney and Florida's artificial "lifestyle" communities. The timeline below illustrates these three parallel phenomena and how they provide the ideal conditions for Florida's present private product-based communities to exist.



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Three parallel histories

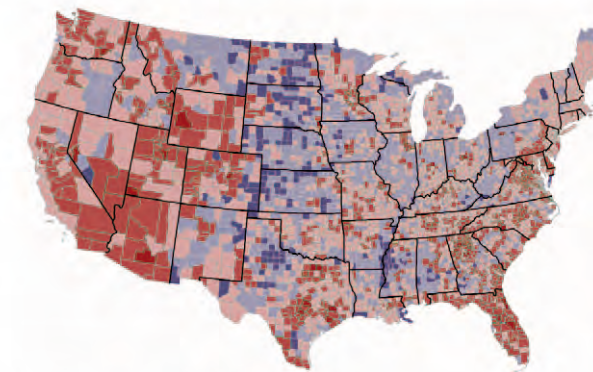
Florida's land development history, the influence of Walt Disney in the region, and more recently the growing momentum of the New Urbanist movement have all played a decisive role in shaping the state's private communities.



Land Development of Florida

Until the beginning of the 20th century, Florida had an extremely low population density. The state was thus divided into large tracts of land. Ever since, however, its growth has been spectacular and marked by big infrastructure projects built all at once, such as the Tamiami Trail or the Overseas Highway. The state government, however, has not been able to provide housing for all this growth.

As a result, chapter 190 of the Florida Statutes was introduced to allow for private corporations and individuals to provide these investments, in return for having a certain degree of autonomy. The existence of this legal base, in addition to the large tracts of land available and a healthy market of buyers, make private developments particularly attractive in Florida.



Population Growth from 2000 to 2010
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-01.pdf>

- 50% or more
- 25% to 49%
- 10% to 24%
- 0% to 9%
- - 9% to 0%
- -10% or less

Hot Spot of Growth

Florida attracts Americans from across the country, particularly the mid-west and the rust-belt. It also attracts many immigrants, mostly from Central and South America. The result is one of the highest rates of growth in the nation. Combined with the millions of tourists who visit the state's attractions and beaches, Florida's infrastructure is constantly being challenged.

Florida Statutes
Title XIII: Planning and Development
Chapter 190: Community Development Districts

190.001 Short title. - This act may be cited as the "Uniform Community Development District Act of 1980."

190.002 Legislative findings, policies, and intent.
 (1) The Legislature finds that:

(a) There is a need for uniform, focused, and fair procedures in state law to provide a reasonable alternative for the establishment, power, operation, and duration of independent districts to manage and finance basic community development services; and that, based upon a proper and fair determination of applicable facts, an independent district can constitute a timely, efficient, effective, responsive, and economic way to deliver these basic services, thereby providing a solution to the state's planning, management, and financing needs for delivery of capital infrastructure in order to service projected growth without overburdening other governments and their taxpayers.

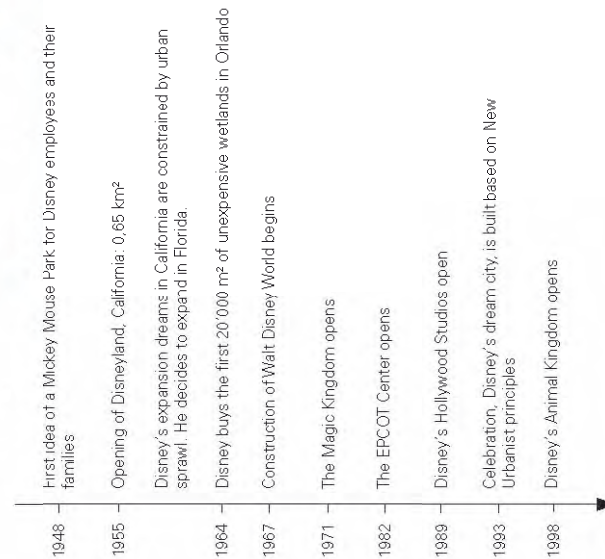
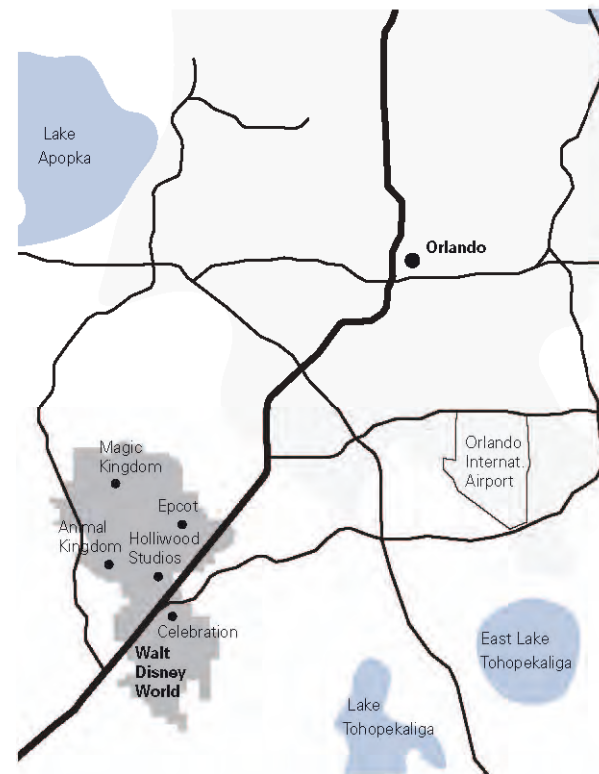
<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/>





Walt Disney

Walt Disney's ambitions for his Florida project went far beyond fantasy and entertainment: urbanistic ideals were at the core of his vision. Learning from his own mistakes in Disneyland in California, and taking advantage of the vast space available, every single detail was thoroughly planned. A particularly important topic was transportation. In an era when the automobile was increasingly dominating every-day America, Disney was one of the first opponents of this phenomenon. His plans for Walt Disney World in Florida included railroads, the Monorail, and the famed People Movers.



Walt Disney World (since 1971)

WDW is the biggest entertainment center of the world (122 km²). It is visited by 17 millions people per year and contains four themeparks, two water parks, six golf courses and twenty-three hotels.



