

Deseret Morning News, Friday, September 30, 2005

## An unprecedented process

### Deseret Morning News editorial

Never before has a landowner fully involved elected officials and municipal planners in a massive land use and planning project *before* going to officials for their approval.

But the area that Kennecott Land plans to develop — some 144 square miles along the undeveloped west bench of the Oquirrh Mountains and into Tooele and Utah counties — is far from the limited developments that cities and counties ordinarily encounter. Kennecott Land developments will literally change the face of the west side of the Salt Lake Valley forever. It is critical that this is done well, abiding by the best practices in municipal and urban planning.

It's early in the process, but Kennecott Land has established six key principles for its developments: sustainability, environmental responsibility, a sense of community, open space, quality of life and a unique sense of place. These principles should be a fantastic springboard to launch the discussion, which began in earnest this week.

Those talks will be followed by a summit on Oct. 12, when Kennecott's preliminary master plan will be revealed. The group will conduct subsequent monthly meetings to discuss and refine the ideas into a revised master plan, to be announced in December. That plan will guide future development, which would have to be approved by the respective city and/or county governments.

Kennecott Land's Daybreak development in South Jordan showcases many elements of the smart planning practices. That master-planned community includes parks that are within a five-minute walk of every home, a school and community center and a lake for recreation, fishing and irrigation.

By contrast, Kennecott Land's proposed west bench plans involve a 26-mile-long, 93,000-acre swath along the Oquirrh Mountain foothills and into Tooele and Utah counties. The master planning process — and subsequent governmental approvals — will literally shape nearly half of the Salt Lake Valley, as well as parts of Utah and Tooele counties, for the foreseeable future. Elected officials and municipal planners will have a rare opportunity to help sculpt massive amounts of land into uses that will be a boon to the Wasatch Front for generations to come. We trust they will make the most of this unprecedented opportunity.

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