

# Amelia Island Plantation Amelia Island, Florida

May 1–6, 2011



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Strategies for Protecting and Sustaining Its Legacy

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- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

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# About ULI Advisory Services

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Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; hour-long interviews of key community representatives; and a day of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration,

participants in ULI's panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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# Acknowledgments

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The panel also thanks the Amelia Island Equity Club and Omni Hotels and Resorts at Amelia Island Plantation (also members of AIPCA) for the extensive cooperation and assistance extended during the panel's visit. In addition,

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# Foreword: The Panel's Assignment

**AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION** (AIP) is a master-planned community and resort located on Florida's First Coast at the south end of Amelia Island. The community is situated about 35 miles northeast of Jacksonville, Florida, and is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and marshes and the Intracoastal Waterway to the west. Since its inception in 1970, AIP has been known as both a one-of-a-kind resort destination and a distinctive residential community.

Developed by Charles Fraser and designed by a group of landscape architects led by Ian McHarg, both legendary for their visionary resort communities characterized by their relationship with the surrounding landscape, AIP is no exception. In 1970, Fraser's Sea Pines Company purchased 3,000 acres on Amelia Island with the intention of creating a resort lifestyle community that enhanced and preserved the island's natural beauty. Today, the development still contains Fraser's signature balance of natural beauty, community, and recreation.

In 1973, construction of the community's resort amenities began, including a golf course by noted golf course designer Pete Dye and a number of tennis courts. The Amelia Island Plantation Community Association (AIPCA) was founded at about the same time and has had an evolving role through the years as the primary provider of services to the community, including maintenance of common areas, roads and trails, signage, and security. Today, AIP contains three golf courses, a tennis center with 23 courts, a fitness center, over three miles of dunes and beachfront, and a number of recreational facilities, parks, and trails for both visitors and residents.

The Amelia Island Company, a consortium of investors led by Richard Cooper, purchased AIP in 1978. The company provided services on a fee basis to AIPCA for security,

common area maintenance, and other needs, retaining responsibility for the resort facilities shared with the club, including the three golf courses, tennis center, and fitness center. In November 2009, the company declared bankruptcy, leaving the future of the resort, the company-owned club, and the community in flux. Omni Hotels and Resorts (Omni) purchased the resort assets in September 2010, and community members rallied to create a member-owned club, the Amelia Island Equity Club (the Club), to ensure continued access and maintenance of the on-site club facilities, which are operated by the Club but technically owned by Omni until the completion of a 20-year lease/purchase agreement. By virtue of being property owners, both Omni and the Club are members of AIPCA.

Currently, AIP also comprises 869 single-family homes, 160 vacant lots for future homes, and 1,187 condominiums located on approximately 1,350 acres. Every homeowner must be a member of AIPCA but may choose whether or not to join the Club. A number of homes—primarily condo-

*Amelia Island Plantation was built by Charles Fraser in the 1970s with a respect for the site's natural beauty.*



miniums—are used as investment properties, meaning that temporary visitors are frequently able to use the same facilities as full-time residents.

Some facilities are showing their age more than others. Residents are concerned that older facilities and homes be maintained to preserve the intended look and feel of the community and AIP's continued desirability as a resort community. Whereas most residences are well maintained, many units kept as investment properties look dated and are in need of a face-lift.

In a regional context, AIP is an important employer both on and off Amelia Island, employing more than 1,000 people in the Omni resort facilities as well as the Club and residential neighborhoods. Many AIP residents are prominent citizens of the larger Amelia Island and Nassau County community, donating hundreds of hours per year to social and cultural volunteerism. However, creating more substantive connections between the historic town of Fernandina Beach and Nassau County, on one hand, and AIP, on the other, should be a priority for AIPCA.

## The Panel's Assignment

ULI Advisory Services was invited to AIP by AIPCA as it reaches a turning point in its history. As the legacy developer departs and AIP emerges from this period of uncertainty, a new set of relationships between the primary players in community life—the Amelia Island Equity Club, the Amelia Island Plantation Community Association, and the Omni Hotel Group—has come to the forefront, along with a desire from all parties to develop and implement a systematic plan for the community's future.

AIPCA provided the panel with a set of specific questions, summarized below. The panel decided to answer these questions in an appendix to this report and to use the body of the report to provide the strategic guidance sought by AIPCA.

- How do upscale communities re-create and refresh their unique and distinctive vision? What approaches are most (and least) successful?

- When the initial developer departs, how is the task of visioning, redevelopment, and renewal transferred and accomplished?
- What are the most successful methods for financing large renewal projects?
- What amenities will be most successful in attracting new buyers to AIP?
- What are the best practices for enhancing mobility both within AIP and to and from the larger Amelia Island community?
- In multiuse communities, what organizational activities best facilitate relationships among all stakeholders?
- What governance structure, policies, and practices do successful communities use to initiate, guide, and control redevelopment?
- What are best practices to manage change and obtain community buy-in?
- What are the characteristics of successful architectural review boards (ARBs)?

## Summary of Key Recommendations

The panel has made many recommendations throughout this report but has highlighted 13 key recommendations here. Additional comments about these and other recommendations can be found in the report and its appendix. For a comprehensive list of the panel's recommendations, please refer to the Timeline table of action items.

- *Hire an executive director for AIPCA.* The executive director should serve as full-time staff and should be highly skilled in community management so that he or she can provide strategic guidance to the board as well as oversee the everyday operations of AIPCA.
- *Allow the AIPCA board to focus on vision, policy, and strategy rather than operations.* The panel's perception is that AIPCA is unable to focus on the longer-term strategic needs of AIP because the board is bogged

down in community management issues, preventing it from tackling long-term challenges. If the board does not have the capacity to focus on these broader issues, the community could find itself facing the conflicts and difficulties down the road.

- *Increase the transfer fee from .004 percent to the current cap of .005 percent, and raise the transfer fee cap to at least 1 percent.* The cap is established in the community's governing documents. The transfer fee is an important funding source for AIPCA and the capital improvements it chooses to undertake. By increasing this fee and planning for the future with a higher overall cap, AIP will be in line with similar communities and provide a boost to its budget.
- *Address club membership issues.* AIPCA and the Club should require club membership for all residents and create finely tiered membership grades that address the individual needs of a diverse population.
- *Strategically address deferred maintenance in both structures and common areas.* Maintenance needs in privately owned property, community facilities, and community open space are preventing AIP from meeting today's real estate market demands. A strategic maintenance plan with input from the three partners—the Club, AIPCA, and Omni—should be developed.
- *Develop maintenance standards and management performance standards for the management company, and then bid out the contract.* A clearly defined set of standards will help the AIPCA board determine the best service provider for AIP's maintenance and management needs, as well as assist the new executive director in overseeing those operations.
- *Trade the Property Owner's Club for the Racquet Park Conference Center to create a new community "living room."* The Property Owner's Club is relatively remote and lacks on-site activities and amenities. Trading this property with Omni for its Racquet Park Conference Center, which is within walking distance of 40 percent



of AIP residents, will create a more active community nexus point closer to amenities such as the fitness center, tennis courts, and shops.

- *Redirect the security focus.* The panel believes that security services at AIP are too focused on gatekeeping at the community's perimeters. Successful communities use and position their entry systems and control points as sources of information, to guide visitors, and to "meet and greet."

*Older condominium complexes within AIP may need cosmetic face-lifts, or in some cases total renovation, to remain relevant to today's real estate market.*

*Kate Ligare and Steve Kaye introduce the ULI advisory panel members to AIP residents and Fernandina Beach and Nassau County citizens at a reception at Walker's Landing.*



- *Redesign the AIPCA website.* For many first-time Amelia Island visitors and potential buyers, the AIPCA website is their first portal into the community. The website should be redesigned to provide more information for visitors, prospective buyers, and residents.
- *Provide an integrated community-wide electronic calendar, posted online and physically.* An enormous number of activities, events, and meetings are happening each month at AIP. An “Amelia Life” calendar posted online and in a central community location for residents should boost participation and foster cooperation among the three partners.
- *Upgrade the fitness center.* The fitness center is too dated to meet the needs of AIP residents. Upgrades that expand its offerings and make it a more pleasant place to spend time will provide a new amenity to residents and help strengthen the draw of the proposed community center at the Racquet Park Conference Center facility.
- *Survey, survey, survey to determine member needs and wants.* As AIP moves forward in a new set of partnerships, of paramount importance is truly understanding what residents expect from AIPCA and the Club so that these entities can tailor their services and amenities to the current AIP population. Surveys are also an excellent tool to engage residents in an ongoing dialogue.
- *Improve cellular service and Internet connectivity throughout AIP.* A community that appeals to the modern market is a wired one. Wireless Internet service should be provided to residents as part of the AIP amenity package, particularly in common areas such as the shops and community facilities. Cellular telephone reception within AIP must also be improved.

# The Vision

**FOR A COMMUNITY, “VISION”** is the projection of how it will exist in the future. It is the sum of its economic future, its ecological future, and its social future. It is shaped by the landscape, the area’s history, the founder’s ideas, and the actions of leaders and citizens over time.

AIP has a rich legacy vision. It has authenticity, something buyers seek out today. This vision is based on timeless principles that can continue to guide community decisions. This vision has, however, become muddled and muted, and its power and value have been reduced. Recovering, adapting, and using the AIP vision in the strategic planning and day-to-day decisions of the community is important. AIP’s vision addresses economic security, environmental integrity, and community.

AIP was created, in part, to increase the value of real estate and maintain that value through a universal commitment to ongoing maintenance and shared amenities. The values for all rise or fall together. Economic downturns have and will always interrupt this shared commitment, but it must be reaffirmed and form part of a vibrant and exciting restoration and blossoming of the community. Moreover, the community as a whole (AIPCA, the Club, and Omni) must recognize that the next generation of buyers perceives money spent on inefficient buildings or infrastructure, unnecessary buildings, and unnecessary or inefficient vehicles as wasted, so renewal must focus on these issues as well as program and aesthetics. Many resort communities around the country have the same concerns about maintenance and their future. AIP is better positioned to tackle these issues than most.

Few communities have the natural resource legacy of AIP. It must be carefully preserved and woven into all decisions. This legacy is a valuable asset as a clear brand that can increase in value by embracing today’s issues of technol-

ogy and environmental sensitivity. As other resorts and private communities try to appeal to contemporary guests and the next wave of buyers by adopting green programs, these changes often seem superficial. At AIP they are an extension of the legacy brand. AIP has benefited from this sensitivity to the natural environment from its founding, but now it must be extended to the expectations of modern environmental stewardship programs. World-class resorts have committed to these types of programs, and communities around the country have focused their associations on them as well.

