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New school to have many uses

Elementary campus: The facility at South Jordan's Daybreak would include a community center By Mike Cronin The Salt Lake Tribune

An architect's rendering shows how a Jordan District multiuse elementary school would be built at South Jordan's Daybreak development. It only makes sense.

In a neighborhood full of energy-efficient homes and where its parks are sprayed with recycled water, building an elementary school with an in-house community center would be the next logical move.

Plans to build such a school in South Jordan's Daybreak development were announced on Wednesday by Jordan School District and Kennecott Land officials. The partnership calls for a \$14.55 million elementary school with common areas for each grade's classrooms and recreational space open to residents.

Construction for the as-yet-unnamed school is scheduled to begin next month, according to Kort Utley, a Kennecott Land spokesman. It likely will be located within the Kennecott development at 11700 South and 4500 West, and could open as early as fall 2005.

Jordan purchased 10 acres for \$950,000 and Kennecott donated an additional 3.4 acres, bringing the total project to 13.4 acres. The district expects to pay about \$8.9 million in construction costs - not including furniture and other equipment. Kennecott will pay about \$4.7 million to build the recreation center and other spaces that will be shared with the community, said Jordan Superintendent Barry Newbold.

The deal excites school board members - they say it's the first of its kind in Utah. But it also raises worries that increasing land prices could make it difficult to build Daybreak schools in the future.

The \$95,000 per-acre cost to seal the Kennecott deal was nearly twice as much as the district recently paid - less than \$50,000 - to purchase land in Herriman, just a few miles to the southeast. Such high land costs would be a major problem in an area that Newbold expects will eventually need six to eight new schools.



architect's rendering of Jordan School District elementary school that will be built in the new Daybreak development

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“We're looking forward to a positive relationship with Kennecott Land,” said school board member J. Dale Christensen. “But we can't continue to pay exorbitant prices for land, and [then] continue to buy land and build schools with the money we bonded for.”

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Last year, Jordan district residents approved a \$281 million bond to build 22 schools districtwide by 2010.

“[Kennecott needs] to work with us on an upfront commitment,” he said, so Jordan can escape paying premium prices for property.

Two other board members, Lynette Phillips and Ellen Wallace, agreed.

Top dollar was paid despite two years of

negotiations, Phillips said. “That was frustrating. We didn't see a significant cost-savings.”

Wallace was more straightforward.

“I was hoping that Kennecott would give a little more on the land,” she said. “At the same time, we have to commend Kennecott for donating 3.4 acres.”

Utley pointed out that his company did not set the price the district paid for the school's acreage. Both parties hired independent appraisers to determine the parcel's value, then agreed upon a figure, he said, adding that Kennecott also contributed a “significant” amount to design the building.

Despite concerns about high land prices, Newbold and school board members emphasized their desire to work with Kennecott.

“We want to be partners for a long time,” Newbold said. “I'm feeling very good that we're over this first hurdle. Now, we can look even further down the road at the joint issues we need to address.”

Board member Wallace said the partnership is “going to be a real good thing for the people in Daybreak.”

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