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- ◆ Executive Living
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## Green is Right for Utah's Future, Sustainable Building Proponents Say

by Marie Mischel

Building with an eye toward conservation and protecting the environment is the way of the future.

"We are in the midst, globally, of an essential revolution," said Peter McMahon, president of Kennecott Land, during Wednesday's Sustainable Building Conference keynote panel.

Sustainability issues are a staple topic in European newspapers, and the conservative government in McMahon's native Australia just announced the largest solar electricity generation plant in the world, "driven by the change in political perceptions," he said.

McMahon joined Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson, Rep. Ralph Becker and Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon on the panel. Their topic was 'Build Green. Can you Afford Not To?'

"Not many people in certain parts of the U.S. get it yet," McMahon said. "I think we're going to see a really huge shift in the next five years. It's happening in a lot of countries."

In Utah, "the legislature is not a hotbed of progressive thinking in this area, [but] we are seeing some real progress at the state level," Becker said.

Becker pointed to the state building energy efficiency program, which has already been made into law, and the governor's commitment to reduce energy use in government buildings by 20 percent by 2015 as examples of governmental leadership in sustainable building.

In addition, this session of the legislature is considering a whole set of proposals regarding sustainability, from fuel efficiency standards for state vehicles to energy conservation in school buildings, he said.

The conference drew more than 300 people. That interest is "a wonderful indication of both the changing times and the changing awareness," Becker said.

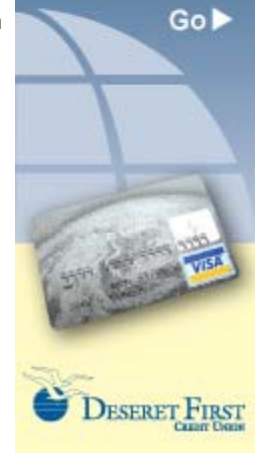
Because buildings consume such large amounts of energy and natural resources, and are a large source of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable construction is key, Becker said. "Buildings



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are at the center of being able to make a difference.”

Another part of the conversation about sustainability is whether it make sense from a business point of view.



The answer, McMahon said, is yes, for several reasons. “You enhance your reputation by doing the right thing,” he said. “It may not pay off immediately but over time...it’s good business.”

In addition, people under the age of 30 want to work for companies that are environmentally friendly, he said. “Young people want to work for places that do the right thing, and if you want to hire bright young people, you’ve got to do the right thing.”



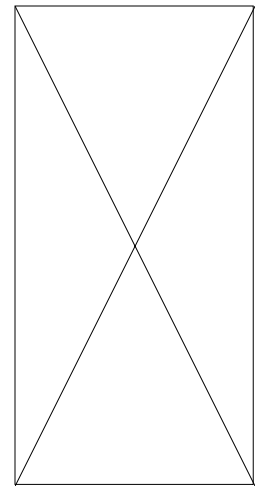
Kenecott Land owns the Daybreak development, which recently sold its 1,000th home. The houses meet EnergyStar requirements and other conservation elements have been incorporated in their construction. “We’re doing our best to create a sustainable community,” McMahon said.

Among those who attended the conference was Davis Mullholand, president of CCI Mechanical, Inc., a design/build firm based in Salt Lake City.

The company is involved with projects that are seeking certification by the U.S. Green Building Council’s leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED) program.

“We’re trying to stay ahead of the game when it comes to sustainable construction,” Mullholand said. “I believe it’s a trend that is here to stay. There have been a lot of certifications that come and go, but I think this one has legs. It takes into consideration all aspects of construction.”

Projects that seek the LEED certification make a statement, he said, not just to employees and consumers but about “where we are headed as a conservation-minded country and our impact on the world.”



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