Finally, AIP was created to be a community—a place of interaction, shared joy, and sanctuary from strife. Just as energy efficiency is part of protecting a household or community against rising energy costs, a rich social

*During the interviews, the panel asked the participants, “What does AIP mean to you?” In this word cloud, the larger the word, the more times it was mentioned.*



environment protects against the many challenges of the larger world. Studies have shown that buyers will pay more to live in a “community” than they will to simply live in a house. But hard work and vision are required to nurture this communal society. Discourse must be cooperative, respectful, and productive. Learning, arts, and volunteerism are critical. AIP is fortunate to have a history of this type of involvement, perhaps even stronger than the founder’s vision. The shared vision of community must guide decisions on social activities and facilities as well as programs for the future.

AIP was created with a vision that has become more relevant with the passage of time. It has the sort of legacy that other communities as well as the next generation of buyers deeply desire. That legacy must be treasured as the valuable asset it is and the vision must continue to inform decisions that embrace its power for the 21st century.

## Partners for Success

Successful recreation-based communities recognize that natural beauty, recreational and cultural activities, community spirit, and social fabric are their keystones. These communities are committed to a vision, have strong leadership, form cooperative partnerships, and are focused on delivery of high-quality amenities and services to both residents and guests. They recognize that their commitment to repositioning, reshaping, and rejuvenating their resort-based community will determine their long-term sustainability.

At AIP, AIPCA serves a vital role for all residents and also affects the visitor experience. The Club provides golf, tennis, fitness, dining, and other activities to its members. Omni is the resort owner and operator, attracting groups and leisure travelers to AIP and providing amenities for residents and Club members. These three entities constitute the AIP “partners for success.”

Working together, this group has enormous opportunity to enhance real estate values and enhance the quality of life of those who live and visit here. The partnership is newly formed, meaning each entity needs to expect to give more

than 100 percent effort to make it work, to have patience as issues get sorted out, to recognize that this type of transition does not happen overnight, and to embrace a spirit of cooperation. The responsibility of each entity needs to be clear, and all must recognize that the success of one requires the success of all three.

The current level of involvement and concern by the AIP residents is extraordinary, reflecting the passion and appreciation people have for the community. Much has been accomplished in the past several months, with the resort emerging from bankruptcy with a new owner committed to investing in it and working with the residents and Club members. AIPCA and the Club have tremendous opportunity to set the community on a new course that will invigorate the property and to appeal to the next generation of purchasers to enhance property values for the long term.

## Four Key Action Items

The panel believes that focusing on the following four key action items is critical to AIP’s future success:

- Strategically addressing community management issues;
- Addressing Club membership to maximize financial strength and community-building;
- Enhancing real estate values; and
- Making general quality-of-life improvements.

Actions in these four categories may overlap, and improving one area will most likely result in improving another. The following sections describe how this can be accomplished.

# Community Management

**AFTER THE BANKRUPTCY** of the Amelia Island Company, the community's capable residents took on much of the responsibility for their future through AIPCA and the restructuring of the Club. The AIPCA board members should consider enlisting professional management to provide oversight of day-to-day services and to assist the board in its strategic planning.

## Hiring an Executive Director for AIPCA

The panel recommends that AIPCA hire a full-time professional to serve in this role. This individual should have extensive managerial experience in a hospitality setting, specifically with a proven track record in devising and implementing new organizational initiatives, purchasing, property maintenance and service delivery, and leading strategic programs. The executive director will be AIPCA's representative in its dealings with the Club, Omni, and outside contractors as well as the primary shepherd of the strategic initiatives that are expected to take place over the next 24 months.

Many communities similar to AIP have hired professional staff as community managers. In an executive director role, this staffer should be responsible for tasks such as overseeing and contracting for maintenance services, organizing the association's programming, and tackling big issues such as deferred maintenance and strategic plan revisions. The board of directors can then focus on broader strategic thinking while the executive director maintains responsibility for the board's day-to-day interests, projects, and management.

More specific guidance regarding the executive director's role can be found in the appendix.

## Addressing Deferred Maintenance

Deferred maintenance is evident in AIPCA's common areas and in some of the resort's older condominiums. Areas of the resort have fallen behind, which is not unreasonable given the financial uncertainty leading up to and following the bankruptcy. Although both the Club and Omni have committed to ongoing capital improvement projects, together with AIPCA they must develop a comprehensive plan for refreshing the property that can be implemented over a multiyear period. All work does not need to be completed at once. Highly visible improvements such as enhanced landscape plantings in key locations will have a noticeable effect and inspire confidence. Accumulating funds for major repairs and creating adequate annual budgets for ongoing maintenance are critical.

The older AIP condominiums represent a more challenging issue. AIPCA must evaluate which can be refurbished and which have passed their useful life because of structural or other issues, making refurbishment economically infeasible. Failure to proactively address these deteriorating properties will result in a checkerboard of quality across the resort, inhibiting overall property values and creating a subset of owners who will not participate in the Club, which could adversely affect its financial health.

The redevelopment process will be too complicated for each of the condominium associations to handle independently. AIPCA can become the central base of knowledge and a resource to assist the individual condominium associations through the complicated process of redevelopment. AIPCA can offer preapproved designs and provide referrals to builders and local professionals in design and construction. Additionally, AIPCA and the ARB can identify areas of the resort where allocation of additional density is appropriate, enabling the addition of units to generate sales revenue and facilitate the redevelopment.

# Club Membership

**THE CLUB WILL FACE THE SAME** demographic and financial challenges as many resort and golf communities around the country. At Amelia Island, those issues are made more urgent by the recent transition following the bankruptcy and the contracts between Omni and the Club.

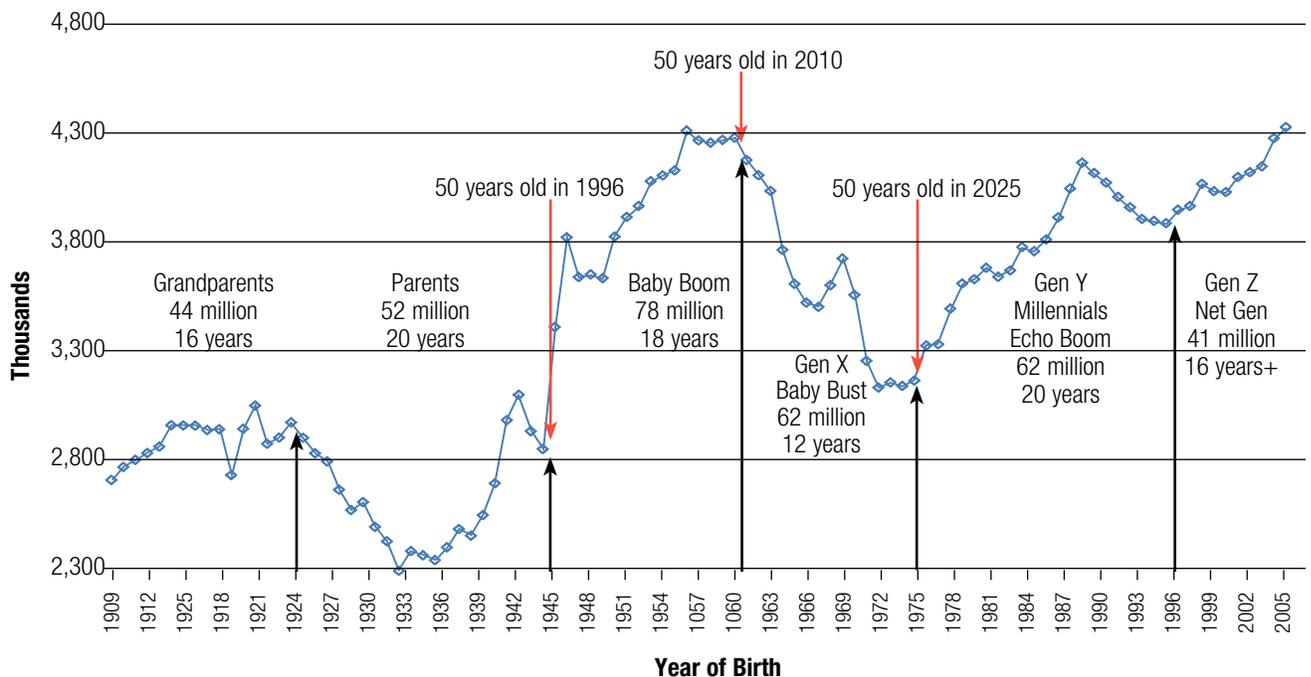
## Demographic Pressure

As the population of these communities ages, the Club must focus on the needs and desires of the next wave of purchasers. As figure 1 indicates, although the baby boomers' large population has defined the character of resort and retirement communities, generation X will begin to reach retirement age in just 15 years and will have different interests and priorities:

- They are more involved with their children, so the Club must be a family-oriented place.
- They focus more on value, and when buying a vacation home, they look at the entire cost of the package.
- They want choice and flexibility.
- They want a club that feels more active and energetic—and with fewer rules.

During the community interviewing process, the panel heard concerns from many stakeholders regarding the Club's focus on traditional country club activities and amenities. If the Club tries to be a traditional private club and does not continuously refresh its activities and ame-

**FIGURE 1**  
U.S. Retirement Demographic Trends



**FIGURE 2**  
**Preferences in Recreational Activities**

Percentage of population over age 7 that enjoys the following activities

Exercise Walking	93.3
Exercise with Equipment	57.2
Swimming	50.2
Bike Riding	38.1
Hiking	34.0
Aerobic Exercise	33.1
Running/Jogging	32.2
Golf	22.3

nities in a concerted effort to appeal to the whole family, membership could gradually decline, with a corresponding reduction in Club revenues. AIP includes a broad range of property types and prices, from condominiums priced in the \$200,000s to beachfront and marsh-front homes that sell for several million dollars. Consequently, AIP must cater to a broad range of interests and financial abilities. The panel recommends implementing a more finely tiered membership structure for the Club with choices and price points beyond the three membership levels available today, which is described later in this report. Without more options for Club membership, many new residents may not join, and the social membership category will gradually decline, causing the cost for remaining members to increase.

Clubs and resorts across the country are making a tremendous investment in facilities and programming, and adjusting their character to be more inclusive of the whole family. Family life is changing (see figure 2, which describes the recreational preferences of today's families). For the Club to be viable in the long term, it must make a concerted effort to better address the needs of women and children—to make the Club a place where the entire fam-

ily wants to go. The panel recommends that the Club actively seek the participation of more women on the board to ensure that their needs are incorporated as a priority. If the focus on improving the golf course or golf clubhouse is too strong, to the exclusion of the family experience, AIP will lose appeal to an important demographic, and property values could decline over the next several years.

