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Daybreak project is rising star

Sacramento group tours new development

By [Doug Smeath](#)

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SOUTH JORDAN — The planned-community idea behind the Daybreak community is a relatively new concept catching the attention not only of Utahns but of people across the country.

On Thursday, about 80 business and civic leaders from the Sacramento, Calif., area toured the developing southwest Salt Lake Valley community to get a sense of how planners here are approaching issues facing growing cities nationwide.

The study mission, sponsored by the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, is the group's sixth such mission. In the past, the chamber has sponsored tours of Seattle, Portland, Ore., Austin, Texas, Denver and Atlanta.

In a letter to study mission participants, organizers said, "It is apparent that the civic leaders of the Salt Lake region have a commitment to the success of their community that, in our experience, is unparalleled. A strong sense of collective identity and history empower Salt Lake's public- and private-sector leaders to chart a bold course for their region's future."

Chamber president Mathew R. Mahood said many in the delegation are especially interested in Envision Utah, a private-public partnership that encourages environmentally and socially responsible growth. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments recently crafted Sacramento Blueprint, a group patterned largely after Envision Utah.

Envision Utah's principles have been a guiding vision for Daybreak planners, Kennecott Land spokesman Kort Utley said.

Daybreak is a planned community at 11400 South and 4500 West, with more than 13,000 homes, 1,250 acres of parks, a recreational lake, town centers, schools, churches and mass transit. It is on land owned by Kennecott Land. Since the community's grand opening in June, about 140 homes have sold — a pace everyone involved called brisk.

The study mission found its way to Daybreak by the advice of Envision Utah, Utley said. Part of Daybreak's plan is building that follows Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star guidelines on everything from appliances' energy use to the efficiency of home insulation and windows.

"What's cool about it is it makes a home 30 percent more efficient than Utah's building codes require," Utley said.

The visitors from Sacramento were impressed.

Many expressed interest in a new part of Daybreak's plan that would allow people interested in living in Daybreak to live in a rental unit first. Part of their rent would be deposited into a savings account that could be applied to a down payment for a home purchase after a year or two.

Others were interested in plans that incorporate mass transit into the community, including possible light-rail lines and the community's planned walkability. Among the interested visitors were city leaders from Elk Grove, Calif., a community of about 90,000 in southern Sacramento County.

"We're definitely looking at doing more things like this in Elk Grove," city planning manager Eric Norris said, adding that a few things — such as Daybreak's lack of fences between homes — would probably not fly in a California community.

Norris said Elk Grove already has a few planned communities in development, and seeing the progress of Daybreak gives city leaders an idea of what to expect. "That's why we came — to see how it looks in the flesh," he said.

The study mission will be in the Salt Lake area through this evening. On Wednesday, the delegation toured The Gateway in Salt Lake City. It also visited Park City Thursday evening.

E-mail: dsmeath@desnews.com

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