

The Salt Lake Tribune

Daybreak home sales see sun despite dreary economy

Housing » No clear explanation for the success -- homebuyers just love the cradle-to-grave community.

By Jeremiah Stettler - Updated: 4/24/2010 @ 7:01:20 PM MDT

South Jordan » Even amid a gloomy economy, Kennecott's Daybreak development saw sunshine last year in home sales.

The eclectic South Jordan community sold 375 new homes last year -- 7 percent more than the previous year -- a statistic that defies the downturn.

That also is a significant number locally and nationally for the Kennecott-created burb.

Locally, nearly one out of every five new homes sold in Salt Lake County last year was in Daybreak. And nationally, Daybreak ranked among the fastest-selling master-planned communities, coming in sixth behind three communities in Houston and two in Las Vegas, according to the independent real-estate advisory firm Robert Charles Lesser & Co.

"It is just a great place to live," said Ty McCutcheon, vice president of community development for Kennecott Land, during a tour through neighborhoods of brightly colored homes, narrow lots and broad front porches. "It goes to the notion that you can live your entire life here."

With a patchwork of apartments, condominiums, single-family homes and senior living, Daybreak was designed as a cradle-to-grave community with schools, churches, parks, shopping districts, even a human-made lake -- all within walking distance.

If the project goes as planned, Daybreak someday will stretch across 4,000 acres with 20,000 housing units and 14 million square feet of commercial and office space.

McCutcheon pointed to no specific home -- or style of home -- to explain why Daybreak somehow sidestepped 2009's real-estate slump. He did note that homes priced between \$200,000 and \$400,000 were the biggest sellers.

Daybreak's selection includes homes and condos ranging from \$130,000 to more than \$800,000.

Brian Wilkin and his wife bought a home in Daybreak's East Lake Village last July. Why? Because the homes were more appealing -- inside and out -- than those found in the stucco subdivisions scattered across the valley.

"We wanted to see homes with more character in them," said Wilkin, who moved in weeks before Christmas.

And after spending time on Draper's South Mountain, Wilkin favored a big-business backer such as Kennecott to ensure the development is successful a decade or two down the road.

He is not surprised the homes are selling. "It's a substantial value for the money."

Hundreds of other homeowners might agree. Of the 1,970 new homes sold in Salt Lake County last year, 19 percent were in Daybreak.

However, Daybreak's deals were a mere fraction of total home sales -- consisting of new and existing units -- which reached 8,825 last year.

Among the notable developments in Daybreak last year were the addition of Solaris homes, which include solar power as a standard feature, and the creation of a senior-living community known as Garden Park Village, which is reserved for residents age 55 and up.

jstettler@sltrib.com

Buying brand-new homes

Nearly one in five new homes sold in Salt Lake County last year were sold in South Jordan's Daybreak. Here's a look at how that community's numbers compare with all of Salt Lake County and other Utah counties.

Daybreak » 375

Salt Lake County » 1,970

Utah County » 2,143

Wasatch County » 153

Weber County » 573

Tooele County » 203

Davis County » 953

Source: NewReach Inc.

Did you know?

Daybreak was listed as one of the nation's fastest-growing master-planned communities by Robert Charles Lesser & Co., an independent real-estate advisory firm. The Kennecott burb came in sixth behind three developments in Houston and two in Las Vegas.

Source: Kennecott Land