



FAQs

This document is intended to address common questions related to the master plan initiative, particularly Phase I which focuses on the space needs analysis and conceptual design for the priority projects in the plan as identified below. This document will be updated as the project proceeds.

General

What is the goal of the Master Plan?

The Master Plan addresses capital needs in a sustainable, financially responsible, and thoughtful fashion. A master plan is essential to remaining a vibrant and relevant community that is prepared to serve current and future generations of residents. It identifies and plans for capital enhancement and improvement projects for DC Ranch as compiled by a Master Plan Committee (MPC) and approved by the Community Council Board of Directors (CCBOD).

Who was involved in the decision-making for the Master Plan?

The MPC, which includes DC Ranch residents, Community Council staff and a CCBOD board member compiled feedback and created the master plan for consideration by the CCBOD, who ultimately approves the plan. DC Ranch residents have and will continue to have opportunities to provide feedback throughout the process.

Who has been working on the Master Plan?

Check out the [process timeline on dcranch.com](#) for details.

1. The MPC drove the process by analyzing significant resident feedback and identifying, prioritizing, and compiling the master plan.
2. Holly Street Studio was hired as the architect to create the conceptual design and lead resident engagement related to the first phase of the master plan, as defined later in this document.
3. Residents and staff provide feedback to the MPC and Holly Street Studio to create a final product for phase I.
4. The CCBOD will consider and possibly approve master plan projects as funding becomes available.

What are the priorities of the Master Plan?

Per CCBOD approval in 2020, the priorities are a larger fitness facility, multi-use space, path and trail enhancements, and community services and maintenance space (maintenance space is being considered under a separate initiative). In addition to the four priorities, the committee established

eight amenities for future consideration: sports courts, game lawn, hot tub, overflow parking, dog park, Market Street Park refresh, studio/kitchen space, and card and club space. Renovation of the pools at Desert Camp Community Center may be considered in future phases.

Who determined what is included in the master plan?

Residents – through surveys, focus groups, representation on the MPC, informal discussions, and more. Significant data has been collected over the last several years that was reviewed and assessed by the MPC, staff, CCBOD, and Holly Street Studio to identify and prioritize projects that residents identified as needs and wants.

How are Master Plan projects funded?

The Master Plan space needs analysis and conceptual design project (phase I) is funded through capital funds as designated by the CCBOD. The Council’s capital fund is funded through a monthly transfer from the operating fund in accordance with the annual operating budget. The fund also receives additional transfers from the operating fund when excess cash is available. When a property sells in DC Ranch, ½ of 1% of the sales price is paid to the Council in the form of a benefit fee. Strong home sales over the past several years have resulted in benefit fees that exceeded the budgeted amount, enabling the Council to transfer those excess moneys into the capital fund (see [financial reports](#) on dcranch.com for more information). The annual operating costs and reserve contributions related to any new amenity or facility enhancement due to the project will be funded through the DC Ranch Community Council’s operating budget, which is supported by property assessments, benefit fees, and program and event revenues.

Do you have enough funds to pay for the project?

The Community Council currently has \$4.5m set aside as a substantial down payment for phase I of the master plan project. However, this will not be sufficient to fully fund this phase of the project. In lieu of a special assessment, the CCBOD will likely consider obtaining a loan for the project, which will be paid off via the operating fund. Savings in lease obligations (see below) can be used to offset debt service payments, mitigating the need for the operating fund to absorb increased costs for construction or debt service. Funding will be needed from assessments to pay any increased operating costs.

Did the pandemic impact the master plan priorities?

When this question was posed to the MPC and the resident group, the general consensus was that the master plan priorities should remain, yet care and thought should be given to design that considers lessons learned from the pandemic, including incorporating more indoor/outdoor programming space; allowing ample space for residents to enjoy programs, fitness classes, and workout equipment; creating areas where people can interact and gather informally; and operational improvements such as touchless faucets and improved air filtration systems.

Desert Camp Community Center

How did you determine the size of the fitness center and studio?

Holly Street Studio benchmarked against other communities and fitness centers to determine the space needed per person in accordance with best practices, center use, and population size. We also considered use statistics for both community centers.

What is the daily usage of Desert Camp?