EPCOT (1982)

The Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow was originally intended to be a real living community: a prototype for the future development of American cities. The center provided the transportation hub and a high concentration of retail and hotel space. The individual neighborhoods were arranged radially and accessed through the people movers. Unfortunately, Disney's dream died with him and EPCOT was built as a mere futuristic theme park.



Celebration (1993)

Celebration, Florida was the first living community built and developed by the Disney Company. As in its theme parks, the aesthetics are strictly regulated. Combined with the principles of New Urbanism, this community makes Disney's fantasy world available for everyday living. Its numerous imitators in the form of private lifestyle communities and New Urbanist developments are testament of the huge success this concept enjoys.



Main Street, USA

A key element in both Disneyland in California and Magic Kingdom in Florida is Main Street, USA. This generic street was modelled on the historical Main Street of every small American town. Disney thus aimed to transport his visitors back to the Main Street of their childhood memories.

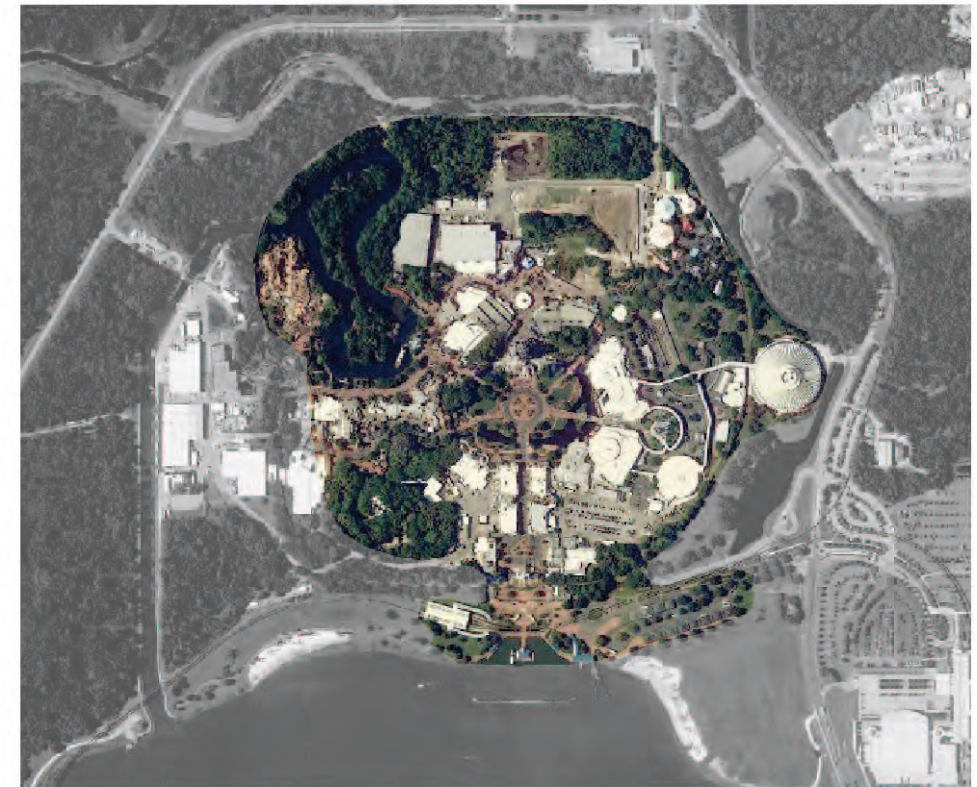


Fantasy and Reality

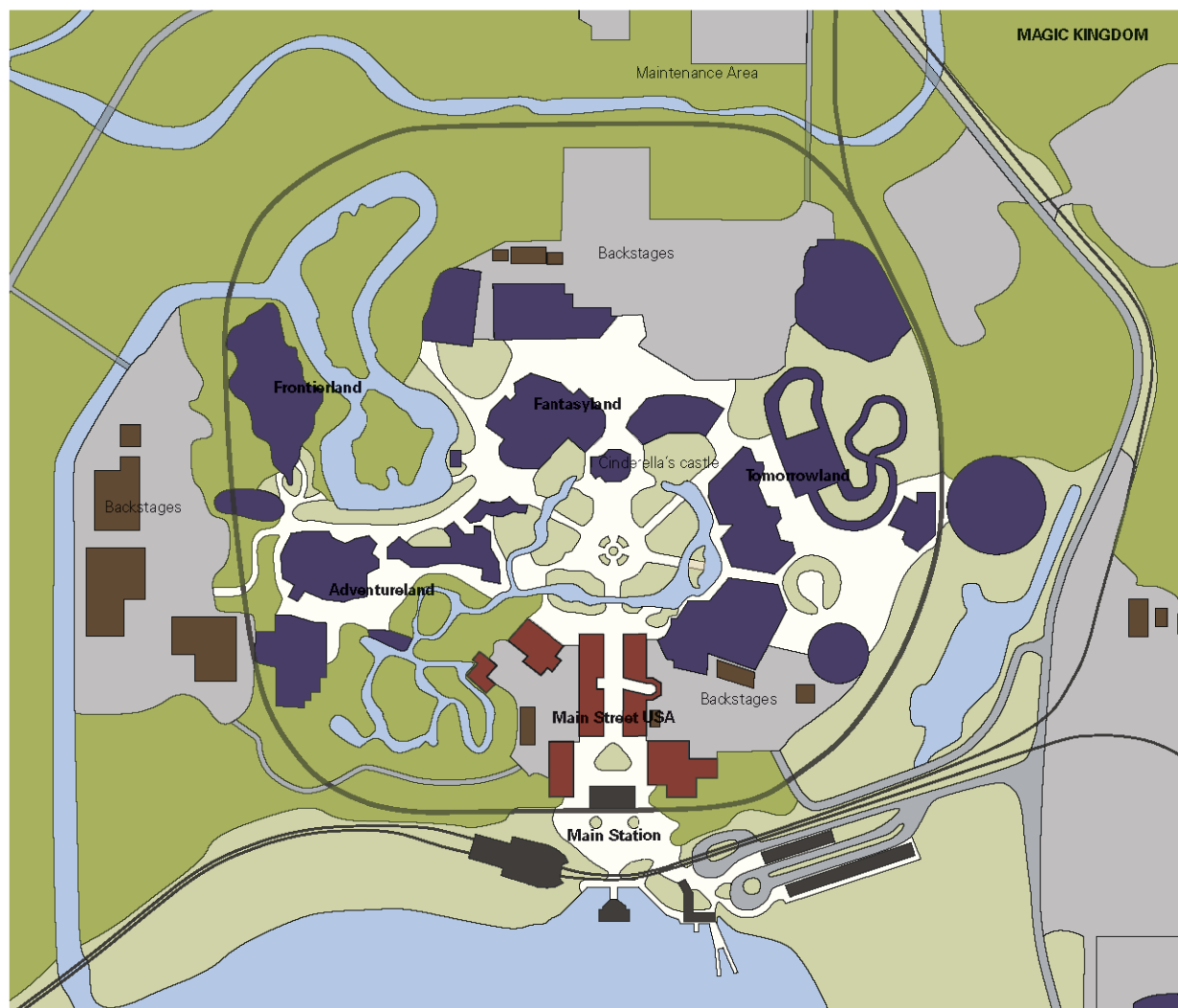
The Disney Company portrays the Magic kingdom as an island of fantasy in the middle of nowhere. However, the satellite image reveals a vast infrastructure backstage of parking lots, roads and maintenance areas that make the magic happen. A system of tunnels (above) is used for delivery and for employees to move around without being seen.



