



White City developer M. Kenneth White and wife Ada stand on one of few remaining undeveloped parcels of land in subdivision.

Area Builders Hail Growth As Incentive to Economy

Special to The Tribune

WHITE CITY — A homeowner's dream before 1950, this Salt Lake County residential community today is busting at the seams.

White City is an unincorporated, developer's mecca, sprawling southward from 9400 South to 10600 South and extending westward from 2100 East to 700 East.

The community's namesake is supplied by 73-year-old M. Kenneth White, who with a few resourceful homebuilders, like the Papanikolas brothers of the Cannon Papanikolas Construction Co., turned what was called "Poverty

Flats" into a solid investment for young families.

Mr. White acquired 1,500 acres in what is now White City, and began constructing homes priced between \$9,000 and \$15,000. Those homes today sell for about \$40,000, he said.

Because the sagebrush and weed-covered land of Poverty Flats could not be used for farming without irrigation water, Mr. White in 1951 drilled wells on the land and established a culinary water system for his housing development.

Water built White City. Today, the name "White City" is posted the most

visibly over the White City Water Co. and on the side of the large water tank just above 1300 East.

Today's Look

Some 27 years after its inception, White City today is comprised of 4,000 homes, five churches and four schools. Mr. White estimates the area's population at about 10,000.

"My grandfather used to say there's only one crop of land," said Mr. White, who has the highest respect for good earth. The Salt Lake County native also developed such residential projects as Mount Olympus

Park, Canyon Rim, Eastwood Hills, Park Terrace, Morningside Heights and Sunnyside Heights along the county's east bench.

Back in 1950, Mr. White said homes along the bench were too expensive for young families, so he turned to the White City site and "tried to take care of people needing housing."

"Everybody who bought back then has made money," Mr. White declared, citing the generous return on a house that originally cost \$9,000 to \$12,000.

"We built what the people wanted to buy," he said as he toured White City's winding avenues. "Not a stereotyped group of houses, but a variety of several styles."

The first homes were constructed adjacent to what is known as the "entrance" to the community — 9900 South off 700 East. As the county grew, White City grew, and today developers construct homes priced in the

\$75,000 to \$100,000 price range on the slopes above 1300 East to 2100 East.

Street Names

Mr. White named most of community's streets after flowers and minerals. White City's main drag is Sege Lily Dr. (9800 South).

"He named the streets after flowers because he owned a flower shop at the time we were married," said Mrs. White, his wife for 53 years.

Mr. White gave each of his 24 grandchildren a lot in White City, and at one time five of the grandchildren established homes near each other on Violet Dr., which the family called "Cousins St." Three of the families still remain on the street.

He admittedly is disappointed that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints chose to build its new temple near the Jordan River instead of on a knoll near 1300 East and 10400 South, land which he was willing to donate. "That's a

beautiful site — I still don't know why they turned it down," he said.

Salt Lake County about two years ago purchased land in the ravine which runs through the middle of White City for a park. That, plus 80 acres of White property at 1300 East and 10000 South, destined for a shopping center, awaits White City residents as growth and demand increases.

View Noted

"White City would have been incorporated," Mr. White claimed, "but Sandy chipped the corners off with annexation, leaving White City checkerboarded."

White City provided water to the Salt Lake Conservancy District and Sandy City for a time as the area expanded. Mr. White also built the area's first sewer system.

To date there are still no commercial enterprises in White City proper, a credit to Mr. White's concept of pre-

serving a community for family living.

He said he believes buying a home today, even as prices and construction costs skyrocket, is a sound investment for a family.

"Houses today won't go down in value because of inflation. Nobody's gouging anybody. They just can't be built any cheaper."

And he called the recent hike in county property taxes "terrible." Said Mr. White, "What they got to do about it is have more economical administration. They don't need all those taxes."

Other Area

A sister White City looms on the horizon. Mr. White said by next year a 4,000-acre community — incorporated with schools, churches and "administered by the people who buy there — will be developed in Cedar Valley in the northwestern portion of Utah County. Its name: White City Estates.

And the philosophy of Salt Lake County's White City will prevail there as well. "We'll try to have homes to fit everybody's pocket-books," Mr. White promised.