

The Highline Recreation Council voted unanimous support toward acceptance of the North Sea-Tac Park Plan (Sunset Plan) at its regular monthly meeting Tuesday and heard a request from the council's president to urge other organizations and individuals in the Highline area to endorse the plan.

The North Sea-Tac Plan proposes development of Sea-Tac International Airport's north clear zone into a multi-use recreational park.

The plan is nearly ready for presentation to the Port of Seattle Commission and King County Council for final acceptance or

The recreation council's endorsement is one of the items sought by those who had worked to develop the plan.

Following the unanimous endorsement, Council President Geraldine Van Notrick urged council members to contact county, school and Port officials and inform them of the council's endorsement as part of an apparent endorsement campaign.

**DOTTIE HARPER**, Southwest King County Arts Council chairwoman, said she thinks the endorsement should be followed by a strong recommendation to expand the proposed golf course from nine to 18 holes and to en-

Elementary School as a state archives site.

Her suggestion to expand the golf course would extend the course into the area the Boeing Corp. had planned to use as the site of its corporate headquarters building, which has been halted through legal action brought on by West side airport residents.

"I just feel we should make a statement because it's something that would be of use," she said and added later, "I think it's important that we speak up. We're the only ones that will."

In other business Tuesday, the council compiled a list of objectives for 1980 from council

of the audience who turned out. Among some of the suggestions offered for 1980 goals were to make the council more well known in the community in order to foster more community involvement with it and improve its function.

Another suggestion, along the same lines, was to change council meetings from monthly to quarterly to encourage better attendance.

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS** included: Making better use of existing parks; work with Metro to develop more bus routes to parks and install emergency telephones at public parks.

# Perfect recycle: Unused school to become records center

Officials of several levels of government are near agreement on what is described as "the perfect recycle."

It involves transforming part of a former junior high school in the Seattle-Tacoma Airport noise zone into a state archives, or record center.

All available governmental historical records from the cities, towns, county and the Port of Seattle would be stored in the former Sunset Junior High School, 1809 S. 140th St., in the Highline School District. The school has been closed for three years.

The Port will acquire ownership of the 20-plus-year-old school next July as part of a settlement of a lawsuit with the school district, involving airport noise. It was one of 14 schools involved in the \$10.7 million suit settled in 1977.

The school gymnasium is being used for recreation now by youth groups, but officials believe intensive use of the entire school for recreation or as a community center is not desirable so close to the bus airport.

So, use as a storage center with one or two employees and a handful of visitors seeking records is seen as "just the thing" for the buildings there.

Costs of financing the operation, maintenance and any capital improvements required, and lease arrangements with the Port, still must be worked out. But the state Department of General Administration is going ahead with limited funds to establish the center while it is available.



Polly  
Lane

Times real estate editor

Mike Saunders, state archives assistant for local records who is coordinating the effort for the state, said the opportunity to use the school has come at least a year ahead of any planning for records storage in this area. The department presently is budgeted to work out centers at Cheney, Ellensburg and Bellingham in conjunction with long-standing plans at the state universities in those cities.

But he said a survey has shown that records of King County governments make up about four times as much as in some other regions of the state which include 7 to 12 counties. The need is great, he said, and with city and county financial help and cooperation of the Port, the opportunity to begin setting up a center here now is too good to ignore.

J.M. Neil, city conservator, agrees and thinks the reuse of the school this way is a splendid idea.

He said storage space occupied by city government would be available at an estimated \$1.20 a square foot a year — a lot less than the space being occupied in City Hall now is worth to the city for

more intensive uses. City records are stored in the City Hall basement, in departments and in city warehouses.

The same situation exists for the county, according to Jake Thomas, county historic-preservation officer.

The city and county are considering each allocating \$10,000 a year to the center for the next two years to help set it up. The state has purchased some shelving, has negotiated a lease with the Highline School District of one building at the school, and is talking with the Port of Seattle about the future lease arrangements. A state staff member probably will be assigned to the center sometime next year, according to Saunders.

Some of the records from governments in King County presently are stored by the state in warehouses as far away as Bellingham and even at Fort Columbia at the mouth of the Columbia River.