Desert Camp offers multiple amenities, including open space for drop-ins (work from home, tutoring, games, etc.), complimentary coffee, fitness center, main and toddler pools, tennis and pickleball courts, playground, basketball court, outdoor open space and home to most events and programs. Historically, Desert Camp has allowed residents to access many amenities via key fob, with outdoor amenities such as the courts available without reservation or key fob access. That means that usage statistics are limited and only recognize those residents who swipe in when they visit. The data does not fully capture guests, multiple residents who enter through gates with one key fob swipe and attendees of events and programs. Often times, multiple residents and guests enter on one swipe. Over the last five years, the fitness center has averaged 36,000 key fob swipes per year. Due to the pandemic, the DC Ranch team must evaluate statistics from 2020 and 2021 with a caveat as COVID-19 restrictions limited capacity and hours, and the center closed for some time. The fitness center has limitations due to its size and overall capacity of about 12 residents; however, we currently allow a maximum of eight people to support physical distancing.

Holly Street Studio considered studies from Heartline Fitness; they concluded a community of DC Ranch's size with about 20% resident participation at 35% daily use should accommodate about 546 residents and guests per day.

With the above in mind, here are visitor statistics for Desert Camp Community Center:

- In 2020, there were 2,268 tennis reservations and 1,291 pickleball reservations.
- Through July 31, 2021, there have been 2,168 tennis reservations and 1,822 pickleball reservations.
- Through July 31, 2021, the front desk team has greeted 18,089* residents and guests, and there have been 7,582* resident swipes to the fitness center.
- There has been a steady 3% increase in fitness center use since 2015.
- In 2019, both community centers saw over 76,000 residents and guests between daily use, events, programs and facility rentals. That was before to COVID-19.
- Through July 31, 2021, with COVID-19 modifications, both community centers have seen almost 35,000 residents and guests between daily use, events and programs and facility rentals.

*Key fob swipes only

Residents already have fitness options via other fitness gyms and the golf clubs – why expand?

Those entities are all private in nature. The Community Council, however, serves ALL DC Ranch property owners. Property owners pay assessments that, in part, contribute to the operation of the community centers; therefore, the centers are designed to serve all residents. It is imperative that resident needs are met, now and into the future.

Why not just expand the current fitness space?

Holly Street Studio is recommending designs that are consistent with DC Ranch architecture and that serve the community now and into the future. Creating an addition to the current footprint ensures that the design and support systems (e.g. HVAC) are appropriate for a dedicated workout space. The addition will also allow the existing fitness area to be repurposed for other programming better suited to that size of a room.

Will enhancements at Desert Camp Community Center impact views from courts and other locations on the site?

While efforts will be made to preserve views, it is possible that views could be either impacted or shifted to different uses. For example, if a fitness space is added where the north patio is currently located, the fitness space could be aligned to provide views for those using that space, but there would no longer be views from the lobby area.

Why is a building being considered for the vacant space at Desert Camp?

This area was designated from the onset for future expansion at the Desert Camp Community Center. There are limited spaces for community amenities that don't require significant land acquisition costs. Any development of this space will be done thoughtfully in a manner that is synergistic with and thoughtful of the surrounding land.

Is there enough parking available if a larger fitness center is added at Desert Camp?

These types of operational concerns will be solved by Holly Street Studio in concert with the City of Scottsdale as the process continues. All improvements will meet parking requirements and needs.

Where will outdoor events and rentals move to if the north patio is reconfigured?

There could be additional space where the existing fitness center is located and/or these types of events and rentals can be held at The Homestead Community Center.

Will there still be open space available at Desert Camp if these improvements are implemented?

Yes; however, it may not be to the extent that it currently exists, particularly if other improvements, such as additional courts, are added to the site. The City of Scottsdale is also adding amenities to the nearby DC Ranch area, including a dog park at Thompson Peak Parkway and Hayden, the new Bell Road Sports Complex at 94th Street and Bell Road, and the new lake and walking path at Trailside View and 91st Street.

Will there be additional pickleball or tennis courts?