The Magic Kingdom as portrayed by Disney



The Magic Kingdom as seen from a satellite image



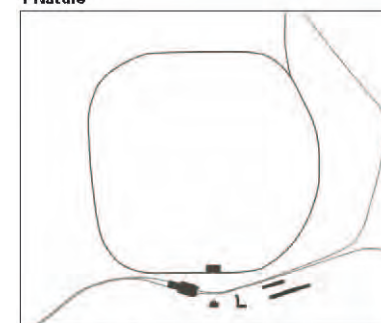
1 Nature



2 Public green



3 Water



4 Monorail and railroad



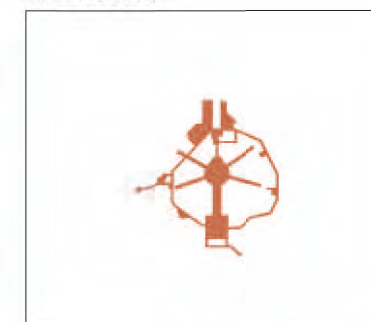
5 Pedestrian streets



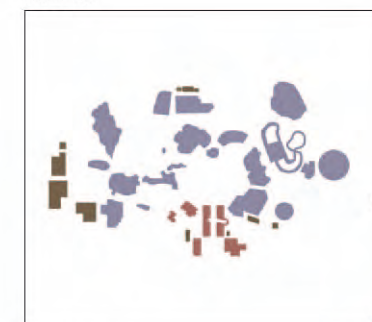
6 Streets



7 Parking Lots



8 Underground tunnel



9 Buildings

The not-so-Magic Kingdom

The separation of land uses of Disney's Magic Kingdom reveal vast areas devoted to backstage activities. The perfect fantasy of Main Street does not happen by magic. There are huge parking lots and infrastructures hidden from view that make everything run smoothly.

An area for every function

Nature is used to hide the backstage areas. Transportation modes are also separated: pedestrian do not share streets with cars, delivery is carried out underground out of view of the visitors, and tourist can arrive at the Magic Kingdom by land (buses), water (ferry) or air (monorail).



The New Urbanism in Florida

Urbanism and planning have a long history in Florida. In 1919 John Nolen, America's preeminent planner in the early 20th century, initiated the planning of new towns based on the garden city ideal and strongly influenced Raymond Unwin. In 1925 Nolen planned Venice, the most complete example of garden city in Florida. In the 70's and 80's Léon Krier's ideas about the reconstruction of the "European city" had a strong reception in Florida. He helped masterplan the private community of Seaside, the first New Urbanist Experiment. As of the 1990's the New Urbanist Movement has gained strong momentum in Florida. Since the building of Celebration, many other developments have successfully implemented the ideals of New Urbanists across the state.

New Urbanist principles

1. Walkability
 - Most things within a 10-minute walk of home and work
 - Pedestrian friendly street design
2. Connectivity
 - Interconnected street grid network disperses traffic and eases walking
 - A hierarchy of narrow streets, boulevards, and alleys
3. Mixed-Use & Diversity
 - A mix of shops, offices, apartments, and homes on site
 - Diversity of people - of ages, income levels, cultures, and races
4. Mixed Housing
 - A range of types, sizes and prices in closer proximity
5. Quality Architecture & Urban Design
 - Emphasis on beauty, aesthetics, human comfort, and creating a sense of place
 - Special placement of civic uses and sites within community
6. Traditional Neighborhood Structure
 - Discernable center and edge
 - Public space at center
 - Public open space designed as civic art
 - Contains a range of uses and densities within 10-minute walk
 - Transect planning: Highest densities at town center; progressively less dense towards the edge
7. Increased Density
 - More buildings, residences, shops, and services closer together for ease of walking, to enable a more efficient use of services and resources, and to create a more enjoyable place to live
8. Green Transportation
 - A network of trains connecting cities, towns, and neighborhoods
 - Pedestrian-friendly design that encourages a greater use of bicycles, rollerblades, scooters, and walking as daily transportation
9. Sustainability
 - Minimal environmental impact of development
 - Eco-friendly technologies, respect for ecology and value of natural systems
 - Less use of finite fuels
 - More walking, less driving
10. Quality of Life

Taken together these add up to a high quality of life well worth living, and create places that enrich, uplift, and inspire the human spirit.

