

Scotts Valley 1990

Skypark plan moves ahead

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Scotts Valley gets OK to annex for downtown project

BY TERRI MORGAN
Special to the Mercury News

Scotts Valley's boundaries will be redrawn to include the former Santa Cruz Skypark Airport, allowing the city to proceed with plans to expand its commercial core and develop new homes and a community park.

As expected, the Santa Cruz County Local Agency Formation Commission on Thursday approved Scotts Valley's request to annex the 46-acre site from the city of Santa Cruz.

The decision allows Scotts Val-

ley to move forward with its ambitious Skypark development project, combining the former airport with several adjacent parcels, then overseeing development of the entire 93-acre site.

The long-planned project had been on hold until annexation was approved, Scotts Valley Mayor Peggie Lopez said.

About half the former airport site will be used to create a distinct downtown district. The city must find a developer to buy the site, which has not yet been appraised, and design and build a

commercial center.

Last fall, the city council approved downtown guidelines established by a 16-member committee that included city leaders, merchants and residents. The Skypark committee planned a town center for Scotts Valley, like those found in Los Gatos or Carmel, instead of a strip or regional mall.

"We need a downtown area," said Councilman Joe Miller, who served on the committee. "Our merchants need the stimulus of what it would bring."

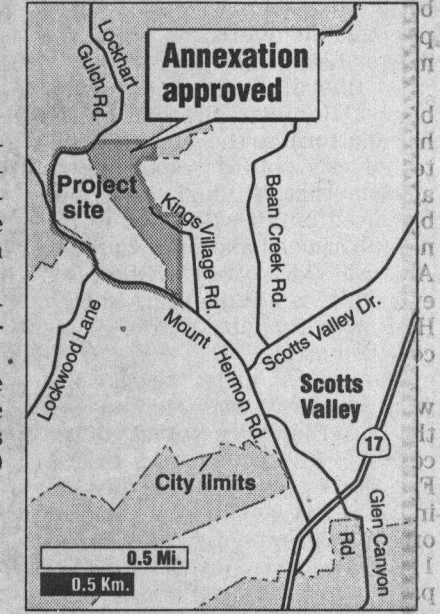
The new commercial district — Scotts Valley Village Center — would be adjacent to several existing shopping areas on the north side of Mount Hermon Road.

"We want to develop it to complement what's there," Miller said.

A 16-acre park would separate the commercial zone from three planned housing developments that would add more than 200 homes.

The Village Center would include a mix of multilevel shops, restaurants and offices as well as a transit center. The downtown

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Scotts Valley can annex land for Skypark project

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area would be pedestrian-oriented with benches and covered walkways. It would include outdoor areas for dining and meetings or performances. Landscaping, public art, water fountains, awnings and decorative trellises also are planned.

Parking lots, out of view from Mount Hermon Road, would be situated so park and transit-center visitors could share them with shoppers. And bicycle stalls are planned.

The city hopes to attract well-known, midsize retailers such as the Gap, Circuit City or Tower Records to anchor the village center and a mix of locally owned businesses to fill the rest of the commercial buildings. Such establishments could include art and

antique galleries, dental offices, music stores, martial arts instructors, jazz or teen clubs, a bowling alley and a day care center.

The Scotts Valley City Council approved an environmental impact report for the Skypark project in 1992. Miller said the city is investigating whether additional environmental documents will be required before specific development plans can be approved.