While additional courts/fields are not contemplated in phase I of the master plan projects, many residents have expressed a desire to see additional tennis and pickleball courts. Additional courts will be considered under the eight amenities for future consideration. Holly Street Studio has identified space for future expansion, both for tennis and pickleball, and the CCBOD can consider that project component during the pricing portion of phase I. The original concept designs for Desert Camp show future expansion into the open space adjacent to either side of the tennis courts.

What types of activities and programming will take place at Desert Camp?

Desert Camp could become the wellness center and host several different activities including fitness classes, clubs, small meetings, and intimate rentals. This will allow dedicated space for these activities, reduce competition for in-demand space, minimize set up and tear down for multiple uses, and free up space at other centers for other uses (such as meeting and learning space at The Homestead).

Was building a second floor onto the existing Desert Camp footprint considered?

Holly Street Studio is investigating this option.

Ranch Offices – Community Support Services

Why do we need to have space for “administration/staff” and why does it need to be near a resident amenity?

The Community Council, Ranch Association and Covenant Commission are governed by resident-run boards of directors. They hire executive directors and charge them with staffing the various functions that serve the community. These services range from community engagement (new resident welcome, clubs), communications (Ranch News, web site, emails) to programs and events to finance to facilities to landscape and maintenance. The DC Ranch team members are located in various facilities throughout the community, including at both community centers, Ranch Offices on Market Street, and at the maintenance facility off of Thompson Peak Parkway. (Space for the landscape/maintenance teams is not contemplated under this project.) Operating a community the size of DC Ranch requires a dedicated team of trained individuals who specialize in serving master plan communities. Much of the team works behind the scenes and are committed to serving the community with excellence. The master plan project contemplates moving the staff located at the Ranch Offices to join the staff teams already at Desert Camp and/or The Homestead. The term “community services” is a more accurate description than “administration” or “staff offices” as it more fully describes this important function.

Why is there a need to accommodate space for support functions and what services are provided at the Ranch Offices?

Currently, the Community Council, Covenant Commission and Ranch Association are leasing shared space on Market Street for offices for resident services including administration, finance, communications, community standards, and architectural design review. Resident engagement, board and committee meetings, and other resident services such as home modifications also take place at the Ranch Offices. Long term, there will be a cost savings to the community by owning space for the Ranch Offices versus leasing, freeing up valuable operating dollars for other purposes once any debt service obligations are satisfied. A financial analysis comparing lease to own will be considered by the CCBOD. Additionally, locating these employees at the Desert Camp or The Homestead campus provides additional staff support at these important resident gathering spaces, which may be necessary for operating an expanded facility. Holly Street Studio is contemplating a building that allows residents, board members, committees, and staff to engage, meet and co-create in a collaborative space to foster a vibrant, service-oriented, top notch community.

What is the benefit to having all DC Ranch team members in the same location?

The main reasons are resident engagement, resident service consolidation, efficiencies, and culture/communication. The Community Council, Ranch Association, and Covenant Commission all have different missions but one shared vision: *to serve residents and create a community that is beautiful, functions well, and creates a deep sense of belonging*. There are multiple benefits including productivity, staff availability to residents, and the convenience and access to services for residents. It allows for increased staff and resident interaction. There will be financial savings due to having staff at consolidated sites, many of whom support operations at the centers. There would now be two locations to operate instead of three. Also, the Council already owns the land at Desert Camp, so building at this site avoids having to pay land acquisition costs.

Why is the community services building proposed for Desert Camp and not at Copper Ridge or The Homestead?

All three sites were investigated by Holly Street Studio as potential locations. The Copper Ridge site was eliminated due to the cost of bringing utilities to the site, the fact that it would require another lease as it is not owned by the Council, the use doesn't meet the requirements of the memorandum of understanding with SUSD, the site would be best used for other purposes given its central location in the community and the beautiful mountain views, and it does not solve the challenge of having multiple separate staff locations. The Homestead site is a possibility. There is also a need for additional staff support at Desert Camp, particularly with expanded operations at that location resulting from this project.

Why can't we put pickleball or tennis courts at this location instead?

