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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oro Valley Keeps Sun City Residents Outside Flood Plain *Town Officials Correct FEMA Map Revision to Save Units in Subdivision*

ORO VALLEY, ARIZ(July 16, 2007) —The Town of Oro Valley, working with Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and officials from Pima County's Flood Control District, have worked to correct flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs) that had placed housing units within Sun City Vistoso inside a 100-year flood plain.

The FIRMs, issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), reflect federally recognized flood hazardous areas. The maps are updated approximately every 10 years.

Under FEMA guidelines, a property that has a 1 in 100 chance in any given year that it will flood is designated as a 100-year flood plain. Communities in Arizona work with FEMA when establishing housing units to ensure they are outside of the flood plain or meet flood plain compliance standards. Sun City Vistoso, constructed 20 years ago, had not previously been in the designated flood plain. However, a 1999 update of the area published by FEMA mistakenly showed these boundaries now included the community.

Residents of the Sun City Vistoso community contacted Council Member KC Carter to express their concerns over the designation. Working with Mayor Paul Loomis, along with staff from the Town's Stormwater division, Pima County and Rep. Giffords, officials were able to determine the designation was in error. This July, FEMA notified Town and County officials that the error had been corrected. Staff and the Pima County Flood Control District will work with FEMA to create new digital FIRMs that will be published in 2008.

"The safety of our citizens is of course our number one concern," Loomis said. "This error created a great amount of confusion and angst for residents who suddenly found themselves living in an unsafe area. Luckily, we were able to demonstrate that the error was just that—and allow them to continue to feel safe in their community."

Carter agreed. "The cooperation of everyone involved was key to assessing where the confusion occurred and what the best remedy might be on behalf of our citizens," he said. "We appreciate the tremendous work of our staff, as well as that of the County and Congresswoman Giffords."

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