



Entertainment-Restaurant District Operator & Developer Solicitation Process; Governance Reorganization

Chandler, Arizona

The Wild Horse Pass Development Authority (WHPDA), a wholly owned entity of the Gila River Indian Community, has engaged Hunden on four different occasions to conduct studies and processes for major tracts of land near I-10. Currently, the site includes a major racetrack complex, a casino, hotels, resorts, a Simon outlet mall, an Old West town and an event venue. Hunden's work resulted in a long-term master plan that would maximize the value of the land and its uses for the next 30 – 75 years.

Hunden conducted a market analysis that considered the potential of more than a dozen uses and how those would perform over time. Hunden then managed the solicitation and selection process for developers and operators of a major mixed-use entertainment and restaurant district that would connect their hotel/casino with their Simon outlet mall, creating synergy amongst all elements.

At the beginning of 2021, WHPDA announced the newly envisioned master plan was approved by the Gila River Indian Community. The site is planned for a large-scale sports and entertainment district including additional hotels, a wellness center, an event center, an outdoor amphitheater music entertainment venue, sports facilities, outdoor recreation and parks, restaurants, retail, and an office park.

Operations RFP. As part of the process, Hunden engaged with numerous operating companies and developers who sought to execute the entertainment district development plan, including a third-party operation agreement for the food and beverage. OVG360 had been managing the catering, restaurants and concession at the complex and Hunden worked with the Client to determine the options for moving forward either in-house or with new operating partners.

Event and F&B Reorganization. Hunden also managed a business restructuring endeavor with WHPDA for two major event facilities within the development area: Motorsports Park and the Rawhide Events Center. This included a deep dive into the catering and concessions operations, delivery, customer service and overall business efficiency. Hunden results were presented to the WHPDA board, followed by a merger of the entities.

Client: Wild Horse Pass Development Authority

Time Period:

2015 - 2019