<http://www.newurbanism.org/newurbanism/principles.html>



Peter Calthorpe



Andrés Duany



Elizabeth Moule



Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk



Stefanos Polyzoides



Dan Solomon

The New Signature

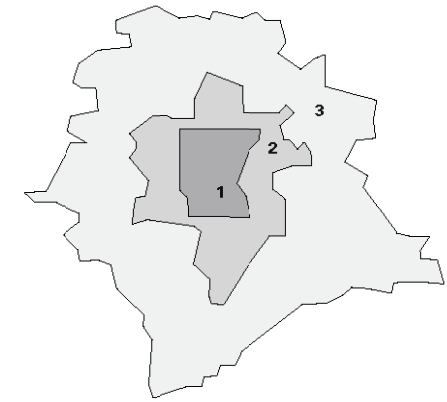
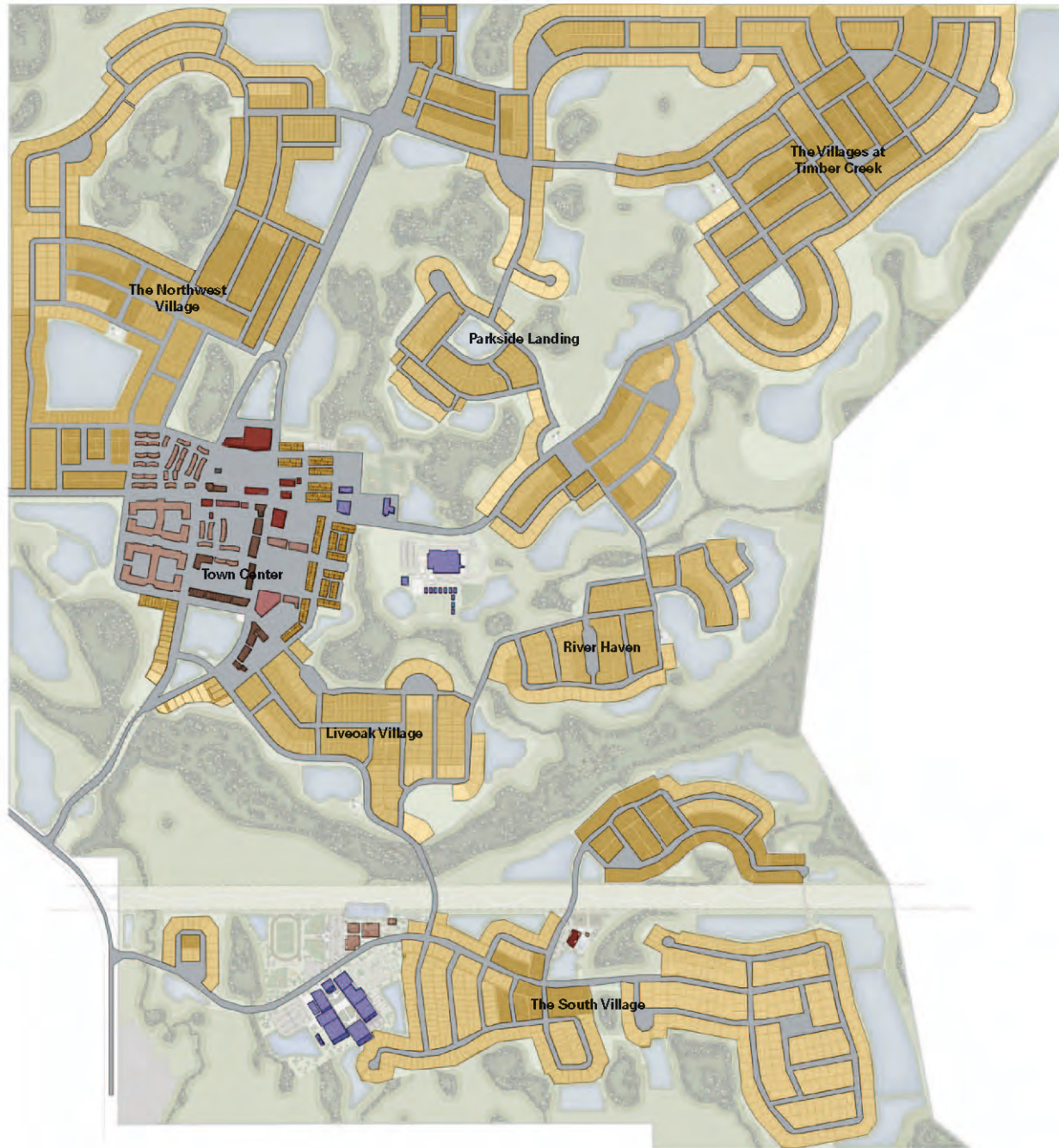
Calthorpe, Duany, Moule, Plater-Zyberk, Polyzoides, and Solomon founded the Congress for the New Urbanism in 1993. The CNU has grown to more than 3,000 members, and is the leading international organization promoting New Urbanist design principles. It holds annual congresses in various U.S. cities.

COREOGRAPHY OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE: A CASE STUDY OF AVALON PARK

Using Avalon Park as our case study, we examine the role of the developer at the center of the design process. To what extent is his vision carried out and what role do government authorities and other actors play? What factors make up the individual identity of Avalon Park that make it different from the surrounding communities? We believe these communities provide much more than housing and a center: they provide a complete lifestyle, identity and individual experience.



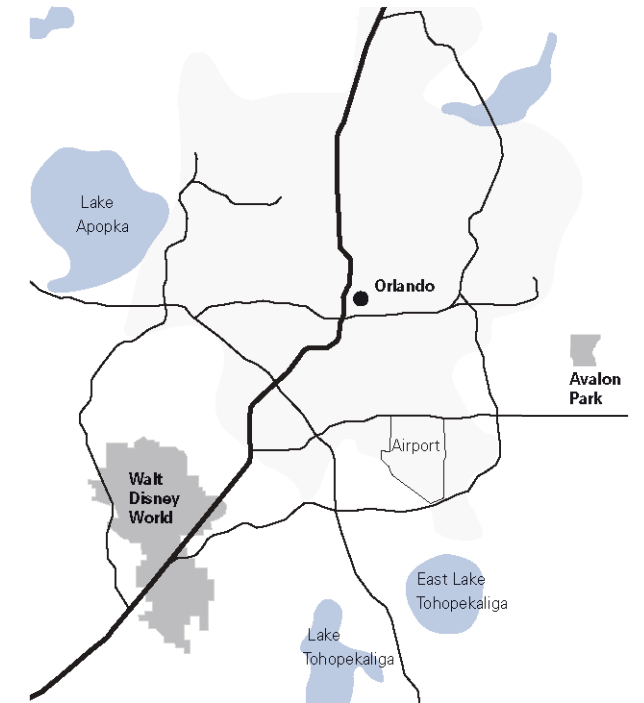
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1: Avalon Park 2: City of Basel 3: City of Zurich

AVALON PARK

Location: Southeast Orange County, Florida
 Population: 11'000
 Number of households: 4831
 House Price Range: \$ 200'000 - \$ 1'000'000
 Value: \$ 1.5 billion
 Racial composition: 54% white, 28% hispanic, 8% black
 Services: YMCA, baseball, tennis, swimming pool, parks, supermarket, bakery, restaurants, doctors, bank, pharmacy, gas station, two elementary school, middle school, high school and technical college.