## Financial Pressure

The existing contracts between the Club and Omni were constructed during the resolution of the bankruptcy. Their terms were suitable for resolving the bankruptcy, but financial inequities exist that if left unresolved will cause disagreements and cuts in service. According to information provided to the panel, Club member monthly use of the golf, tennis, and fitness facilities is disproportionate to the monthly fee being charged by Omni to the Club. The contract between the Club and Omni will likely have to be revisited as these use patterns become more evident and costs are allocated more accurately. The fitness center will be an obvious flashpoint. As the resort constructs a new facility for its guests, it may become unwilling to support the existing fitness center at necessary levels. The Club can step up in anticipation with a plan to take over the facility and create a dynamic new fitness center that addresses health, wellness, and longevity. This approach dovetails with the recommendation found later in this report to create a community center of gravity focused around the site of the Racquet Park Conference Center.

If AIP does not take a proactive approach to addressing the demographic changes and financial realities, discord will continue in the community, and the Club's financial condition could be adversely affected. The panel believes that the Club cannot offer "à la carte" amenities to residents and remain financially strong.

## The Options

The panel looked at three primary options that the AIP community can pursue to ensure the long-term viability of the Club. Two of these—creating an exclusive private

club and folding the Club into AIPCA—were rejected by the panel. The third, requiring that all AIP residents become members of the Club at varying membership tiers, is the panel’s preferred alternative. All three ideas are discussed below.

### **Exclusive Private Club**

The Long Point Golf Course and Clubhouse could separate from the existing Club with 500 to 600 members, and the broader recreation and social activities could be absorbed into the Omni resort or AIPCA. The resort would manage tennis, beach club, resort golf, and dining, and all residents would have access through structured membership with fees with for specific uses. This option goes against the historic inclusiveness of the resort and has potential to create a long-term cleft in the community. Additionally, resolving the carryover obligation relating to initiation deposits from before the sale of the resort remains a challenge.

### **Association**

All of the club amenities and services could be merged into AIPCA. This solution would be simpler and cleaner, providing one entity, with mandatory membership and the ability to levy assessments. This option may require some level of legal work, however, to ensure the transition complies with state regulations. In addition, the aforementioned deposit issue would need to be resolved.

### **Resort Community Club**

This option would require Club membership for all residents, with finely gauged membership tiers that offer flexibility in service and cost. For instance, the Club could offer a baseline membership that includes access to resortwide social activities and casual dining with higher tiers of membership permitting access to the fitness center, golf, tennis, or other activities.

The mandatory Resort Community Club is the option with the greatest long-term benefits to the character of the community and property values, but calculated, focused leadership will be required to move the concept through the adoption process. If AIP embraces such an approach, it will require the cooperation and partnership of the

three main entities: the Club, AIPCA, and Omni. Once the mandatory requirements have been implemented, the responsibility for specific sites, facilities, and programming will be more clearly defined than at present. The panel believes that in addition to the primary benefit of strengthening Club finances, this option will foster a sense of community and eliminate the division and suspicion that exist from time to time between AIPCA and the Club, which the panel observed during the interview process and other conversations with community members.

The transition will likely be complicated. Controversy, turmoil, and bad feeling within the community are bound to surface during the initiative. Rules such as precluding nonmembers from patronizing restaurants, using the resort golf courses, or taking the AIP shuttle—amenities of which nonmember resort guests are allowed to partake—are divisive and unsustainable.

Although AIP will need to find its own way as it approaches a mandatory membership initiative, the panel recommends considering a “grandfather” provision that allows existing owners to opt out, requiring only new property purchasers to join. This key element will soften the blow to the nonmembers. Other issues to consider include the following:

- Litigation;
- Grandfathering membership categories; and
- Community versus Club facilities, especially food and beverage rights.

The panel recommends that the two boards together with Omni adopt a comprehensive communication practice that informs the entire association of the goals and ongoing consideration of the initiative. The boards also need to engage professional counsel, including legal and financial, at all stages of the initiative to ensure its legitimacy.

# Enhancing and Sustaining Real Estate Value

**PRESERVING AND ENHANCING** the value of real estate is a multifaceted process. The panel's professional experience indicates that buyers explore many areas in their search for a second home or preretirement home, focusing initially on the ambience of the surroundings and the nature of the community, and secondarily on the actual real estate product. AIP buyers typically start their search methodically from the Cape Fear River in North Carolina and proceed south as far as Daytona Beach, Florida, sampling the character and feel of the many communities in this path. They gather and compare data directly and indirectly. The search is quantitative and qualitative; the first impressions are lasting.

## The Components of the Buying Process and Information Flow

Word of mouth and community reputation help define the physical areas being considered. When a prospective buyer has narrowed the options to one or two locations, the search becomes more focused on the physical products available and the overall price/value decision process. Increasingly, online research and referrals from friends and family play a major role in the decision process. When the search begins in earnest, the prospective buyer seeks every information source available, including making site visits and working through the broader brokerage community, which normally has access to the Multiple Listing Service.

It is the panel's understanding that no comprehensive list of AIP properties on the market is available electronically or conveniently available on site for prospective buyers. Some of these homes are listed by Omni Realty, some through other realty companies, and some privately by the owner. Potential buyers need to be able to do research more easily about all of the homes available for purchase in AIP. The

panel recommends creating a centralized list of Amelia Island real estate listings on the AIPCA website that includes basic information about the home type (single family, villa, condo, and so on), size, and location, along with contact information for the agent or owner.

## The New Purchasing Paradigm

As a result of the recent financial uncertainty, buyers are purchasing where they find financial stability and communities with completed amenities. Gone are the days of purchasing the developer's dream and promise without proof of the result and the expectation that values will continue to escalate. As is evident in national media, second-home market values have not been immune from the general decline in housing values, and no clear consensus exists about when, or if, values will reestablish their previous heights. But some evidence indicates that consumer confidence is returning and that prices are stabilizing. In this environment, the consumer's tendency is to seek the tried and true rather than the new but less certain. AIP is now well positioned on all counts. The built amenities exist and are established. The natural assets are core to AIP and speak to the very nature of the place. And in today's still uncertain times, Omni's industry reputation, financial strength, and long-term vision for AIP as a cornerstone for its corporate growth support the underlying value of the real estate, even at the depressed values that currently exist.

AIPCA can preserve and further enhance the AIP value by telling Amelia Island's story, showcasing its unique qualities, and providing opportunities for prospective buyers to experience the physical beauty and to meet residents. The AIP master plan is the result of exemplary best practices by legends in the resort industry. This community has grown and prospered because of their forward thinking. Today

consumers highly value natural beauty, open space, and trail systems, which the vision in the master plan protected and preserved. This story needs to be refreshed, retold, and celebrated. AIPCA should consider adding this information to the community website or possibly collaborating with the Omni real estate team to produce an online piece or visitor center.

## Communicating the Brand and the Place

A buyer's decision process starts with first impressions of a property and place. In the case of AIP, this process typically starts at the security gate, which currently sends a message of obstruction rather than one of welcome. Successful communities use and position their entry systems and control points as sources of information, to guide visitors, to meet and greet. The panel also recommends that the partners all participate equitably in security cost, which will allow each to have an equal say in determining the best plan for security operations.

A strong second impression at present is the absence of technology within the Plantation. Both wireless telephone connectivity and internet access are limited and unreliable, and the AIPCA website does not have the types of information available to serve as an information dissemination center for the AIP community. The website should be revamped to make it more welcoming and more useful. As part of the investment in better Web information as a communication tool, AIPCA needs to commit to providing high-speed wireless access and improved cell service throughout. This is equally important to resort guests and prospective buyers.

A current third impression is the deferred maintenance in much of the resort's public spaces and buildings. Although such neglect is undoubtedly a result of the bankruptcy, its evidence is visible wherever one looks. The panel is cognizant that AIPCA is conducting a capital needs survey, that the Club is making investments in renewing its facilities, and that Omni has an aggressive renovation and expansion program. The combination of

these efforts and the visual changes they will bring will send a strong message to both resort guests and prospective real estate buyers that reinvestment is ongoing and will help maintain real estate values.

A fourth and more subtle impression felt mostly by resort guests, but also by potential buyers, is the functional obsolescence and physical deterioration of some of the older villa products. The buildings are victims of nothing but age and changing consumer preferences, but a concerted effort should be made to promote renovation or replacement of some of the older villas. It is already happening at the single-family level but is not easy to accomplish at the condominium level because of multiple ownerships. As noted elsewhere in this report, however, it can be done through a combination of making low-interest loans to owners within a condominium owners association or homeowners association (COA/HOA), providing density bonuses to offset the costs, and so on. In addition to the capital needs survey currently underway, a parallel assessment needs to be conducted on the older villa products.

## Architectural Review Board Process and Documentation

The ARB members are stewards of the plan. The board needs to understand and embrace the community vision in its decision-making process. The board is in partnership with real estate owners and should assume the role of a resource as well as a gatekeeper.

Through the ARB process, the master plan can be preserved and enriched as each member of the community incrementally adds a residential or commercial structure or landscape component. As also voiced elsewhere in this report, residential scale, architectural solutions, and styles are different from those of commercial construction.

## Financial Transparency and Planning

Key elements of maintaining property value go beyond appearance. Best practices mandate financial transparency and sound planning. Resort property buyers are experienced and sophisticated. They know how to ask the right questions to protect their investment. Part of maintaining real estate value is the consumer's confidence in knowing the total cost of ownership. Purchasers do not want surprises after they have bought into a community.

## Services for Property Owners

In addition to providing outstanding service to resort guests and various Club and association activities, the Omni resort has an opportunity to provide services to owners to enhance their lifestyle and life cycle. The panel envisions an array of fee-based services that might include housekeeping, meals, care taking, pet sitting, light repairs, household maintenance, landscape maintenance, and refurbishment. This service would be provided on an à la carte basis and be available throughout the Plantation as an added value to homeowners



*Amelia Island Plantation has a variety of housing typologies that work in harmony to create a sense of place.*

# Quality of Life

**THE AIP LANDSCAPE SETTING** is of unparalleled beauty, and the resort character lends a quiet and relaxing dimension to life. Residents take significant pride in both the natural beauty and the quiet and friendly community life.