The former classroom building being recycled has two floors and will provide an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 cubic feet of storage space. Besides shelving, the center will need equipment to handle the stacks of papers and documents, furniture and a research room for visitors wishing to use the documents.

Genealogists, in particular, have been unable to track down a lot of information which could be helpful, Neil said. Others interested in historic pres-

ervation, local history and public-planning research are expected to find the Burien-area center useful, he added.

Officials hope that information will be available within a day after requests are made to the new center when it is fully operating.

Some of the more important documents — the originals, not microfilms — include Superior Court records from the 1850s, late 19th Century land-office filings with the government and others relating to early-day development of the area.

Saunders said it would cost several million dollars to microfilm the records to occupy less space. And because the area is younger, archivists here do not have a "wear" problem on the materials as is developing in East Coast communities — yet.

He said the main concern is that the papers be kept at a steady temperature and humidity. The school's heating system is expected to handle that with no difficulty in the near future.

Volunteers from the Association of King County Historical Organizations will help set up steel shelving in the classroom building in the weeks ahead. Officials hope the center will be open for at least limited public use by late spring or early summer.

The modern-era jet noise isn't likely to bother the stacks of history that will be stored there for better accessibility by occasional visitors.

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## A tremendous plan for Sunset

Here's a question for Highline residents:

What can you do with 240 acres of land which is inundated with noise from low-flying aircraft — so much noise you can't live there?

Consider that the land is surrounded on three sides by residences. It is flat and highly developable. And it's adjacent to a busy international airport which needs more room.

Also, remember much of the land has already been developed into athletic playfields and there's a closed-down school with usable classrooms and a gymnasium in its midst.

What's the best usage of this land?

Airport-related light industry is compatible with aircraft noise. Industry creates jobs and the result could be a general economic spurt for the Highline area.

On the other hand, there's already the makings of a park there with the athletic fields and gymnasium. Why not expand it into one gigantic park facility?

These are the questions

currently facing residents of Highline for the property north of Sea-Tac International Airport. The Port of Seattle owns most of this property in the area called the north clear zone.

Under the Port's land acquisition program, houses are being purchased and removed from the zone. The homes will all be removed within the next several years.

Now, the predominant plan for the zone is a park. The Port of Seattle and King County have already spent \$15,000 each to prepare a park proposal.

The plan is now on paper and has received much publicity lately. There'll be soccer fields, softball fields, tennis courts, nature trails, a bicycle motocross course, a golf course, and (hold on) a motorcycle training area.

A citizens' committee which included Port and County officials worked several weeks on the plan and presented it to the general public in a meeting last week.

And a fiery meeting it

was! While many of the participants liked the idea of the park, there was heated debate over the golf course and motorcycle training track.

Would a golf course serve enough people, especially considering there's already a course at the south end of the airport?

We're among those who don't think so. One course with aircraft buzzing the greens is enough. Planners should come up with a better idea for that proposed golf course property north of South 154th Street and south of State Route 518.

The motorcycle training track was another hot topic.

"Nothing — 747s, cars, trucks, even rifle shots — drowns out the sound of motorcycles," one woman complained. "They'll hear them on Vashon," another said.

Indeed, motorcycles can be noisy. But motorcycles with legal mufflers — and those will be the only ones allowed on the track, according to the plan — are no more noisy than the cars and

trucks which travel SR 518.

Actually, the motorcycle track seems to be one of the better ideas for an already noisy area. We see no reason why the motorcycle track should be taken out of the plan.

However, there should be a firm proposal for controlling usage of the track before this particular aspect of the plan is implemented. The track will be a nuisance to nearby residents if the rules aren't enforced.

Generally, the overall plan for the park facility is a tremendous one, we feel. It's good usage of the land and will be of great benefit to residents of all Southwest King County.

Now the problem is finding a way to pay for the park. This may be the most difficult step lying ahead for the people who are working hard to see the plan a reality.

We won't offer any suggestions now on funding since there are many avenues to be examined. But we will say a word to provide that the Port could more than just the land.