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Coyote Springs right on track

Exec says sagging housing market not hurting 43,000-acre development

By HUBBLE SMITH
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Construction crews work on the drainage system at the golf course at Coyote Springs. There will be 70 custom home lots along the course.

Photo by [Gary Thompson](#).

Coyote Springs developer Harvey Whittemore says any delays to the project are unrelated to a struggling housing market.



Photo by [Gary Thompson](#).

Development of the master-planned Coyote Springs community 50 miles from [Las Vegas](#) is coming along on schedule, with the first production model village set to open in less than a year, an executive for the primary home builder said.

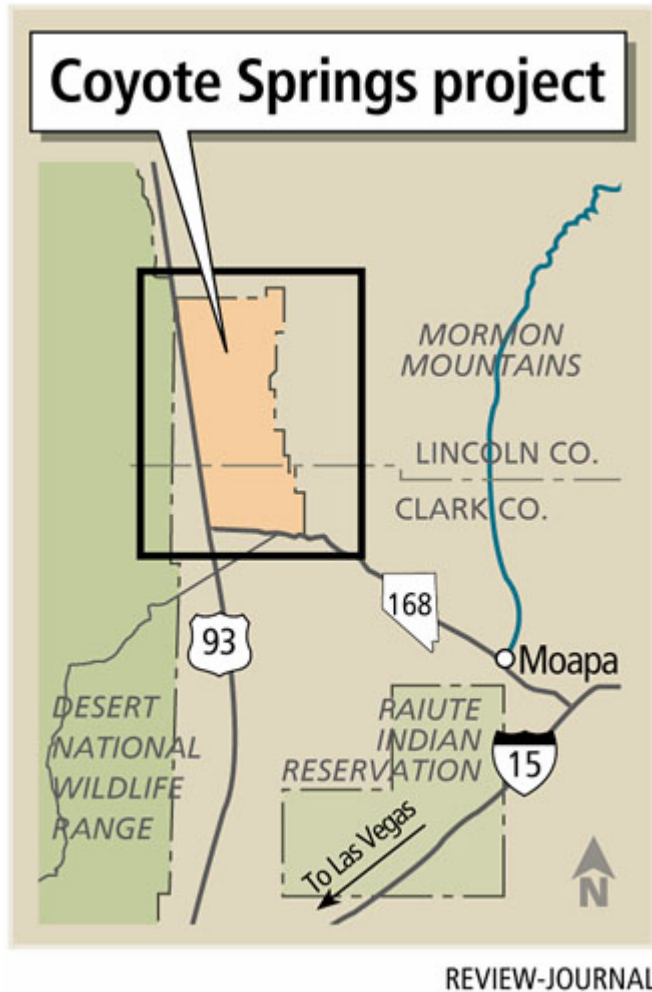
There have been no delays or scaling back of plans for the 43,000-acre bedroom community, said [Klif Andrews](#), division president of [Pardee Homes](#).

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"Not at all. I don't know where that comes from," Andrews said in response to reports that Coyote Springs has become a victim of the slowing housing market.

Pardee entered an agreement with Coyote Springs developer [Harvey Whittemore](#) in 2004 to build about 7,000 homes on the first 2,000 acres. The homes were originally scheduled to be finished this spring. The community has been approved for 159,000 homes.

"That's really a function of our delays with the general improvement district and delays associated with the water treatment and sewer facility," Whittemore said. "It doesn't have anything to do with the market at all."



Despite the glut of homes on the market for sale, Andrews said, he's confident Pardee will deliver its first housing units at Coyote Springs by the end of 2008.

"Everyone you survey will tell you no matter what the inventory looks like today, 2008 will be a good year for having lots," he said.

About 70 custom home lots along the Jack Nicklaus signature golf course have been graded and will be available for sale when the course is ready for play in September, he said. Prices have yet to be determined.

"It's a very expensive (golf) course. That's the draw," Andrews said. "The custom lots ... I don't worry about that for a minute."

Pardee Community Development Director Jim Rizzi said his biggest accomplishment in the past few

weeks has been getting the building permit for the 32,000-square-foot community center at Coyote Springs. It's part of a \$20 million lake amenity center that includes an outdoor amphitheater.

An "accelerated schedule" calls for the main entry at U.S. Highway 93 and State Route 168 to be completed in October or December, development of water wells by February and all of the infrastructure, including dry utilities, to be in place by March, Rizzi said.

Some 20,000 acres have been set aside for residential development in Coyote Springs. About 30 percent of the land lies in Clark County and 70 percent is in Lincoln County. The Clark County portion is being developed first and will take about 10 years, Andrews said.

Lincoln County Sheriff Kerry Lee, who meets with the developer at least once a month, said he'd heard the Clark County side wasn't going to be as big as originally planned. He said developers had lightened up the density and increased open space.

"We heard it was going to be coming in two years, then we heard it would be five years and then 10 years," Lee said. "My feeling is that Toquop (Lincoln Highlands by Olympia Group) comes before Coyote Springs."

Coyote Springs would be served by the sheriff's substation in Alamo, about 35 miles away, Lee said. He has about 10 officers to cover 11,000 square miles of Lincoln County. Initial home development at Coyote Springs would fund two or three more officers, he said.

Coyote Springs is divided by the Pahrnagat Wash wetlands and will have 12,000 acres of nature preserves, trail systems, parks and open space.

The master plan calls for six golf courses and a major golf training facility, vacation golf villas, multifamily housing and commercial and retail development.

"It looks like one of those things that's too big not to happen," said Larry Murphy, president of Las Vegas-based SalesTraq. "It's on a scale of CityCenter. When you've got that many dollars and that many players, they've got too much in it not to go through with it."

Construction of the water treatment plant is nearly complete and work is about to start on the wastewater and sewer plant. Estimated construction cost for both plants is \$35 million, Andrews said.

Pardee has spent tens of millions of dollars on infrastructure, including 21,000 feet of sewer line and 10,500 feet of water line. Nearly 2 million cubic yards of dirt have been moved.

Coyote Springs will draw its initial power from existing lines along U.S. Highway 93. The developer is working with the Lincoln County Power District to provide power for the entire community.

Whittemore's Coyote Springs Investment company bought the land for \$15 million in 1996. The previous owner, Aerojet, a California-based defense contractor, had obtained it in a 1988 federal land swap for use as a rocket-testing facility.

"Coyote Springs is creating a new destination in the Las Vegas sphere of influence," housing consultant Tim Sullivan said. "With the golf orientation -- a dying breed in the west because of the lack of land -- multiple home types and village core, they're establishing a new destination."

Sullivan said Coyote Springs could complement Lake Las Vegas as master-planned resorts that enhance lifestyle options for the active adult and second home buyer.

Andrews said Coyote Springs is for "trailblazers and stargazers who want to be connected to the land, their neighbors and their livelihood in a sustainable setting away from congested cities."

Pardee is building in 22 communities around the valley, from \$260,000 homes in the Sunrise Mountain area to high-end golf course homes at Lake Las Vegas.