## Community Events and Activities

As mentioned before, younger families and new buyers of second homes or retirement homes looking to join the AIP community may have a different set of priorities about amenities from what has been seen in the past. They focus on community connections, family, and wellness. The following recommendations address how to increase quality of life for current residents as well as how to ensure AIP's enduring appeal to a new generation of buyers.

### **Survey, Survey, Survey—Feedback**

In cities and communities, common practice is often to assume one knows what services and recreational pursuits are expected. Often the task of determining the needs and desires of the many falls into the domain of the few, usually elected officials, who in many cases look to the past to determine the choices for the future. However, we live in a sophisticated and ever-changing society where social networks, the internet, and intranets provide new communication choices and feedback mechanisms. Our recreation choices and interests are also now more diverse and changing more quickly than ever before. Although golf and tennis are pursuits that remain popular within the community, the panel recommends carrying out surveys at least annually on the interests, recreational desires, and levels of satisfaction of the community and club members and providing timely feedback. The surveys should cover general and peak times, when visitors and young family members are likely to be at the

Plantation, to help ensure that the services being offered are vital and meaningful to all.

### **Shared Activities—More Social Programming**

As a resort community, AIP enjoys the best of all worlds, with many choices of recreational and social interaction offered across all providers—the resort, the Club, or the community association. Simple coordination tools among these entities, such as developing a shared calendar and considering shared activities to improve the cost-effectiveness and the value of all three partners' resources make good sense. Coordination of efforts and clarification of roles and responsibilities, using an integrated web-based calendar and registration facility would be an easy first step. A joint resort, Club, and community association workshop would be a helpful forum to consider “who provides what” and what provider and user synergies might be possible.

### **More Community Activities and Facilities**

An active population is key to vibrant community health, whether in terms of social health or personal health. At the community level, the panel has heard much about the quiet, family atmosphere that is coupled with a highly active social network. It has heard of up to 30 community activities that are available monthly; however, the primary focus of organized recreational activities tends to orbit around golf and tennis. Many more opportunities exist to add community recreational amenities and facilities, but the emphasis should be on flexible facilities and ones that have low entry and maintenance costs, such as bocce, organized nature walks, fishing clubs, and Frisbee. The panel recommends that these activities be identified and documented through a survey process, after which facility types and locations can be decided.

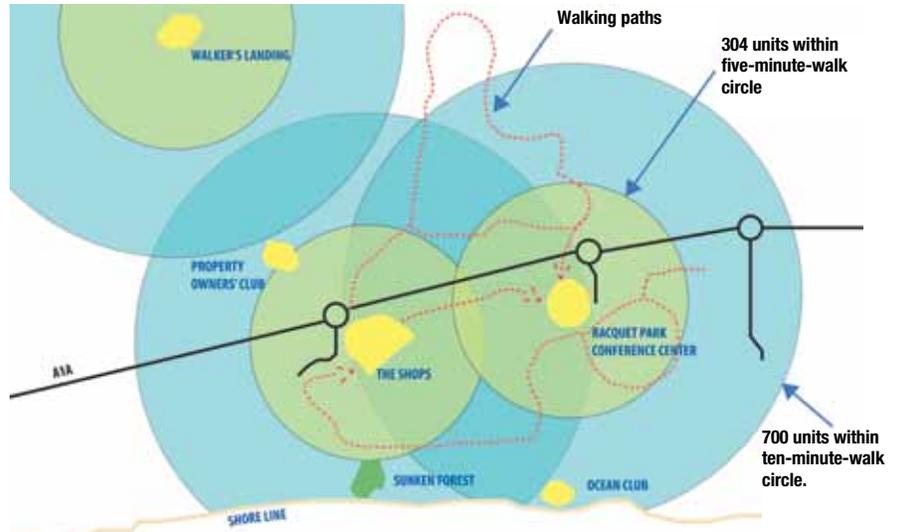
### Facilities Swap with Omni

With new resort operators now in place, taking stock of existing facilities and amenities across the Plantation is now timely. The existing Property Owner's Club (POC) facility is relatively remote and difficult to purpose for the broad array of events and activities that take place across the community. A social hub and meeting place is required to accommodate activities such as yoga, Pilates, bridge, education, meetings, and the like. The panel believes this space can be created through a strategy of "linked centers of gravity": on one end, a redeveloped, repurposed tennis center, and on the other end, an enhanced set of village shops. Connecting the two should be an explicit and logical trail that will take less than seven minutes to walk from end to end. Feeding into this area will be a system of pathways that put the area within walking distance of over 40 percent of the community's residents, creating vitality in the community while offering residents a broad array of food, recreation, and social interaction all within a very short distance.

As the resort looks to upgrade its fitness facilities and amenities closer to the centralized resort complex, the repurposing of the Racquet Park Conference Center for these community activities is an attractive proposition. These facilities offer a relatively flexible series of spaces that could accommodate a broad range of uses and activities, and given the facility's location, is positioned to serve more than 40 percent of residents located within ten minutes' walking distance. In turn, the title for the existing POC facility, which is within ten minutes' walking distance of 23 percent of residents, could be traded to Omni for an expanded golf pro shop and golf clubhouse facility.

### More Activities Designed for Different Demographics

The panel did not review specific demographic information for AIP; however, if other communities are a guide, one can safely assume that women represent a significant proportion of the current population. With this in mind, catering for the recreation and social needs of women and families is important, particularly in terms of future



*By shifting the center of gravity in the community, AIP can reach more residents and create a vibrant meeting place. All locations are approximate.*



purchasers. The Plantation needs to be looking forward to the next generation of owners and in doing so needs to be current in its outlook and appeal. Contemporary communities are oriented around wellness, health, and fitness, which can be manifested in amenities ranging from a comprehensive network of walking and biking trails, to exercise facilities and activities, healthy food and lifestyle choices, arts and crafts, lifelong learning, and others. Again, the creation of a survey tool, as well as looking at amenities and services offered at other comparable communities, can serve as a guide to benchmark AIP.

*Although traditional, the Property Owners' Clubhouse is becoming too small for the number and variety of activities desired by property owners.*

## Community Living Room

The idea of a community living room—a place for quieter interchange for residents and visitors—has strong appeal as a central community focus. The panel was struck by the consistency of comments from residents about the strong family feeling within the community. What better way to further enhance this quality than through the creation of a community living room? It may be a repurposed room within the Racquet Park Conference Center, a place where community or family gatherings can be held, with comfortable sofas, a reading library, film nights, or game nights. The creation of such a place could be the common point between permanent and part-time visitors and owners—a place to check in and take the pulse of the community.

## Community Environment

One of the critical parts of AIP's special identity is its commitment to preserving the natural beauty of its site. The following recommendations will reinforce that commitment and bring the community's technology infrastructure to the cutting edge.

### Comprehensive System to Reduce the Use of Cars

The resort character and the narrow, winding roads and trails within the community create a perfect environment to move away from reliance on personal cars. Although the tram service offers an alternative transportation mode, it relies on a conventional, gasoline-powered vehicle. If one builds on the environmental values of the initial master plan, the mobility within the community should be upgraded to match. The use of electric carts, community cars and bikes, a natural gas or electric tram, community Segways, electric jeepneys, or the like—something fun that takes advantage of the mild climate and resort atmosphere—would create a more contemporary and environmentally attuned community. Support components, such as artfully designed bicycle racks and preferred parking close to buildings for electric vehicles and carts, would help incentivize the use of other forms of transport.

Alternative transport modes would result in a cleaner, safer environment and would ideally allow the repurpos-

ing of the large surface parking lots in some areas so they can be reintegrated into the parks and open-space network. Many communities are now looking at similar initiatives, which not only generate safer and more environmentally attuned communities but also create a marketing point of difference.

### Wireless and Enhanced Cellular Network

Good information technology infrastructure is critical to today's visitor and potential purchaser. The current level of service at the Plantation for both internet and cellular phones is poor. Upgrading this amenity and providing free wireless throughout the community would mirror current best practice and ensure the community is staying abreast with other comparable communities.

### Education—Community College Nature Center

Lifelong learning is a hallmark of modern life, and educational services more and more are occurring outside the traditional classroom. Given the development story and quality of AIP's natural environment, significant value would arise from partnering with an external education entity to create a community college nature education and research center, a community health center, or something similar. This center would benefit local residents as well as be a meaningful way to engage the broader community and help run recreation programs at the community level.

## Amelia Community Outreach

As all its residents know, Amelia Island has much to offer beyond AIP. Many residents are already involved in cultural activities and community volunteer work in the historic town of Fernandina Beach and Nassau County, but more should be done to enhance these connections.

### Increase Shuttle Connection

Fernandina Beach, its historic district, and surrounding attractions are an important amenity to the island and its visitors. Strong connections between the AIP resort, the AIP residential community, and surrounding areas are seen as beneficial to all parties. Recent statistics show the existing resort shuttle system, which is a user



fee-based service, carried 9,000 passengers between the community and the town last year. The panel recommends every effort be made to increase this connection through increased shuttle services offered between the community, the town, and other recreational and historical points of interest. As with the internal circulation network, explore the opportunity to use fun vehicles, natural gas or electric shuttles, jitneys, or the like that take advantage of the mild climate and island atmosphere. The service could be free and provide greater value and ultimately enhance the resort guest and residential experience on the island. It would also further enhance the economic interdependence between the Plantation and the town.

#### **Create Amelia Island Plantation Foundation**

AIP has a notable tradition of philanthropy and community outreach. Plantation residents play an important

role through their involvement in enterprises such as the Boys and Girls Club, which is done quietly and behind the scenes. The foundation can be a facility to help coordinate philanthropic and volunteer outreach.

#### **Hospitality Tent at Shrimp Festival**

For a small community, Fernandina Beach plays host to a large number of festivals and events, notably the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival and the Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival. The shrimp festival is a spirited community celebration that includes parades, competitions, food and vendor stalls, pirate and beauty pageant, and the Blessing of the Fleet. This year saw the event's 48th year of operation and has become a unique and important cultural celebration. The panel recommends that a hospitality tent be established, providing an outlet for community arts and endeavors, as well as a respite facility to encourage resident and visitor participation.