"Avalon Park was built on the rich traditions of small-town life. Tree-lined streets, lakes, lush landscaping, rocking chair porches and nearby schools, shops and professional services were designed to evoke an ideal small-town America."

[Avalon Park web site](#)

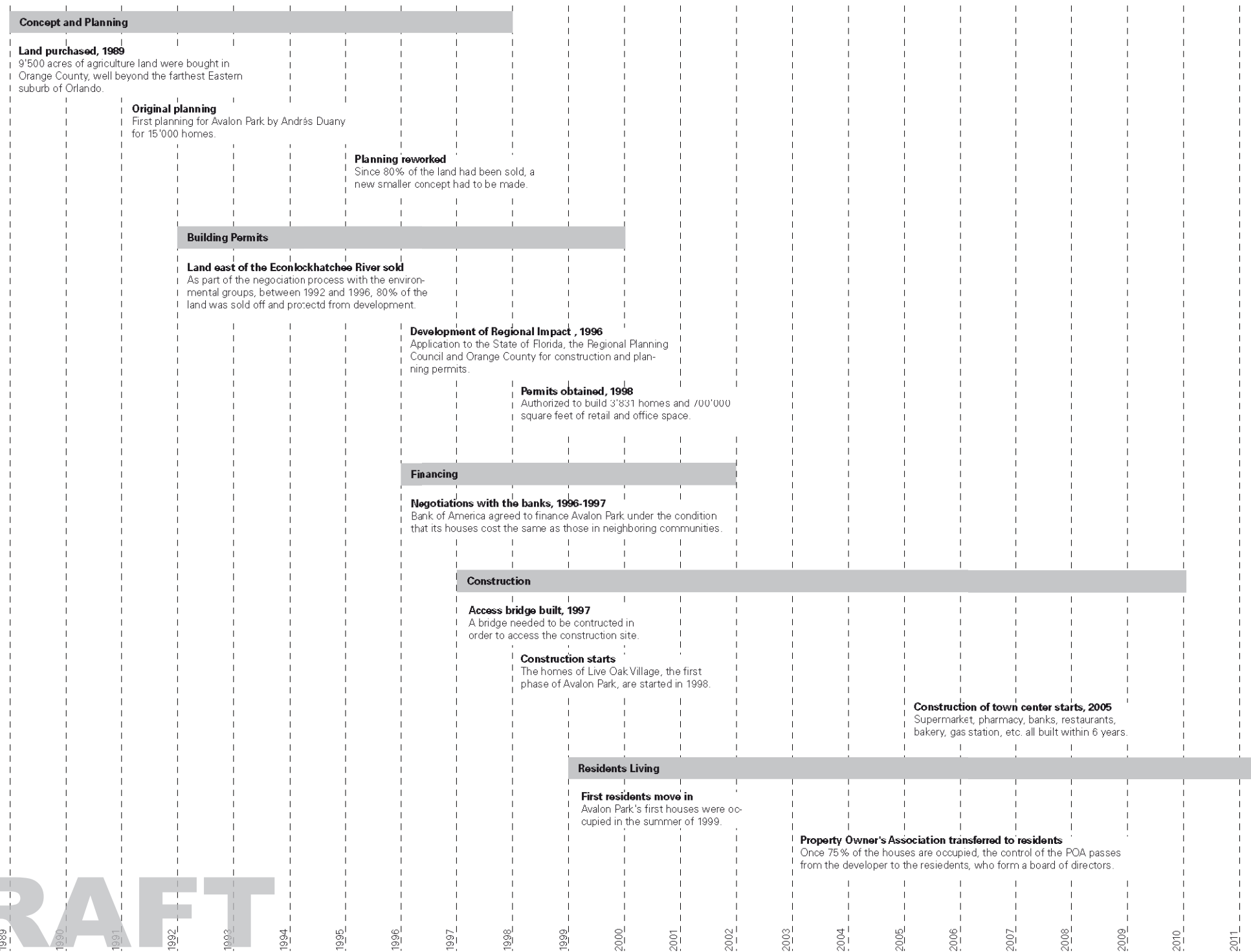
Overview

Avalon Park is a 7,5 km² neo-traditional, private community located East of Orlando. Planning includes 3,223 single-family units, 800 multi-family units and 46'000 m² of commercial space, workplace, and civic sites.



Beat Käbli, developer of Avalon Park

“You have to lobby, and lobby, and then lobby some more”



Project development

Avalon Park took over 20 years to develop, and it is still not 100% complete. The most time consuming stages of the development process are the negotiations with environmental groups and government authorities. The construction of the town center is also significantly slower than the construction of the individual neighborhoods. It takes time for retail demand to build up. An all-at-once construction is not financially viable.

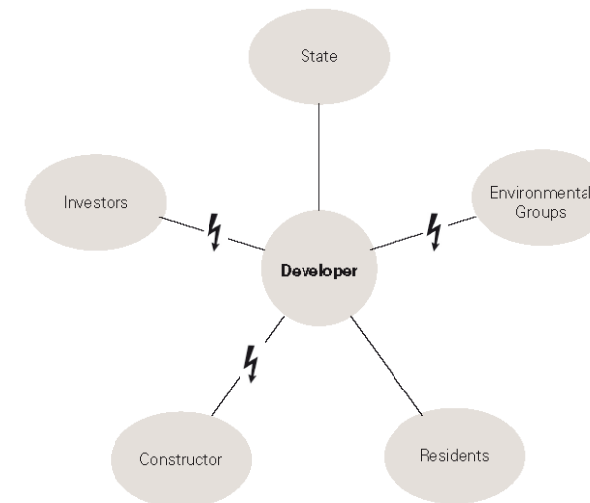


The Swiss Developer

A native of Zurich, Switzerland, Beat Kähli had different ideas about suburban development. As a foreigner in Florida, it was not easy at the beginning to explain why his ideas were better than what was being built. Over a span of 20 years, however, his project became the top selling development in Florida. He is now one of the most influential businessmen in Orlando. As he personally describes it, Avalon Park is a fusion of Zurich and Florida, with European urbanistic principles at its core but adapted to American culture.



