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BUSINESS

Community for seniors planned

The MacKenzie House project, to begin in 2008, will be next to Lone Tree's Sky Ridge Medical Center.

By Margaret Jackson
Denver Post Staff Writer

Denver-based developer MacKenzie House plans to build a \$150 million senior housing community next to Sky Ridge Medical Center in Lone Tree.

The project will include a mix of for-sale and rental housing, including single-family homes, duplexes, apartments and condominiums on 36 acres MacKenzie House is buying at RidgeGate, a 3,500-acre master-planned community being developed by Coventry Development Corp.

The first phase of MacKenzie Place at RidgeGate is expected to start early next year. It will include 60 single-family and duplex residences, as well as the Gathering Place, which will start as a sales center and evolve into the community town center.

The master plan also calls for 50 assisted-living apartments and 45 skilled-nursing apartments.

"True condo ownership in a senior community is a fresh idea," said Ron Vaughn, senior vice president at MacKenzie House.

Other senior housing projects under construction in the area, such as Classic Residences by Hyatt and Erickson Communities' Wind Crest, charge refundable entrance fees and a monthly rate.

Incorporating seniors into the surrounding community is one of MacKenzie House's driving principles, said Don MacKenzie, president and chief executive of the company. Traditionally, senior communities



RidgeGate vice president of community development Keith Simon, left, meets with, from left, Don MacKenzie, Don Gorsuch and Ron Vaughn of MacKenzie House over-looking the future site of a community for seniors.

have been located off the beaten path, and visits have to be planned ahead.

That's a big reason RidgeGate appeals to MacKenzie House.

"Our goal is to encourage residents outside the community to connect within the community," Vaughn said.

Over the next eight years at RidgeGate, Coventry will focus on developing West Village, about 600 acres west of Interstate 25 and south of Lincoln Avenue. The parcel will have 2,500 residences, up to 23 million square feet of office, retail and civic space and about 1,000 acres of parks, trails and preserved open space.

"We're creating a city that's set in a landscape," said Keith Simon, vice president of community development for RidgeGate.

Three light-rail stations are planned within the community as part of the Regional Transportation District's Southeast Line rail expansion. Under the current plan, they'll be completed by 2016, but Lone Tree and RidgeGate officials are working to fund the \$100 million extension so it can be finished sooner.

The rail line will extend to Sky Ridge, then along the east side of I-25 before ending

at a new RidgeGate Parkway interchange a mile south of Lincoln Avenue. The interchange is scheduled to open in the fall of 2008.

RidgeGate's owners will donate a large piece of land for the station and parking for 2,000 cars at the interchange location.

"That will do a lot to alleviate congestion on Lincoln Avenue," Simon said. "The problem with the current end of the line is it adds to the congestion of Lincoln."

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Senior housing

The first phase of MacKenzie Place at RidgeGate will include 60 single-family and duplex residences.

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