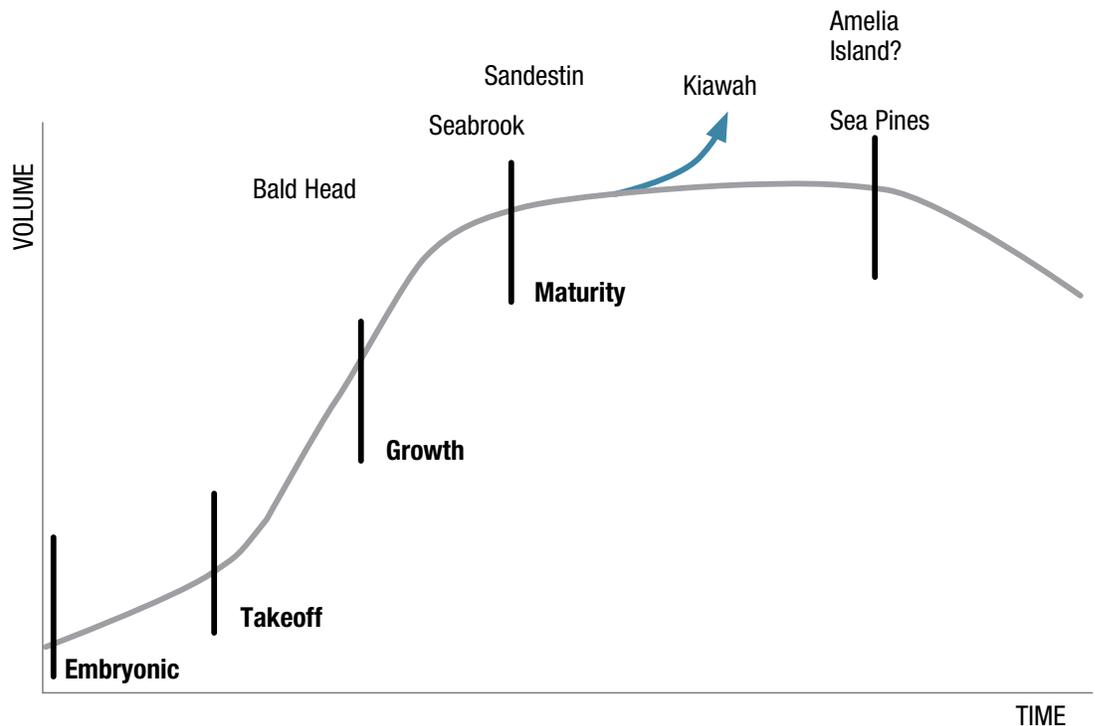
*The town of Fernandina Beach has a rich history and offers opportunities for Plantation residents to get involved in broad-based community activities.*

# Moving toward the Big Picture: Implementation

**DURING ITS FIRST 40 YEARS**, AIP developed its own personality. It embraced its coastal beauty and vigilantly protected its majestic tree canopies. It has grown to become a place of enduring landscapes and mature relationships. It speaks with humility and civility, and for this reason the current period of tension leaves many residents uneasy. Although challenging to those who have come to enjoy the serene beauty of this place, this moment will be looked back upon as a defining one in AIP's next chapter: What kind of story will be written?

Change is hard, and the community's evolution from "company town" to mature community is awkward. But through the upheaval of bankruptcy, the true potential of this place has been made evident. Passionate volunteerism, entrepreneurial leadership, and just plain "business smarts" have guided the community from dark days on the edge to a showcase of activity and resource depth. In less than six months, this community has lived through bankruptcy auction, constructed new operating agreements, organized and invited a sharing

**FIGURE 3**  
Life Cycle of Resort Communities



of experience through a peer community symposium, and now convened this ULI panel review. The capability of the community, evidenced by this short timeline, shows not only how capable its residents are but also their ability to reflect and inquire—inviting new thinking and new ideas when many might simply retrench to what they know best.

The panel recognizes the energy released in this time of trauma cannot be sustained, but it provides a glimpse of AIP's potential. The southeast coast is dotted with recreation communities and plantation developments, but AIP stands apart because of its

- rich natural and cultural resources, both on property and at its boundaries;
- deep-seated legacy of environmental sensitivity, starting with storied founder Charles Fraser;
- proximity to an authentic small town with all the best elements of a walkable downtown, historic buildings, and emerging arts, food, and cultural offerings;
- active, accomplished, and dedicated residents; and
- a new resort owner who sees it as more than an opportunistic real estate play.

From this base of opportunity, AIP sits at an important crossroad. It can choose between the following two options:

- Dividing longstanding friendships along lines of who is “in” and who is “out,” deferring its future to the new “company,” sitting passively and letting residences and facilities deteriorate, and allowing social offerings to lose pace with current trends and become irrelevant to new buyers; or
- Seizing this moment and taking direct responsibility for writing the next chapter of AIP's story by facing the tough issues head-on, tackling the challenges of creating one community, organized around a series of simple, coalescing ideas and a greater sense of purpose.

To move forward, AIP must commit the necessary financial and intellectual resources to renewing facilities and building a community that will transition gracefully into the next 40 years, be the envy of every other community up the coast, and as a result command a premium from future buyers.

To structure this journey, the panel offers four guiding strategies that will remain relevant no matter what specific decisions are made about the key issues facing the AIP community.

## Recognize You Are Not Alone

The panel's perception based on interviews and more casual conversation is that AIP sees itself as insulated from the rest of the greater community that is Amelia Island, but today's buyers want to know that they are buying real estate that is not only a comfortable home but also part of a greater community. Investing in amenities in town, as well as on the property, is an example of how innovative developers are reaching beyond their boundaries to create new excitement for their residents while supporting local enterprises. Embracing and telling the stories of American Beach, supporting local, undiscovered chefs, musicians, and artists in town, and regularly making access to other parts of the island one of the amenities of AIP will add great value to its real estate while enriching the overall setting.

## Embrace a Basic Level of Amenities for All

As it is currently structured, AIP cannot be a place where members and nonmembers coexist happily. The current dynamic will continue to demoralize community spirit, increasingly add unproductive energy, and eventually erode real estate value. Although a difficult process, the community must come together and offer a universally accessible set of amenities to all residents. Those who choose a higher level of amenities and who are willing to pay for them should also be respected. However, community components such as convenient access to natural

resources and recreational offerings of the property, fitness and wellness facilities, alternative transportation, and venues for social interaction must be a basic right for anyone who chooses to live in AIP. Conversely, everyone must pay his or her fair share.

## Timeless Place, Current Offerings

AIP's founding principles must be maintained. Although the community is at an awkward age (too new to be historic, too old to be fresh), the vision behind its master plan will endure and be seen as one of the great recreational community plans of the past half century.

Of course, some iconic residential products and structures are out of step with current market fashion. They obscure this community's timeless qualities, distracting potential buyers by looking tired and behind the times of shinier new developments. To stay relevant and build on its strengths, AIP must capture and then share the authenticity of its story while updating its offerings. A deliberate and systematic approach is needed to refreshing, renovating, or replacing aging products if AIP is to stay relevant in the marketplace.

This story, which draws on both AIP's rich legacy and forward-thinking amenities, should be shared with residents and branded as "Amelia Life." It could take the form of an orientation for new homeowners to familiarize them with the community and its offerings. "Amelia Life" could also serve as a unifying umbrella for activities and amenities offered to residents by all three partners—AIPCA, the Club, and Omni—as a brand for the unified calendar recommended by the panel and for activities or social opportunities sponsored by one or more of these groups.

## Ageless Soul, New Heart

The community's meandering roads and paths, lush ground plane, and magnificent tree cover are at the essence of its beautiful soul. While these elements are AIP, they also they make navigating the community and identifying the center of activity, energy, and daily life difficult.

As Omni embarks on redevelopment and expansion, the resort will take on a new personality that may be complementary, but not appropriate, as the residential community's focal point. Although numerous facilities around the community serve different users and provide landmarks for various neighborhoods—Walker's Landing, POC, the Ocean Club—AIP needs a definitive gathering place that bustles with daily activity, hosts events enriching quality of life, affords opportunities for chance interaction among residents, is flexible enough to adapt to new uses and users, and offers potential buyers a ready glimpse of what their daily life at Amelia Island could be.

# Timeline

The following are recommendations for AIPCA to **complete**, **lead**, or **facilitate**. These actions are categorized as ongoing, immediate (I = 0–6 months), short term (ST = 0–2 years), and medium term (MT = 2–5 years). The time frames are associated with the start date of the actions.

AIPCA Action Items	Time Frame
Continue collaboration among the partners: AIPCA, Omni, Club	Ongoing
Continue to collaborate with symposium communities	Ongoing
Host or cause to happen annual peer-community symposium (may have best value if rotated among participants)	Ongoing
Encourage community engagement and participation	Ongoing
Tap into and use the talent that lives here	Ongoing
Hold monthly update meetings with Omni and the Club	Ongoing
Encourage volunteer passion (exceptional dedication and remarkable results)	Ongoing
Provide Beach renourishment leadership	Ongoing
Hire AIPCA executive director	I
Finalize Club and amenity resolution plan	I
Complete community-wide amenity and needs survey	I
Provide wireless Internet connection and enhanced cellular throughout community	I
Prepare Strategic Plan (with Omni and the Club)	ST
Through Strategic Plan, explore an increase in the transfer fee revenue (after storm reserve)	ST
Develop comprehensive operating budgets (operating, reserve, capital, maintenance plan)	ST
Write and communicate the vision (the legacy story)	ST
Support Omni if it chooses to host islandwide events	ST
Revise covenants, conditions, and restrictions to make more readable and user-friendly (update for legal compliance and make reader-friendly)	ST
Work with ARB to integrate required design elements, especially important to single-family home expansions, teardowns, and multiple lots (see question 8 in appendix)	ST
Explore more representative composition of ARB: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase to five members</li> <li>• Give AIPCA a voting seat</li> <li>• Use separate professionals for commercial and residential reviews</li> </ul>	ST

<b>AIPCA Action Items</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
Create “Amelia Life”	ST
Present “Amelia Life orientation” (resident orientation)	ST
Work with ARB to create approved improvements for villas in poorest condition	ST
To help facilitate continuity at this time of transition, change maximum length of term that president can serve	ST
Explore selling Sunken Forest parcel to Omni to generate AIPCA revenue	ST
Explore trading POC for Racquet Park Conference Center, and repurpose center	ST
Work with Omni to make security be more guest-friendly	ST
Revamp AIPCA Web site	ST
Create and maintain a community-wide master calendar (Omni, Club, AIPCA events)	ST
Organize community activities to leverage connection to resources in town	ST
Begin to construct trail improvements (connections, signage)	ST
Work with Omni and Club to make shuttle service available for all residents and visitors	ST
Host the AIP (Omni, Club, AIPCA) hospitality tent at shrimp festival and similar in-town events	ST
Host annual AIP-wide barbecue and storytelling festival	ST
Host annual meeting of all COA/HOA presidents (before barbecue)	ST
Measure use of community facilities and activities	ST
Increase transfer fee from .004% to current cap of .005% and increase the cap to at least 1%	ST
Write maintenance performance standards manual	ST
Define and establish AIP Foundation	MT
Host islandwide events at AIP (e.g., tennis tournament, music, art)	MT
Work with Omni to improve signage and wayfinding	MT
Encourage partners to convert fleets to alternative-fuel vehicles	MT
Redevelop the villas and condominiums that have aged beyond renovation	MT
Create nature center or community college learning center to further connect AIP to the surrounding community by capitalizing on its natural assets	MT

# Conclusion

**AIPCA AND ITS PARTNERS** must act now to ensure that this momentum is not lost. Much of what must be done is not easy but will result in a more cohesive sense of community, an enhanced quality of life, and an ever-stronger market for AIP property. Best of all, this can be accomplished without losing the original vision that makes AIP such a special place to live.