John, retired, resident in Avalon Park for 8 years
"Beat had a great vision!"



State

A good relationship with the local and state government is crucial to a private community, as they ultimately give the construction permits. However, they also profit from this development in the form of tax dollars. Avalon Park contributes over \$18 million in taxes per year and Kähli estimates the city of Orlando makes about \$10 million in profits.

Environmental Groups

Negotiating with environmental groups is especially cumbersome as they are principally against all forms of development, even a sustainable one such as Avalon Park. Kähli had to sell 80% of the land (everything east of the Econlockhatchee river) and put it under environmental protection to be able to develop the remaining 20%.

Residents

The developer's relationship with the residents is temporary. Once over 75% of the homes are occupied, the control of the community passes over to the Property Owners' Association. For Avalon Park, however, Kähli is part of the POA so he does retain some control.

Constructors

Convincing home builders to agree to the design criteria of Avalon Park was extremely difficult. In Florida, home builders normally save costs by building the same home on several adjacent lots. They did not like the idea of having homes of different price ranges together and were especially against the garages in the back. After a long search, Kähli found some small firms willing to take the risk.

Investors

Securing the financing for Avalon Park was a long negotiation process. The banks feared the project lacked a magnet to attract buyers and were sceptical of the financial viability of the project. They really wanted a golf course. Kähli found a creative solution by providing all levels of schools to attract residents.

Negotiations and Conflicts

The developer in the center has to negotiate with several actors in order to build his community. In the case of Avalon Park, these discussions did not always run smoothly. As explained in the graph above, three were particularly problematic.



Scott, since 3 years resident in Avalon Park
"I love this close knit community"

Concert
Orlando Concert Band
at the Downtown Avalon Park Amphitheater
Friday, February 4th, 7 - 9 pm
That's Amore!

Garden Club
Avalon Park Garden Club
March 12th
8am - 4pm
Orlando's BIGGEST Yard Sale
Clean Out Your Closets! Make Some Cash! Join 200+ Neighbors!
AVALONYARDSALE.COM

Speed Dating
June 27th 6-9pm
\$2 Sangria all night
Come meet other Single Orlando singles this Sunday night and enjoy complimentary appetizer buffet

Yard Sale
Avalon Park March 12th Saturday
Spring Yard Sale 8am - 4pm
Orlando's BIGGEST Yard Sale
Clean Out Your Closets! Make Some Cash! Join 200+ Neighbors!
AVALONYARDSALE.COM

4th of July Celebration
4th of July Celebration
at Avalon Park
Sunday, 5-9 PM
Duck Bakery
Papa Gino's
West Park Tennis Club

Movie Night
MOVIE UNDER THE STARS
DESPICABLE ME
SOME CALL HIM BAD, THEY CALL HIM DAD
March 18th 8:30pm

Dog Wash
2000 are sponsoring several Dog Washes
ONLY \$5
to benefit the foundation, Puppy BREATH
Belly Rub in Avalon Park
Blvd. Ori, FL 32828
days from 1-4pm
\$5 & 29
na for only \$1
friend's dog

Botox Party
Botox Party
Botox Party
Botox Party

Parents Night Out
Parents Night Out!
PAJAMA PARTY
Friday, January 23rd
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Wear your pajamas! Bring your sleeping bag
Join us for campfire stories, games, and fun!

Super Bowl
ALL STAR CUTS
SUPER BOWL

55+ Club
Jet Setters (55+) Senior Group of Avalon Park
OPEN HOUSE
FEBRUARY 9, 2011

Sweetheart Club
Sweetheart Club
Sweetheart Club

Dance Night
Dance Night
Dance Night

Spa Day
Spa Day
Spa Day

Teen Club
Teen Club
Teen Club

Carnival
AVALON JUBILEE FALL CARNIVAL
November 19th, 2-6pm
November 20th & 21st
10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Father Daughter Dance
Father Daughter Dance
Father Daughter Dance

Community Olympics
Community Olympics
Community Olympics

High School Musical
THE SOUND OF MUSIC
FRIDAY JUNE 18 7:00 PM
SUNDAY JUNE 19 3:00 PM & 7:00 PM
SUNDAY JUNE 20 3:00 PM
ADVANCE TICKETS

Lifestyle as a brand

The Avalon Park brand is part of the individual resident's identity. A vast array of activities is offered as a means to create a community, some of which are depicted on the opposite page. This is especially important in American culture, where the average person moves every five years. The Avalon Park brand is therefore not restricted to the built environment, it is part of every resident's identity.

Something for Everyone

There are activities designed for every taste, every age group, every time of day, and all throughout the year.



Ross, architect and resident of Avalon Park

"This is the only community where children can go safely on foot to school and where parents are not taxi drivers"

Live, learn, work and play

Avalon Park's original slogan was "live, work and play". "Learn" was later added to underline the importance of schools in the community. Avalon Park has two elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and one technical college. When the School Board lacked the funds to build the high school, Avalon Park donated the land and even built the school itself, only selling it to the school board several years later. A complete set of schools is cited as being the prime reason why Avalon Park has been the fastest selling development in Orlando for several years running.





Construction

The average American changes house every five years. As a result, homes are seen as a consumption good and it is thus important that the house cost as little as possible. In order to save costs, homes are often constructed in series, with the same house repeated multiple times on the same street. In addition, houses are segregated by price range: all houses on one street cost more or less the same. Avalon Park tried to both increase the quality of the construction and to mix up the home's sizes in the community. At the beginning, this was relatively successful. As the project progressed, however, the original vision was somewhat lost. The demand for homes increased dramatically and there was a need to expand rapidly. The later neighborhoods of Avalon Park reflect this and have mass-produced homes of lower quality.

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1998



2003



2005

Year Built	Nr. added	% Change
2000	6'688	-
2001	7'041	5%
2002	7'457	7%
2003	8'727	15%
2004	9'645	10%
2005	10'963	14%
2006	11'500	5%
2007	6'124	-47%
2008	3'135	-49%
2009	2'039	-35%
2010	2'058	0%

New single family residential homes by year built
www.ocpafl.org/Content/Dynamic/File.pdf?FID=149646

Price Evolution

The price of the house does not depend on its quality. The first homes of Avalon Park were relatively inexpensive and built by small home builders that paid close attention to details. As demand increased dramatically and the speed of construction picked up, there was a marked decrease in quality. Big home building companies turned to mass-production techniques. Avalon Park even developed a whole neighborhood with garages in the front as the demand for them was so high.



