

# SUN CITY ARIZONA

## THE COMMUNITY THAT STARTED IT ALL

*In our continuing series featuring America's premier golf cart communities, we explore Sun City, Arizona - the groundbreaking retirement destination that helped establish golf carts as essential vehicles for active adult living.*

**W**hen Del Webb opened Sun City, Arizona's first five model homes on January 1, 1960, he was embarking on a radical experiment. The concept was bold: create a master-planned retirement community built specifically for active adults, where residents could pursue leisure and recreation as their primary lifestyle. More than six decades later, that vision has not only succeeded—it has become the template for active adult communities worldwide.

### **PIONEERING THE ACTIVE ADULT LIFESTYLE**

Sun City's innovative approach is designed for residents 55 and older who aren't ready to slow down. While affectionately known as the "City of Volunteers," Sun City, AZ is not a city, but rather an unincorporated active adult community in Maricopa County. Recreation Centers of Sun City, AZ (RCSC) is a nonprofit, private corporation which owns and operates recreational and social facilities in Sun City. Services include: recreation centers, golf

courses, snack shops, bowling centers, restaurants (leased), an open-air amphitheater and ballfield, a dog park and a 33-acre man-made lake. The community spans 14 square miles of palm tree-lined streets and features specific amenities that were revolutionary for their time and continue to be utilized today.

- Eight golf courses (five championship and three executive) managed by RCSC and three private golf courses within the region's boundaries
- Eight recreation centers with pools, fitness centers, and club/social spaces
- Approximately 125 chartered clubs and special interest groups
- Multiple venues for entertainment and cultural activities
- Comprehensive medical facilities and services (independently managed)
- Population of approximately 40,000 residents

"Sun City Arizona is where aging is actually fun," as one resident described it. "In this community, retirees attend prom, join cheer squads, and shoot pool. This is not God's waiting room."





### WHERE GOLF CARTS BECAME ESSENTIAL

Unlike communities that later adapted to golf cart usage, Sun City embraced these vehicles as integral to its lifestyle from early in its development. The community's design, with its network of golf courses and recreation centers, naturally accommodated golf cart transportation as residents moved between activities.

Today, golf carts serve as primary transportation for many residents, connecting neighborhoods to the community's extensive recreational facilities. The vehicles have evolved far beyond their original golf course purpose to become personalized expressions of their owners' personalities and interests.

The warm Arizona climate allows for year-round golf cart usage, making these vehicles practical transportation choices rather than seasonal conveniences. Many residents customize their carts with weather protection, upgraded seating, and personal touches that reflect their individual style.

"The biggest change we've seen over the last 10 years has been the rapid growth of lithium as a power

source," said Abe Krumm from Pohle NV Center, a golf cart sales and service dealership in Sun City. "These new batteries handle the heat of Arizona better than any other option."

### EIGHT COURSES, ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

Golf remains a central attraction, with Sun City offering an unprecedented variety of courses within a single community. Each of the eight courses provides different challenges and experiences, allowing residents to play a different course every day of the week with one left over.

The golf facilities include championship courses designed for serious play alongside more relaxed executive courses perfect for casual rounds. This variety ensures that golfers of all skill levels find appropriate challenges while maintaining the social aspects that make golf cart transportation so appealing.

### BEYOND GOLF: A COMPLETE LIFESTYLE

While golf courses anchor the community, Sun City's appeal extends far beyond the fairways. The eight recreation centers buzz with activities ranging from fitness classes and swimming to arts and crafts, social clubs, and educational programs.

### POPULAR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Swimming and aquatic fitness programs
- Tennis and pickleball courts
- Bowling at two dedicated centers
- Arts and crafts studios
- Social dancing and entertainment venues
- Educational seminars and lifelong learning

Many residents structure their days around multiple activities, using golf carts to move efficiently between morning fitness classes, afternoon social clubs, and evening entertainment—all within the community's boundaries.

### BUILDING CONNECTIONS THROUGH MOBILITY

The golf cart culture in Sun City fosters the social connections that define successful active adult living. The slower pace and open-air nature of golf cart travel encourages interactions between neighbors, whether it's a quick wave on the path or stopping to chat about weekend plans.

This connectivity extends to community events, where hundreds of customized golf carts might gather for parades, celebrations, or group outings. The vehicles become conversation starters and expressions of personality that help build the social bonds essential to community life.

"The fun begins at any one of Sun City's eight





## FAST FACTS: Sun City

**LOCATION:** Northwest Phoenix, Arizona, approximately 15 miles from downtown.

**POPULATION:** Approximately 40,000 residents.

**GOLF CART CULTURE:** Integral to daily transportation and community lifestyle.

**RECREATION:** Eight golf courses, eight recreation centers, two bowling centers, amphitheater/ballfield, dog park, and lake.

**NOTABLE FEATURES:** Original master-planned active adult community established in 1960.

**WEBSITE:** [SunCityAZ.org](http://SunCityAZ.org)

recreation centers," community materials note, and golf carts make it possible to discover just how active a "life of leisure" can be.

### SETTING THE STANDARD FOR ACTIVE ADULT LIVING

Sun City's success helped establish the active adult community model that has been replicated across the country. The integration of golf carts into daily life wasn't planned as much as it evolved naturally from the community's design and residents' desire for convenient, social transportation.

The community continues to attract new residents who are drawn to the combination of recreational opportunities, social connections, and lifestyle convenience that golf carts help facilitate. As one resident explained, "Picture an entire community designed around letting you do whatever you want to do, and be whomever you feel like being."

In Sun City, that freedom often includes the simple pleasure of cruising palm-lined streets in a personalized golf cart, heading to the next adventure in a community where fun truly is the primary occupation. 🏌️