The panel feels particularly strongly about three recommendations, and they are reiterated below:

- *Hire a professional executive director for AIPCA* to oversee budgeting, maintenance services, revisions to the strategic and master plans, coordinate board meetings, and organize the association's programming.
- *Make Club membership mandatory for all AIP homeowners*, if legally feasible, and introduce new tiers of membership. The grades of membership should be finely tiered to meet the recreational needs of a diverse population. Making this bold move will safeguard the Club's continued financial viability and create an inclusive atmosphere among AIP residents, who will be able to choose the type of Club membership best for their needs. To avoid possible legal issues and ensure a smooth transition, the Club and its partners may wish to consider having this mandatory membership policy apply only to new homeowners, allowing current nonmember residents to opt out.
- *Create a "community living room" through a land exchange* with Omni to convert the Racquet Park Conference Center to a community center. This gathering place should be connected to the shops through clearly marked pathways and landscaping.

The panel spoke to more than a hundred people and conducted hours of on-site research to develop the recommendations outlined in this report. Panel members overwhelmingly felt that AIP is at an exciting point in its history. It has a great opportunity to build on the past and the original vision to create even stronger partnerships between the primary entities in the community: AIPCA, Amelia Island Equity Club, and Omni Hotels and Resorts.

*"We only meant to make society better. Law would lay everything out for us. But law cannot save us from ourselves. Waking up every morning, we have to go out and try to accomplish our goals and resolve disagreements by doing what we think is right. That energy and resourcefulness, not millions of legal cubicles, is what was great about America. Let judgment and personal conviction be important again. There is nothing unusual or frightening about it. Relying on ourselves is not, after all, a new ideology. It's just common sense."*

—Philip K. Howard  
*The Death of Common Sense*

# Appendix

**HERE THE PANEL PROVIDES** responses to the specific questions posed by AIPCA.

**1. How do middle-aged upscale communities re-create and refresh their unique and distinctive vision? What approaches are most (and least) successful?**

AIP is distinct among many planned communities in its underlying vision of harmony with nature, established by Charles Fraser and Ian McHarg in the original master plan. The art of storytelling is an important part of keeping the community's vision alive and fresh. All three entities—the Club, AIPCA, and Omni—need to develop a shared story of the vision and share it.

This will allow the vision to guide AIP's future strategy for preservation and growth. This set of ideas should be captured in a Master Strategic Plan that contains executable actions informed by the panel's report that can realistically be completed over a period of five to seven years. A process to amend this plan should take place every three to five years. Specific action items are a key component of the strategic plan to make it a purposeful and useful document.

In identifying leadership to help guide the development and implementation of the strategic plan, inclusiveness is important. Leaders should represent a variety of groups—Omni, AIPCA, and the Club, of course, but also condominium and neighborhood HOAs and other community groups with a vested interest in the future of AIP. Their inclusion will ensure community-wide buy-in and prevent duplication of work around these issues or planning at cross purposes.

**2. What priorities guide successful communities through middle age? In terms of updates and new investment, what are the most common amenities, services, and**

**actions that preserve and enhance property values? At the same time, how do communities retain the overall character of the various neighborhoods, ambience, natural setting, and special areas that attracted residents in the first place?**

On Amelia Island, the natural beauty that defines the community for many residents and visitors was established as an important foundation at AIP's formation, from the bylaws built to protect the lush tree canopy to the preferred architectural styles enforced by the ARB. Retaining and maintaining this exceptional built and natural environment must be a priority to preserve the existing character of AIP.

As in most endeavors, however, some aspects of the community's amenities require updating so that they do not lose pace with the needs and wants of potential buyers, new community members, and long-time residents. The panel urges AIP to first gather information before deciding upon new investment in capital facilities and programs. Many similar communities conduct a survey of residents—and sometimes visitors—to determine spending priorities over a period of time. Understanding a constituency and its changing needs is critical to maintaining attractiveness and relevancy over time. In addition to surveying, AIPCA, the Club, and Omni should conduct regular use assessments for facilities and systematically keep up with current market trends.

The panel has found that many amenities that work to preserve property values and instill a sense of community for existing residents are not necessarily physical facilities but rather center around the quality of programming. Programs that will continue to increase in desirability for the new generation of buyers revolve around two primary areas: (1) health, wellness, and fitness; and (2) lifelong

learning and involvement with the outside community, including volunteer work.

A funding mechanism does need to be established to maintain the existing physical facilities and enhance them as the needs and desires of residents and potential buyers change. Capital reserves need to be abundant enough to respond to shifts in a timely way. Examples of funding mechanisms that are appropriate for the AIP community include the following:

- Annual assessments;
- AIPCA dues;
- Transfer fees; and
- Fee-based public access (i.e., a “gate fee” to use facilities or visit shops).

Once a viable financial mechanism is established, AIPCA should conduct a comprehensive capital needs assessment with assistance from Omni and the Club. Through this assessment process, the community should develop a consensus on what is of value—for instance, natural beauty, views, trees, architecture, scale, sense of place—and how to physically preserve that particular character. Places that are of value typically have an identifiable character.

The capital needs program must have three components:

- Operations, with a next fiscal year time horizon;
- Reinvestments, with a one- to two-year time horizon; and
- Expansion needs, with a five-year time horizon.

In addition to thinking strategically about updates to public facilities and programs, AIPCA should begin to think about establishing a mechanism for private sector investment in aging condominium units to keep up with the current market and ensure aesthetic continuity in the community. One example of how this could work is to provide financing or to assist investors in procuring low-interest construction loans on the condition the unit be placed into the rental program after it has been refurbished or rebuilt or that

the money be repaid upon sale. However, the math must show a return of and on the investment no matter what implementation tool is chosen.

### **3. When the initial developer departs, how is the task of visioning, redevelopment, and renewal transferred and accomplished? Is the exercise periodic, relying on outside services, or an ongoing process using in-house staff?**

The vision for the Plantation remains intact and highly attuned to the nature of the landscape. Although the panel recognizes that the ARB has process-oriented difficulties to overcome, the guidelines enforced by the review board have ensured consistency throughout the AIP’s evolution. This vision should endure, but the underlying principles that enable it can evolve and adapt to market trends.

AIP comprises three clearly defined entities—Omni, AIPCA, and the Club—along with the various neighborhood homeowner associations and the ARB. Each of the three main organizations should have a clearly defined role in the process of planning for redevelopment and renewal, and the process should be as inclusive as possible, with AIPCA taking the lead. A strategy group should be established to review benchmarks and principles for AIP on an ongoing basis, occasionally enlisting expert input on facilitation issues and specific technical expertise when required.

One of the main focuses of this group effort should be regular evaluations of the underlying ARB structure. The approach to this effort should be deliberate and systematic, as well as proactive in the interest of heading off issues before they begin to affect the community negatively. The time to make changes to the ARB structure is now, while all three partners continue the process of defining their roles within the community.

### **4. Do communities in situations similar to ours develop and make major revisions in their long-term master plan?**

The general definition of a master plan is a map-based document that lays out the physical attributes of a community, including land use, natural features, density, and

open space. No major changes should be made to the AIP master plan. Refinements should be made and tailored to the needs and wants of the community as well as to long-term changes in the real estate market. Working in tandem with the previously mentioned strategic plan, any minor changes to the master plan should focus on the following key issues:

- Changes in real estate markets over time;
- Shifts in buyer and resident amenity preferences;
- Relevant regulatory changes that occur at the state or local level;
- Environmental responses to current conditions, including changes in beach conditions or innovations in open-space stewardship;
- Maintenance and obsolescence; and
- Renewal facilitation, which could include changes such as increasing density on key sites to enable renovation of condominium structures.

Each partner organization's role in the evaluation of the master plan and potential amendments should be clearly defined before the process begins. The panel recommends designating a party to serve as the equivalent of the planning director for AIP that would report to the executive director of AIPCA, either as a hired outside consultant or as a part-time staff member. This person would be responsible for maintaining the master plan and coordinating updates to it. The property management company retained by AIPCA and the executive director of AIPCA should serve an advisory role, along with design professionals either within the community or hired on a contract basis to review amendment proposals and provide best practices.

It is important to remember the distinctions between the master plan and the strategic plan. Put plainly, the strategic plan creates a framework of goals and the tasks necessary to reach them, whereas the master plan addresses the community's physical environment, including

features such as parks and the beach, as well as land use issues such as the maximum housing densities in certain locations. Changes to the master plan may be part of the strategic plan, but this type of action will be one of many outlined in the strategic plan.

#### **5. What are the most successful methods for financing large renewal projects?**

Communities such as AIP have a number of financing options to consider as they plan for larger renewal projects or major capital investment:

- Reserve Funds: Over time, AIPCA will be able to establish a reserve fund from property owner assessments. This money could be earmarked for larger projects or used in conjunction with debt for financing.
- Transfer Fees, currently called "Contribution to Reserve (CTR)" at AIP.
- Capital (Special) Assessments: A project that affects a particular area would be a good candidate for assessment financing, which would require residents and business owners in a delineated, benefited zone to pay an assessment fee for a defined period. This approach would be similar to that currently in place for beach renourishment with the South Amelia Island Shore Stabilization Association Municipal Service Benefit Unit.
- Debt: In addition to exploring the use of debt, AIPCA should continue its current line of credit of \$1.5 million for emergency or unexpected expenses.