The Property Owners' Association

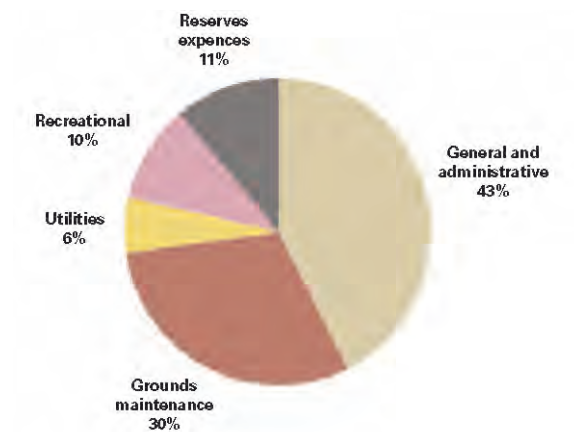
This community association represents the common interest of the homeowners. Buying a house in Avalon Park automatically makes you part of the POA and every house is subject to its rules and regulations. The relationship between the residents and the POA is not always problem-free. This association strictly regulates what each resident can and cannot do with his own home, some of which are listed in the opposite page. The POA also oversees the upkeep of the homes and is the first one to complain if the garden is not well taken care of. However, the residents view this as a necessary evil to maintain control over the aesthetics of the community. In particular, the POA assures that homes in its community do not lose value. This is of vital importance in America, where buying a house is used as a means to make money given the various tax-breaks available for mortgages. In just 25 years, the number of community associations in the United States has grown from 10,000 to over 249,000, representing over 50 million people.

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Use Restrictions and Rules of the Avalon Park Property Owner's Association, Inc

(...)
 B. Exterior Appearances and Landscaping: The painting, coating, stain, roof shingle and other exterior finishing colors and materials on all residential buildings may be maintained as originally installed, (...) prior approval by the Architectural Review Committee shall be necessary before any such exterior finishing color or material is changed. All paint colors must be selected from the approved color books located in the POA's office.
 (...)
 G. Flag Poles: (...) One American Flag, no greater than 3 feet by 5 feet, mounted on brackets or poles located on the house or garage will be allowed and ARC approval will not be required.
 H. Trash and Garbage: (...) Containers shall be placed at the curb on the day a pick up is to be made (...). Trash containers must be removed within twelve (12) hours of collection. At all other times, such sealed and covered containers shall be stored so they cannot be seen from surrounding property and streets.
 (...)
 K. Clothes Drying: No portion of any of the Properties shall be used as a drying or hanging area for laundry of any kind.
 (...)
 U. Animals: Each household shall not exceed a total of four (4) animals, consisting of dogs and/or cats. No horses, cattle, swine, goats, fowl, or any other animals (...) shall be kept on the Properties.
 (...)
 W. Maintenance of Landscape Areas: All landscaped areas (as well as the paved public right-of-way) shall be maintained in a live, healthy and growing condition, properly watered and trimmed.
 (...)
 X. Trees: (...) Single-Family homes are required to have one Grade A, Single leader, 2-3 Caliber, Live Oak Tree installed in the right-of-way in front of their home.
 (...)
 HH. Air Conditioning and Pool Equipment: no window air conditioning units shall be permitted. (...) All air conditioning units, heating units and pool equipment shall be shielded by landscaping or fencing, so that they shall be not be readily visible from any adjacent street.

<http://www.avalonparkpoa.com/live/community-docs/>



Avalon Park POA Budget 2010: \$5'065'036.00

- Management fees, security, insurance, community events
- Plants, parks, irrigation, termite bond, lights
- Electrics, water, telephone, cable TV
- Pool, community center, fitness center, tennis court, parking lots
- Roof and paint of townhomes and clubhouse, alleyways



The Backstage Concept

Disney's idea of hiding service infrastructure in the back is transplanted to a residential community. The front facade of the house is carefully designed and landscaped. It is intended as a public space and gathering point for the community. In fact, the rules of the Property Owners' Association regulate the front of the house only. It is kept garage-free to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. In turn, the garages have been moved to the back of the house, where they are accessed through a network of alleys (see opposite page). The side and back facades are also much simpler and inexpensively built. It is all about keeping up appearances in the front, with the real workings of the house relegated to the back.

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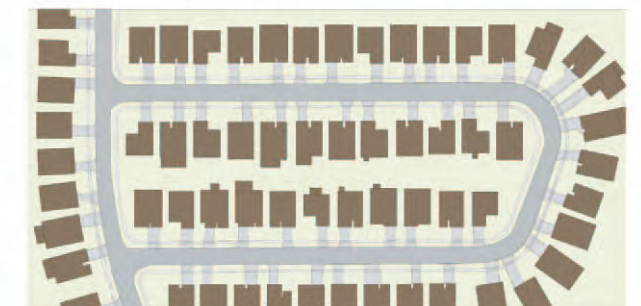
Robert, Homebuilder of Avalon Park

"The lots are too close together... It is not my cup of tea"



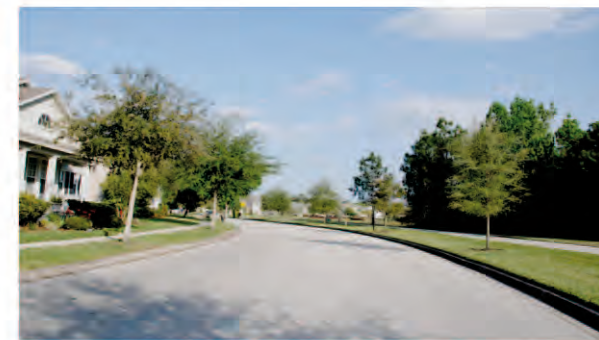
The Back Alley

A second network of smaller streets runs in the back of the house and provides access to the garages. Compared to a traditional suburban development, the required area for roads is more or less the same, the only difference is that the garage is in the back. This is an example of a compromise between new urbanist principles and American culture: the car is hidden because American culture is unwilling to give up the car completely.