Additional courts at this location are possible. The property identified for this building is near a residential area, and best suited for more quiet, passive use. Any building in this area, whether for fitness or community services, would be designed in a manner to blend seamlessly with the desert environment, nearby residential area, and the Desert Camp "campus" overall; it would not look like a traditional commercial or office building yet would mimic the surrounding homes and the aesthetic of the overall Desert Camp campus. Other areas have also been identified for court expansion.

Will relocating community services to Desert Camp create a parking issue or cause the site to be too busy?

A meeting and community services space at Desert Camp with static amenities creates a "one stop shop" for residents. For example, a new resident can stop by the Ranch Offices (administrative office) for their new resident packet and introduction, stop by Desert Camp for their key fob and tour, and then drive over to Westgate for their gate pass.

Ultimately, the CCBOD will assess the value in having support services consolidated on one campus on land owned by the community and will determine whether to proceed with a new building or continue with leased space.

Copper Ridge Leased Land

Why is the Community Council considering land owned by the Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD)?

A few years ago, SUSD and the Community Council executed a memorandum of understanding, which outlined a commitment to consider future joint development of the land for purposes that serve the community. SUSD originally intended to construct a high school on this property, but plans changed. Currently, the Ranch Association uses a portion of the land for storage, and the Village at DC Ranch Health Club leases land from SUSD for their tennis complex. Both SUSD and the Community Council saw the benefit in considering uses for this land that are synergistic with the school complex and address community and district needs. No long-term agreements have been executed at this point.

How will the land at Copper Ridge be used?

This is to be determined. One of the concepts for the future, as proposed by Holly Street Studio, is to create an open-air facility that could host community events and rentals. Desert Camp Community Center would be dedicated to wellness, The Homestead would focus on enrichment, and the Copper

Ridge site would then be used for events that were no longer accommodated at the community centers. Anything that is developed would be in accordance and partnership with SUSD and would involve significant community discussion and feedback.

Did you consider building the community services offices on the Copper Ridge site?

See above. Yes, Holly Street Studio considered Desert Camp, The Homestead, and the Copper Ridge site for the community services offices. Ultimately, for land use and availability, efficiency and cost effectiveness, and other reasons, the Desert Camp site was identified as the most ideal; The Homestead site is also under consideration.

What is the timeline for an amenity at the Copper Ridge site to be built?

The focus of this phase I of the project is on the fitness center, multi-use and community services spaces at The Homestead and Desert Camp locations. Any development of the Copper Ridge site would be considered in the future.

The Homestead Community Center

What types of activities and programming will take place here?

The Homestead could become the enrichment center where the Community Council hosts programs and activities related to arts and education, The Playhouse, larger community events, lifelong learning, and more.

Why are there proposed changes at The Homestead if the focus is on enhancing the fitness center?

The master plan project includes a space needs analysis which identifies improved ways of serving the community by maximizing use of the centers for programming. Also, accommodating enhanced fitness space at Desert Camp will take up land currently used for events. Therefore, events could shift over to The Homestead, which has a larger parking lot and more potential to create improved indoor/outdoor event space for community events, programs, rentals, etc.

Additional FAQs

Where do I find more (and the latest) information about the master plan project – phase I?

Go to dcranch.com for the latest news.

How do I share my opinion?

The Council invited formal resident feedback through July 20. However, you can still submit your comments via [email](mailto:). All of the initial feedback has been compiled and shared with the project team and Council Board. The project team may not be able to respond to every email, but all feedback will continue to be compiled and reviewed. Additionally, information will be provided in the “This Week on the Ranch” weekly email and on the dedicated Master Plan page located on DCRanch.com.

What are the next steps?

Following the resident feedback sessions, Holly Street Studio and CHASSE Building Team will fine tune the conceptual plans and begin costing the project in phases. They will present to the CCBOD on Tues., Aug. 10 at 5:30 p.m. at The Homestead Community Center. Following this meeting, staff, Holly Street

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Studio, and CHASSE Building Team will collaborate on the final project to include developing a project budget with phased priorities; estimating, budgeting, and formulating recommendations for phasing and financing possibilities; and assisting with request for proposal for design/build services. This phase of the project will conclude with a report to the CCBOD on Tuesday, September 21 at 5:30 p.m. at The Homestead Community Center.

What if I have additional questions?

Attend a community meeting on the master plan or contact masterplan@dcranchinc.com.