#### **6. Thinking specifically of future purchasers of residential real estate in a community such as Amelia Island Plantation, what amenities are now proving to be most successful in attracting new buyers? What amenities are declining in popularity? Please give special attention to two segments: (a) baby boomers and retired "active adults" and (b) younger established professionals who can work remotely, travel for a living, or commute to Jacksonville.**

Baby boomers, gen-Xers, and young families who may become full-time residents of AIP have three major interests in common: family, health and wellness, and unstructured activity. To this end, the panel suggests looking at activity programming and small-scale capital investment as ways to update the amenity structure at AIP. Trails, programmed open spaces, and social and fitness programming such as nutrition counseling and other food-related activities are all popular with newer retirees and young families. The amenity base for all these households is the existing natural and built environments with appropriate programming.

AIP should also prepare for an increase in the population of children in the community. Although having a large number of under-18 residents is unlikely, full-time families commuting to and from Jacksonville and younger retirees will mean more children. These families want venues that allow children and family to enjoy nature and activities together and independently and where children move around freely and safely. AIP already has many spaces like that; the key is to begin to brand them in such a way.

**7. What are the best practices to use parks, paths, and trails, and common properties effectively to increase the overall attractiveness of such a community? Do any cost-benefit indices measure such investments?**

The major best practice in paths and trails that AIP needs to address is providing for multiple types of transportation, including pedestrians, motorized vehicles (including golf carts), bicycles, and Segways. Not every mode needs to be specifically provided for on every trail or road. What is most important is to use design features to clearly indicate what type of transportation the path is meant for and to separate vehicular traffic from other forms. Make it easy (and preferred) not to use a private car by providing preferred parking for electric cars, assisting shared transit, and encouraging biking to the closest to facilities. By deprioritizing cars within the system, AIP can create a transportation network that promotes health and community-building.

Creating a network of trails and paths that are interconnected and lead to places that people want to go is also important. It is more efficient and works to create an

enhanced sense of place through the network. Anecdotally, the panel found that although many de facto trails and paths for walkers and bikers run through AIP, they are not clearly marked. "Legibility" is an important concept for urban designers creating a trail or path system. It means, in essence, that a visitor can easily read and understand how the system works.

A community can use a number of cost-benefit indices to measure the effectiveness of an investment in a comprehensive network of paths and trails:

- Increases in real estate premiums;
- Health benefits (obesity index, longevity, diabetes);
- Number of people using a trail amenity pre- and post-new investment; and
- Surveys.

**8. Thinking particularly about residential development, what are the best practices and policies in the following areas:**

- Teardowns and multiple lots and McMansions

Redevelopment of single-family homes should be encouraged, including teardowns. This strategy increases property values for the neighborhood as a whole. Although McMansions can sometimes seem to be an affront to the community, if they are designed well and meet qualitative requirements set by the ARB with input from AIPCA and the various homeowners associations, the practice of teardown development should be allowed. A clear set of design guidelines should be developed that include the following criteria: (a) lot coverage ratios, (b) setbacks, (c) massing, (d) height restrictions, and (f) protection of tree canopy. A design professional should be brought in as a consultant as these regulations are developed.

- Aging multiunit villas and condominiums

AIPCA should work with COAs/HOAs to develop plans specific to each AIP neighborhood to deal with deteriorating

property. Each COA/HOA should clearly define standards of quality for redevelopment.

When looking at a particular property, the COA/HOA and AIPCA should determine if it can be restored or refurbished and begin to facilitate the redevelopment process.

If a property can be restored, the COA/HOA should use designs that both it and the ARB have preapproved and develop construction rules to mitigate impact on adjacent units. The ARB should provide recommendations for landscaping. Projects can be financed through the creation of a fund for no- or low-interest financing that can be paid back through rental income on the unit. AIPCA can administer this fund. For potential developers, information should be available that demonstrates incremental rental income opportunity as a result of upgrade or redevelopment.

If an existing unit cannot be restored but instead must be demolished, AIPCA should serve as a resource for redevelopment and assist the COA/HOA in creating a team of professionals (including legal, financial, design, and construction professionals) to help define and consider the various options. AIPCA should also assist the COA/HOA in seeking an outside developer to buy out the existing units to redevelop. One incentive for doing this could be an increase in density upon redevelopment that would generate additional revenue for the investor.

**9. What are best practices in terms of non-Club community clubhouses as gathering spots for lectures, card games, classes, yoga and flexibility, Internet, informal parties, and the like? What facilities and services are most popular today? How is this expected to change as baby boomers purchase homes in active adult communities?**

“Village casual” environments that are built at a small scale but are flexible and welcoming are the best places to hold both formal and informal gatherings. The panel has recommended that AIPCA investigate a facilities swap with Omni for ownership of the Racquet Park Conference Center to convert that property into a true, multiuse community center. Enabling the “chance en-

counters” that help build community is important. It can be accomplished by creating a FedEx or UPS drop at the new community center or by providing free WiFi service. More details regarding this proposal are contained in the “Quality of Life” section of this report.

**10. Regarding roads, paths, and trails and the goal of improving neighborhood connectivity, pedestrian and vehicular safety, and other related matters, what are the best practices for enhancing mobility within the community?**

This answer has been combined with question 7.

**11. In middle-aged, multiuse communities, what organizational activities best facilitate relationships among all stakeholders? What governance structure, policies, and practices do successful communities use to initiate, guide, and control redevelopment? What are best practices for managing change and obtaining community buy-in?**

The master plan and strategic plan updates and development described earlier in this appendix will create community dialogue around governance and redevelopment, which reinforces the importance of making these planning processes community driven.

Best practices for community buy-in on change and redevelopment include the following:

- Holding community charrettes: use technology to allow virtual participation by nonresidents, including subject experts from around the country;
- Institutionalizing meetings between the Club, AIPCA, and Omni so they continue when the initiating individuals have departed; and
- Institutionalizing meetings between leadership of individual COAs/HOAs and AIPCA to coordinate planning processes.

**12. Thinking specifically about community redevelopment and renewal efforts, can any generalities be made between communities that hire their own**

**staff compared to outsourcing community management to a third party?**

AIPCA is fortunate right now to have a very active group of residents performing many functions. However, this high level of involvement is not sustainable over time. Professional management is critical for maintaining a consistent level of quality. Third-party management typically will have more resources to bring to bear that will benefit AIPCA. These include billing and accounting software, human resources expertise (including labor), equipment, knowledge of current trends in resort community management, keen knowledge of regulations, and purchasing power. Specific long-term capital improvement plans as well as short-term maintenance standards should be built into the contract.

After hiring outside management to fulfill many of the responsibilities of AIPCA, the board has a critical role. It must establish clear management priorities and performance standards and ensure that AIP receives dedicated, focused service. The board also must serve as a conduit between residents and the management company so the manager does not receive conflicting instructions. Once the three partners have agreed upon a set of maintenance and management performance standards, the panel recommends a management company selection process to include request for qualifications (RFQ), followed by a request for proposals (RFP). This process should help the partners select the management firm that is most cost-effective in delivering optimal performance.

Having one management company is preferable for the entire resort property—including Omni and the Club—to minimize gaps in service and to create seamless and consistent service across the property.

**13. What are the characteristics of successful architectural review boards? Please consider such aspects as board composition and skills, transparency, conflict resolution, board funding, written guidelines, and the like. What should be avoided? In multiuse communities, how does the review process differ for commercial projects compared to residential?**

Great ARBs are seen as both a resource and a keeper of the standards. That greatness should begin with creating a clear set of guiding principles that articulate the vision and philosophy of AIP. This step is especially important to guide presession preparation so the board is ready to justify its decision making using principles from the AIP vision.

The ARB review process and criteria should be dynamic, meaning that the ARB is constantly learning and adapting as it makes decisions. Procedural consistency and transparency must overlay this to ensure credibility of the ARB and value protection for the community. To this end, the lessons learned should be recorded and institutionalized for continuity.

ARB member composition should consist of an external professional, either design or development, who rotates regularly to provide different types of expert guidance. Internally, one member should come from an internal operational perspective, for instance, an individual deeply involved in AIP strategic planning or master plan updates. A resident representative with a design background, such as an architect or landscape architect, should also be on the ARB.

Finally, the ARB must recognize that different types of development require different review criteria. Mixed-use applications should be handled differently from residential or commercial applications, and separate review boards may be needed for commercial and residential applications. For any review process, the ARB should not hesitate to enlist additional outside professional experience. A new bylaw could be created allowing an additional adjunct member with specialized experience relevant to the application at hand.

**14. What other things should the AIPCA consider that have not been specifically identified above?**

The sections in the report that describe ways to enhance real estate values and quality of life include many items that were not addressed in the 13 previous questions, such as the following:

- Change the term the president can serve. The panel recommends a one-year term with the possibility of reelection for up to two additional terms.
- Create “Amelia Life,” an umbrella for the social interaction of the entire community.
- Create a place for the community that serves as the “living room” or “great room.”
- Create the Amelia Island Foundation to be the vehicle for philanthropic donations to local organizations.
- Survey the community frequently to track resident needs and wants and to inform the strategic plan.

Additionally, AIPCA may be able to take advantage of the following opportunities:

- Facilitate community interest to create cultural focus including arts, music, nature, and the like. If enough interest exists, formalize this effort as the AIP Institute.
- Focus on ways to reduce energy and operating costs, including upgrading heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems; controlling room temperature more efficiently; using smaller, alternative-fuel vehicles; meeting green-built standards when replacing buildings; installing motion-triggered lights inside and outside; changing type of lighting; using reduced-water fixtures (faucets, toilets); and improving insulation with remodels.
- Coordinate services for the aging population, such as tree trimming, house cleaning, or a handyman. Most of these services could be provided by Omni and generate additional revenue, with AIPCA facilitating.
- Work with the ARB to include more sustainability criteria in design guidelines.

The “Timeline” section in the report includes a comprehensive list of action items for AIPCA to consider.

# About the Panel

## Franklin A. Martin

*Panel Chair*  
*Ventura, California*

From 1997 to 2008, Martin was responsible for the planning, development, and management of Hidden Springs, a 1,724-acre planned community in the Boise front foothills. Hidden Springs was the 2000 recipient of the “Best in American Living” Platinum Award for Smart Growth sponsored by *Professional Builder* magazine and the National Association of Home Builders. Hidden Springs was also featured prominently as a case study in the new Urban Land Institute book *Conservation Communities: Creating Value with Nature, Open Space, and Agriculture*.

Between 1971 and 1997, Martin was responsible for the development of more than 3,000 homes, primarily in the Chicago metropolitan area, and performed project management for several financial institutions to stabilize and market their distressed real estate projects. From 1989 to 1997, he was chief operating officer of Shaw Homes, Inc., an affiliate of the Shaw Company. During this period, he managed the development of several award-winning communities, including Garibaldi Square, Homan Square, Luther Village, Prairie Crossing, and The Reserve at the Merit Club.