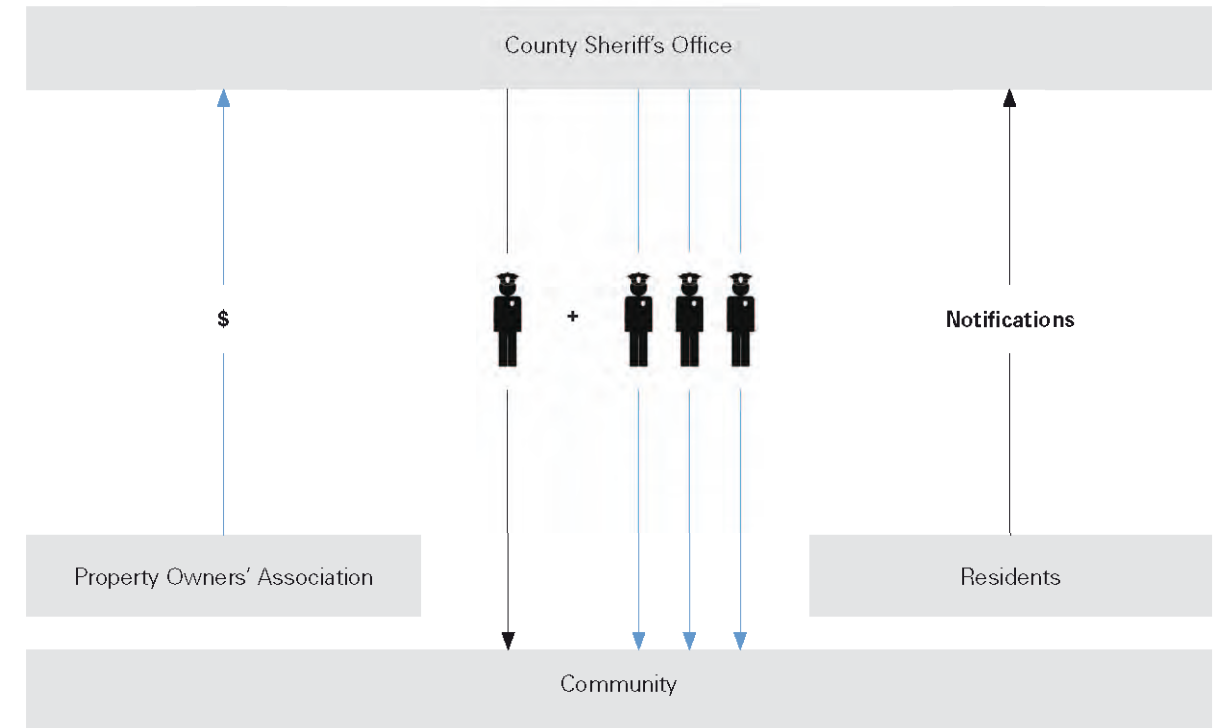
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Green Public Space

In traditional suburbia, green space is privatized in the form of a back-yard. Avalon Park turns this around and provides green space that is public and in the front. As a result, community ties are strengthened as this green space is used as a gathering point, to play frisbee or to walk the dog. Moreover, because houses are oriented towards the front and not the back, there is increased social interaction between neighbors. By contrast, in the suburban communities the green space is traditionally private, in the form of a back yard (1a). Due to the form of the front-loading houses, the public space is interrupted by a series of garage entrances (1b).





Security Concerns

Security is a key reason why families move to private communities. However, there are diverging opinions on whether a gated community is safer than a non-gated one. Avalon Park is of the opinion that open, all-inclusive communities are safer. Criminals often choose to live in gated communities as the police cannot get to them. Security in Avalon Park is provided by a public/private partnership. No private police officers are present, but the community pays the city for it to send extra police officers. A neighborhood watch program is in place with the Orange County Sheriff's Office, whereby a network of neighbors report and notify suspicious activities.

Avalon Park's Drugdealer

What happens if a known drugdealer buys a home in the community and his kids are beating up the other kids? The Property Owners' Association does not have the power to kick him out. When this happened at Avalon, the community paid for a police to park in front of his house 24 hours a day. The drugdealer moved out on his own accord two weeks later.

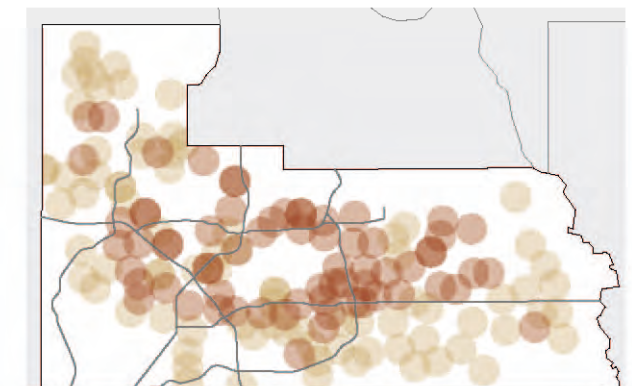




Foreclosures

Avalon Park was not seriously hit by the financial crisis. Considering that Florida, and specifically Orlando, are one of the worst affected centers of the speculative bubble, there are relatively few houses in foreclosure within the community. Part of this can be attributed to good luck: the bulk of the construction was done just prior to the recession. However, the developer also deserves part of the credit. Residents were chosen more carefully and conservatively than in other communities.

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Foreclosure hotspots in Orange County, 2009



Foreclosed homes in Avalon Park, 2011



The Stage

Having a private developer at the center of the design process results in communities which are extremely homogenous in terms of their visual identity. Because competition between communities is rife, marketing plays a crucial role in the success of the community. Residents believe their community is sustainable if it is marketed as such, irrespective of whether it is truly sustainable. This allows developers to create key views and signature buildings, those that are prominently portrayed in their publicity. In a sense, these act as the stage where the pre-conceived lifestyles play out. We believe such residential developments are much more than houses and urban design, they are about the complete organization of life.

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Robert DeLorenzo, DeLorenzo Homes, Personal Interview (30 March 2011)

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IMAGE CREDITS

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PERSONS

Beat Kähli, Developer and CEO of Avalon Park
Ross Halle, Architect of the Avalon Park Group
Eliza Harris, Regional representative of the New Urbanism in Orlando
Robert DeLorenzo, DeLorenzo Homes

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