



Preston Community Club

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Preston, Washington

The Honorable King County Executive and  
The Honorable Council Members of the  
Metropolitan King County Council  
King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Re: Preston Ball Fields and Community Park**

The Preston Community Club (PCC), Eastside Football Club (EFC) and Issaquah Little League (ILL) have jointly applied for CIP funding, CPG matching grants and YSFG matching grants for the design and construction of the proposed new 10-acre Preston Park. That park would include two turf soccer fields, one grass soccer field, one 200-foot baseball field, a children's play area, playground equipment, a covered shelter, picnic tables, a concession stand, restroom facilities, a walking trail and permanent open space.

The PCC, EFC and ILL have worked collaboratively with each other and with King County Parks for nearly two years to develop the plan for this new regional park complex. The park has an estimated total capital cost of about \$2.5 million; but donated professional and volunteer services from these three non-profit organizations, plus anticipated contractor and material supplier donations, will give the finished park a value of about \$3.2 million to the citizens of King County.

The PCC, EFC and ILL are poised to move forward with design and construction of this new park that will serve both regional and community needs. The park site is conveniently located in the rural community of Preston, which lies just off I-90 on unused King County Parks land located between densely populated developments on the Issaquah Highlands and Snoqualmie Ridge.

The Preston Ball Fields and Community Park will offer picnicking, a walking trail, permanent open space and many other recreational opportunities to Preston residents and the citizens of King County at large. Spared from industrial development many years ago through the joint efforts of Preston residents and elected King County officials, this land continues to sit empty and unused by the citizens of

King County. With your help, we can make this property into a stellar regional park that is available for use by all King County citizens, particularly our youth.

The PCC initiated King County's acquisition of land for this park in 1990 and has been actively working ever since to find trustworthy partners and to develop plans for a multi-use facility that advances the PCC *Forest Gateway Vision*. That vision, which is posted on our website at <http://www.prestonwa.org> is attached as **Exhibit 1**. The vision deals with other issues like cultural heritage and education as well, but its primary focus is on active recreation and open space.

The *Forest Gateway Vision* began to emerge in the late 1960s, when local citizens fought off industrialization to preserve the rural character of the community; evolved further in the late 1970s, when plans to establish a trailer park on this very site were turned back; progressed in the late 1980s, when local citizens opposed proposals to turn this site first into commercial property, then into a fire-training center; and came into full fruition in 1997, when the King County Council adopted a motion supporting the Upper Snoqualmie Regional Open Space Gateway. That plan was intended, according to a July 9, 1997, press release, from the King County Executive, to:

- Preserve the Old Mill site, a critical feature of Preston's history,
- Provide ballfields for the young people in this part of the county,
- Acquire a critical part of the land base necessary for the native plant arboretum and learning center to be developed by the Preston Arboretum Association,
- Protect important I-90 edge properties so that the rural character of this section of the I-90 Greenway is maintained, and
- Conserve the connecting properties between Mitchell Hill and Grand Ridge, through the leading edge use of new land use incentive techniques.

That plan, which involved acquiring lands for an arboretum, baseball fields and a county park on lands surrounding the Preston Industrial Park "was designed as a compromise to a long-standing dispute on how property in Preston and along Interstate 90 should be used," according to a July 17, 1997, article in the *Valley Record*.

Ken Konigsmark, president of the Issaquah Alps Trail Club, said at the time: "The vision, while critical and valued in the community of Preston, is also a larger

vision that is a vision for the future of what I would say defines Growth Management Act and also defines Mountains-to-Sound Greenway.”

That article in the July 17, 1997, edition of the *Valley Record* clearly indicated that the ballfields were “part of the balance that’s being established right now” and that “turning [a three-acre park already on the site] into about a 15-acre ball diamond is really good for the neighborhood.” That was the view of the community then, and it remains the view of the community now. In short, the PCC strongly endorses this current proposal, which moves forward initiatives that began in the 1960s and a vision that has become progressively more defined throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Thank you in advance for your support and decision to fund these joint requests by the PCC, EFC and ILL. We are most pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding this project, and we welcome the opportunity to present the Preston Park concept to you in person.

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Guy M. Bennett  
PCC President

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Maryanne Tagney Jones  
PCC Land Use Chair

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Douglas C. McClelland  
PCC Immediate Past President

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Dariel L. Norris  
PCC Secretary

cc: Jeff Pyatt, President, Eastside Football Club  
Peter Gann, President, Issaquah Little League

Attachment: *Forest Gateway Vision*