Martin is the past chair of the ULI’s Sustainable Development Council and the ULI Idaho District Council. He has chaired six ULI Advisory Services panels and served on three other panels.

He received a BA in economics from Hanover College and an MBA in finance from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

## Richard Albrecht

*Park City, Utah*

Albrecht is a developer and management professional with over 25 years of experience in the development and operation of successful luxury resort communities. His expertise is in creating viable development plans for resorts and communities that create long-term value by integrating top-quality development with first-class resort operations focused on personal service. Albrecht has led the successful execution of several complex projects from the conceptual stage through the design, construction, sales, and operations stages. He has extensive experience forming and operating clubs and homeowners associations as well as property management programs.

As president, development, for Miraval Resort in Tucson, Arizona, Albrecht led the master planning for the renovation, expansion, and new residential development of this top-ranked destination spa. He also led the planning and created the economic model for the brand extension into several new resorts and “wellness lifestyle” communities.

As chief operating officer for Talisker Deer Valley, Utah, Albrecht led the development and successful launch of an enclave of lots at the top of Deer Valley Ski Area and managed the development and successful relaunch at Tuhaye, a golf and ski-oriented community in Park City, Utah.

As chief operating officer with the Hualalai Resort in Hawaii, he led a team with responsibilities for an award-winning resort community. Albrecht led the management of the resort operations and real estate development, including creation of the second-phase master plan.

Albrecht has an MBA from the Anderson School at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a BA from the University of California, Berkeley.

## Mary Borgia

*Newport Beach, California*

Borgia, president of the Borgia Company, based in Newport Beach, California, specializes in marketing advisory services for resort and residential community developments. Today, given the increased need to understand overall sales and marketing dynamics, Borgia often serves as chief marketing officer for her clients.

Founded in 1986, the Borgia Company has successfully executed hundreds of major assignments ranging from creating the concept and programming for resort and residential communities to developing and executing strategic marketing plans. Distinguished clients include the Irvine Company, Hines Resorts, Hunt Realty, Leucadia National Corporation, Lowe Development Corporation, the Pivotal Group, Mitsubishi Corporation, Murray Franklyn Companies, the Nature Conservancy, the Pebble Beach Company, Port Blakely Tree Farms, and Valencia Company.

Borgia's experience and talents span a wide array of disciplines. She has been the marketing force behind many successful and award-winning projects, including The Residences at Spanish Bay, Pebble Beach, California; Tumble Creek and Suncadia, Roslyn, Washington; The Terraces at the Vintage Club and The Reserve, Indian Wells, California; Snowcreek, Mammoth, California; River Valley Ranch, Carbondale, Colorado; and Stowe Mountain Lodge, Stowe, Vermont.

With more than 35 years of active involvement in real estate development, she is a frequent speaker at professional and university forums. Borgia is very involved in ULI at the national level and is currently the Council Counselor for the four Recreation Development Councils.

Borgia has a BA from Knox College and an MBA from Pepperdine University.

## Greg Cory

*San Francisco, California*

Until 2009, Cory was senior vice president with Economics Research Associates (ERA). The ERA brand was absorbed by a publicly traded engineering company in 2007, the name extinguished, and the historic consulting lines largely abandoned. To rekindle the unique culture that was embodied in ERA, he founded his own company, Land Use Economics, LLC, headquartered in San Francisco.

Cory is also founder of the Land Use Guild International, a member-based consortium of seasoned, respected practitioners with similar backgrounds, dedicated to sharing knowledge and resources, helping maintain standards, and providing peer review of each other's work as an additional service to clients. The guild represents the resources of four separate companies, a combined expertise of more than 130 years, and experience in over 50 international markets.

Throughout his career, Cory has specialized in developmental economics. Although he has dealt with a broad cross section of land uses, he has specialized in tourism and resort development because of its potential impact on lesser-developed economies. He has accumulated over 30 years' experience in analyzing the demand for hotels, resorts, and recreation-oriented facilities; has studied more than 450 resorts in over 45 international markets in depth; and is a frequent lecturer on resort economics and tourism. While at ERA, he served as head of the Resort Practice Group and was the corporate representative to the Caribbean Tourism Organization, the National Golf Foundation, and the National Ski Area Association. He also served as chairman of the Recreation Development Council of the Urban Land Institute and is a contributing author for two books on resort development published by that organization, *Resort Development Handbook* and *Developing Golf in Residential Communities*.

## Jim Heid

*San Francisco, California*

Heid is a real estate adviser, land planner, and sustainability expert, whose focus is the creation of developments that provide a positive contribution to their environment, region, and residents. In 2000, he founded UrbanGreen to advise established development companies, governments, and legacy nongovernmental organizations that seek better development models. With over 30 years' experience in the design and development of new community, urban infill, and resort developments, Heid is known to effectively resolve the complex layers of community design and real estate development using a variety of proven tools and best practices. He is motivated by the need to deliver high-quality developments to a broader market—in an increasingly complex world of entitlements and financing—without compromising environmental, economic, or place-making objectives.

Heid brings rigor to the rapidly changing discussion of urban sustainability through a dedication to research and practical hands-on experience. Over the past decade, he has pioneered many of the Urban Land Institute's evolving contributions to sustainable land development, climate change, and real estate investment. For ULI he serves on the Climate, Land Use, and Energy Committee. He is a regularly featured speaker at national conferences and symposia and the primary instructor for ULI's Sustainable Communities Development Workshops. He is nationally recognized as an articulate advocate for responsible land development.

Before founding UrbanGreen, Heid worked as an urban designer and land planner and as a real estate strategy adviser with two of the country's leading firms, Design Workshop (1987–1993) and EDAW (1994–2000), where he also served as chief operating officer. In 1994, he earned an MS in real estate development at Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a way to more fully integrate the practice of land design with real-world implementation strategies.

## Andrew Irvine

*Denver, Colorado*

Irvine is a principal with RNL Design in Denver. RNL is a full-service architecture and landscape architecture firm with offices in Denver, Phoenix, Los Angeles, and Abu Dhabi. RNL is dedicated to sustainability, design excellence, and innovation in architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, planning, and urban design. RNL embraces the Design for One Earth philosophy.

Before his current position, Irvine was a senior landscape architect at EDAW, Inc., with a broad range of project experience throughout the United States and Australia. He has specialized skills in site planning, master planning, and urban design guidelines. His range of projects includes major infrastructure, urban renewal, public domain, and traditional park design. He has worked on numerous planning projects that include significant experience with transportation and waterfront development. He also has completed projects that have incorporated comprehensive open-space networks and ecological restoration areas into planned communities.

Irvine has served on four of ULI's national Advisory Services panels. He has degrees in landscape architecture and environmental design.

## Sandra Kulli

*Malibu, California*

Kulli creates marketing programs for builders and developers. She has worked with more than 100 companies on 223 communities with sales exceeding \$6 billion throughout the United States and in Japan, New Zealand, England, Dubai, Sweden, and Mexico.

Kulli Marketing consults with residential builders and mixed-use developers on marketing strategy—from high concept to urban infill. She leads outside marketing resources in concert with the staff of builders and developers. Her large mixed-use projects include Playa Vista in Los Angeles; Stapleton in Denver; Daybreak in Salt Lake City;

and The Pinehills in Plymouth, Massachusetts, the Rural Smart Growth Community of the Year for 2006. Her urban infill works includes Park Fifth, W Hotel, and Residences in Hollywood, and NBC-Universal's Back Lot. Outside the United States, she is currently working with MIRA on resort development in Mexico and with Skanska's residential innovation group in Stockholm.

Kulli has spoken at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, the University of Southern California's Master in Real Estate Development program, ULI, and the Presidential Seminar for CEOs. She has also written for industry publications and judged at Gold Nuggets, Best in American Living, and Builders Choice in Woodstock, Vermont.

She has served on national ULI panels on transit-oriented development, the Memphis Riverfront Development, and Ardmore Main Street in Philadelphia; chaired the ULI-LA Panel for the Boyle Heights Sears Site; served as president of Pacific Coast Builders Conference in June 2004; and is cochair of the awards program for ULI Los Angeles.

Kulli graduated from Wellesley College and earned a master's degree at Boston University. Before Kulli Marketing, she led marketing for a large homebuilder, sold homes, and taught at inner-city schools. She serves on the boards of KCRW, The Vine, ULI LA, Pacific Coast Builders Conference, and Abode Communities, building service-enhanced affordable housing.

## Dan Slone

*Richmond, Virginia*

A partner in the law firm of McGuireWoods, Slone represents developers and communities in overcoming the land use and environmental permitting impediments to small and large-scale projects such as new towns, utilities, and industrial facilities. He provides a wide range of services for developers of new urban and sustainable projects with a related focus on the convergence of communication, power, and essential services. He has assisted clients in dealing with wetland permitting and enforcement for more than two decades. Slone also works with a wide range of green product manufacturers.

His practice area includes environmental solutions, land use, energy and utilities, and sustainability.

He has a JD *cum laude* from the University of Michigan Law School, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was an editor with *Journal of Law Reform*. He has a BA *summa cum laude* in philosophy and political science from Birmingham Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama. Among Slone's many honors, he was named one of the "Best Lawyers in America" (Woodward/White, Inc., 2006–2011); named to *Lawdragon 3000 Leading Lawyers in America List*, 2009–2011; named one of America's "Leading Lawyers," Environmental Law (*Chambers USA*, 2004–2010); named a Virginia "Super Lawyer" (*Law & Politics*, 2005–2011); recipient, Henry David Thoreau Environmental Conservator, Better Housing Coalition 2010 Groundbreaker Award; recipient, Special Recognition for Service Award, Virginia Sustainable Building Network, 2006; recipient, Leadership Award, James River Green Building Council, 2005; Phi Beta Kappa, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Institute of Green Professionals, Honorary Fellow. Slone is a full member of the Urban Land Institute and is a member of its Sustainability Council.

## Rebecca Zimmermann

*Denver, Colorado*

Zimmermann is president of Design Workshop. She is involved in tourism, community, economic, and marketing-related consulting. She is highly recognized for her work with resort communities, including visitor services analysis, market definition, positioning and tourism planning; and in urban areas for brownfield redevelopment, development entitlements, and real estate economics.

She holds an MBA from the University of Colorado and bachelor's degrees in communication and business administration from Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas. Zimmermann is a member of ULI, serving on the Recreation Development Council, and she teaches marketing of real estate classes for the ULI Real Estate School. She has also participated as a jurist for the ULI Global Awards for Excellence.

# A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report



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