

Tao Yuan Ju — A Beautiful, Energetic and Engaging Community in Shenzhen China

Ai-Jun L*

President, Magaharvest International Pty Ltd

It is a great honor of mine to be here today to introduce you our beautiful, energetic and engaging community. That is Tao Yuan Ju Community in Shenzhen China.

The name of Tao Yuan Ju comes from a well-known essay 'Record of Tao Yuan Village' by a famous Chinese poet, Tao Yuan-Ming, 2000 years ago. Tao Yuan means paradise. In the essay, the poet described an ideal world that had no wars, poverty or worries. Farmers all had lands to work on and lived a happy and harmonious life. In the mid 19th century, a European explorer, Mr James Hilton, found a beautiful place in a plateau of Western China, which was later named Shangri-La. Both Tao Yuan Ju and Shangri-La are like the Eden Garden created by God, a dream of paradise sought after by our human beings.

We are working hard towards the above paradise for residents in Tao Yuan Ju. Tao Yuan Ju is creating happy homes for 50,000 people in a beautiful and harmonious place in Shenzhen China, where every one has plenty of food and clothing, senior people enjoy a natural and cheerful sunset life, children receive quality education, and women become more beautiful and self confident. All the women in Tao Yuan Ju have the opportunities to attend lifelong education, which is funded by the specific community development funds for women.

China is a civilized country with five thousand years' history. Shenzhen was just a coastal township with 30,000 people 20 years ago. Now it has become an international city with a population of 11 million. Along with the further developing and reforming in China, the social structure has also undertaken significant and rapid changes. As the reforming and opening policy developed further and further in China, the community structure has also been through a speedy and enormous change. For example, millions of peasants become city residents. Communities have become the

basic cells of a society. The community of Tao Yuan Ju has a population of 36,000 with a planning peak population of 50,000. As a satellite township of Shenzhen city, Tao Yuan Ju consists of residential buildings, commercial facilities, recreation areas, and education, health and tourism facilities. In the past few years, there has been no crime or legal conflict in the community. It has become the preferred place for people to live, to receive quality education, to work and to enjoy holidays. Tao Yuan Ju has won a series of awards from a range level of Chinese governments and is set as a model community by the Chinese central government. Recently, Tao Yuan Ju was awarded as a Chinese International Garden Community by the United Nations Environment Planning Department (UNEP) and the International Parks Association (IFPRA) in Malaysia. Tao Yuan Ju has been a successful model in designing, developing and managing an international sustainable community.

The key indicators of a sustainable development community may be the continuous improvement in the residents' living standards, the continuing cultural development, the increased value of the properties and the stable prosperity of the community economy without the cost of losing the future. Tao Yuan Ju would like to share our experiences in developing a sustainable community as the following.

The first element of our experience is the community management. The community management model in China has been gradually transformed from the government dominated type to a government-enterprise cooperation type. So many government-guided, enterprise-managed autonomy communities have been developed in China lately. Tao Yuan Ju is one of them. Tao Yuan Ju is guided by the local Chinese government, funded by an Australian company and managed by a Chinese developer according to the local market status. Due to the input of the Australian company, Tao Yuan Ju benefits to a great extent from experiences of Australian community management and consulting expertise. Tao Yuan Ju is now a bridge for the economy and culture cooperation between China and Australia. The other feature of community management is that all the members in the management committee have to be elected by the residents, which will lead to a more democracy and free environment. The last point of the community management is that the community services are provided by professional companies as well as volunteers from the

residents. We believe that a community is like a big family and its happiness and sustainable development depends on everyone's efforts in the community.

The second element of our experience is the comprehensive public facilities. To ensure the sustainable development of the community, it is essential to engage the whole community in making good use of the public facilities for the commercial as well as philanthropic operation. The facilities are managed commercially but the profits go back to the community's further development. Therefore, to set up a number of well-structured non-profit local organisations within the community is then essential for the sustainability. Finance management is important for any organisation or community. The funding in Tao Yuan Ju is a 'five-star' structure, which shows five contributors to the total funding system: the first star from the government; the second star from the property management company; the third star from the profits of public facilities; the fourth star from the donation of the developer; and the fifth star from the volunteers' services to reduce the management cost.

The third element of our experience is to have a professional community developer. The developer must plan well in advance even in the initial stage of planning, so that upon the completion of the community construction the community can enjoy a stable and sustainable prosperity. As a professional community development enterprise, we have a well-thought planning and development concept focussing on human beings comprehensive needs. Our mission is to focus all our efforts on human beings in our planning, construction and management of the community. While working hard to reduce the residents' living cost, we try every measure to improve their living standards, create opportunities of employment and establish a perfect wellbeing system. It is our objective to form a collective and cooperation awareness through vivid cultural activities. We strongly believe that a community with sustainable development strength is one by engaging every one in the community and collecting everyone's wisdom and efforts in the management and operation process.

You will be more than welcome to come and visit our Tao Yuan Ju community in Shenzhen China. Now, I'd like to show you the VCD file of the energetic and engaging Tao Yuan Ju.