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**CONTINENTAL GROUP OF SCOTTSDALE DONATES  
HISTORIC WESTERN FILM SET TO RAWHIDE WESTERN  
TOWN AND STEAKHOUSE AT WILD HORSE PASS**

Chandler, AZ – (August 25, 2011) -- Studio City Loft LLC, a division of [Continental Group of Scottsdale](#), a major Arizona developer, has purchased [CJS Film Studios](#) the existing historic western town that sits on a 20 acre site located at 2005 N. 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Avondale Arizona.

CJS Film Studios has been in existence for 50 years and has been the site of many memorable films such as "The Rifleman" including numerous Westerns, and has a wonderful film set comprising street facades of an Old Western Town, with a saloon, Mexican cantina and more.

Mr. John M. Lupypciw, the owner of Studio City Lofts, is intent on preserving this important piece of history and has generously donated the historic western set to [Rawhide Western Town and Steakhouse](#), located in Chandler, Arizona just off I-10 at the Wild Horse Pass exit.

Rawhide is very pleased to accept the western facades and will be dismantling the film set, beginning this Friday, August 26 at CJS Studios. On hand at 1 p.m. will be former film studio owner, C.J. Smith, Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers and the new owner, Mr. John M. Lupypciw.

The media is invited to attend at 1 p.m. to capture the dismantling of the site, and talk to Mr. C.J. Smith about some of the historic films that have been shot at the site. Directions: Take McDowell Road to 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

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# West Valley View

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## Film studio no more

**Little-known site in Avondale being converted into apartments**

Rich Ott  
assistant editor

While the movies that were shot there most recently - *Netherbeast Incorporated* and *Farewell Darkness* in 2006 and 2007, respectively - are on nobody's blockbuster list, Friday's dismantling of the film studio at 2005 N. 103rd Ave. in Avondale marked a sad day.

"It's a sad feeling, but change is change," Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers said as she stood in the middle of a long, dusty street made to look like the wild west of the 1800s, complete with all the appropriate building façades to bring the illusion to life.

The western town - which includes an actual two-story saloon that is not a façade - is just one of the many charming areas on the 20-acre site that will soon be no more.

Scottsdale-based Continental Group recently purchased the foreclosed land for an undisclosed amount under the name Studio City Lofts LLC.

The company plans to build about 500 apartments on the premises, but before doing so, it needs to remove a lot of history in the form of sets, façades and sound stages.

"A bulldozer would knock it over in an afternoon," said Terry O'Neill, spokesman for Studio City Lofts. However, it was important to his client that "the heritage was preserved," he said.

So workers began taking apart various sets Friday, which will then be transported to Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass in Chandler, the organization Studio City Lofts is donating the old movie pieces to.

"We were very pleased to donate this part of history to Rawhide," said John Lupypciw, Studio City Lofts' president and CEO, who in a striking business suit, looked out of place Friday on the old west set.

"We're thankful for the donation," Rawhide General Manager Brian Crum said. "We're going to integrate [these sets] into the 1880's town we have, not expand it. We're just going to make Rawhide a little bit fatter and juicier."

### Avondale to Chandler

The set pieces will soon go on quite a trip: from the little-known studio that was hidden just north of McDowell Road off of 103rd Avenue in Avondale to the well-known, 39-year-old family entertainment facility just west of Interstate 10 at Wild Horse Pass Boulevard in Chandler.



WORKERS MOVE A PANEL from a building Friday at CJS Studios in Avondale. The property was recently purchased by a developer who is going to have the studio destroyed to make apartments. Some of the Old West building façades will be preserved at Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass. View photo by Michael Clawson



STUDIO CITY Loft President and CEO John Lupypciw, left, walks the Old West main street with Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers Friday at CJS Studios in Avondale. Studio City Loft bought the foreclosed land and plans to put 500 apartments on the 20-acre site. View photo by Michael Clawson

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"It's exciting and challenging to get this thing moved across town," Crum said. "We not only have to disassemble and move it, then we have to receive it and assemble it."

Crum was on site Friday as his crew of about a dozen men began the process, which he hopes to complete by "the last week of September," he said. "We got some skilled people and plenty of manpower."

While not having too many ideas ironed out just yet, Crum said they definitely plan to use the two-story Western saloon - the most attractive piece being donated to Rawhide - in the middle of town.

Plus, there is an old west newspaper building at the Avondale studio site that Crum hopes to put Rawhide's working printing press in, giving visitors a place to go to pick up the facility's letters.

And a lot of the façades will "bridge the existing buildings there," he said.

"It will be restored, so that's a positive to me; people can go visit it," Avondale's mayor said of most of the set pieces leaving her city.

### Green apartments

Not all of Friday's news was sad, though.

"We have a good product coming in," Rogers said.

"Continental purchased the site with plans to redevelop the area and bring in housing that will be beneficial to Avondale," Lupyciw said.

The plans Continental will soon submit to the city call for about 25 units per acre, which is less than the city recommended per acre, O'Neill said.

"[Lupyciw] wanted room for pools, fitness areas and to be green," O'Neill said.

"It will be a multi-family community that is green," Lupyciw said, referring to saving the environment. "We have superior designs; something that is going to bring the neighborhood to a higher scale."

Continental hopes to begin developing the 20 acres as soon as all the historic film studio pieces find a new home.

"We think this is the right time to develop," Lupyciw said.

The Studio City Lofts president said once they start construction, it will require about 400 workers.

"We hope to be through [donating all the pieces] very shortly and are in the ground quickly when people really need to work," he said.

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