



King County

Ron Sims

King County Executive

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CLERK
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

2003-453

October 6, 2003

The Honorable Cynthia Sullivan
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
COURTHOUSE

Dear Councilmember Sullivan:

Enclosed for Council consideration and adoption are two proposed ordinances relating to new uses for parks and the King County fairgrounds facility. The Parks Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP), has undergone an extraordinary year of change and adaptation. The Phase II Business Transition Plan completed by DNRP in August 2002, and Ordinance 14509 which was adopted in November 2002, identified ways to reduce the parks division budget while keeping key regional parks open and preserving local rural facilities where practical. To implement the plan, several land use code changes were identified.

The business plan incorporates and builds upon the work of the Metropolitan Parks Task Force (MPTF), which was formed to make recommendations on how King County parks and recreation facilities and open space should be owned, operated and funded in the future, eliminating reliance on a diminishing CX fund. The core recommendation of the MPTF is that the Division begin to operate certain facilities in a manner that results in these assets collectively becoming largely self-sufficient after a limited term of years. The goal is to generate operating revenue in new ways in order to stabilize the system, allow it to expand over time, and minimize the need for ongoing tax subsidy. The County has embraced the new vision and this proposed legislation is integral to the provision of flexibility in the operation and development of the fairgrounds and parks.

The purpose of the new uses for parks ordinance is to revise the land use code to allow for new uses in King County parks. Examples of new uses include the allowance of restaurants, driving ranges and concert facilities in certain parks. The ordinance will provide an opportunity for DNRP to support the parks programs and provide additional amenities in the parks to serve park users.



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The proposed fairground ordinance will amend K.C.C. Title 21A to make the King County Fairgrounds facility a permitted use in the RA-10 zone if it is developed in accordance with the approved King County Site Development Plan. Under the current code the fairgrounds is a non-conforming use with very limited potential for expansion or enhancement.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Stephanie Warden, Director, Department of Development and Environmental Services, at 206-296-6700.

Sincerely,



Ron Sims
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers
 ATTN: David deCourcy, Chief of Staff
 Shelley Sutton, Policy Staff Director
 Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council
Steve Call, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Stephanie Warden, Director, Department of Development and Environmental Services
Pam Bissonnette, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Shelley Marelli, Interim Division Director, Parks and Recreation Division, DNRP