

✓ Scotts Valley - 1990

# Skypark site may someday be a recreational center

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SCOTTS VALLEY — Linda Gilcrest made her mark here in overseeing development of the massive Borland International campus. Now she is ready to make another mark.

Gilcrest, the former director of facilities who left Borland in December to start her own consulting business, is about to be given a \$5,000 contract by the city to help evaluate the feasibility of a large, commercial recreation complex on 12 acres of the former Skypark Airport. She will be working with a subcommittee made up of council members, representatives from the business community and citizens.

"At Borland, we have a lot of requests from the community for the use of the auditorium and amphitheater," Gilcrest said. "It tells me there are people out there who would use similar facilities."

The city has designated about 17 acres of the former airport property for commercial use; the bulk of the land is owned by the city of Santa Cruz. A committee designed a shopping center for the site a few years ago, but there has been little interest from developers.

Then Mayor Joe Miller and Woody Bookout, who runs a baseball camp in Scotts Valley, proposed a commercial development centered on recreation.

The council got excited about the

idea and formed a subcommittee to look into it.

Jackie Bisesto — Scotts Valley restaurant owner, head of the city government committee for the Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce and president of the Restaurant Association — serves on the committee. She said members have bounced around ideas such as miniature golf, water slides, playing fields and an ice rink. There is particular interest, she said, in an ice rink.

But the committee also learned that these types of developments can be very expensive, and wondered how they could attract developers.

Then along came Gilcrest.

"It is a good move to hire Linda," Bisesto said. She described Gilcrest as organized, focused and knowledgeable about development.

But Gilcrest's experience goes far beyond Borland, where she worked for five years and still acts as a real estate consultant. Before coming to Borland, she was director of facilities for Seagate Technology in Scotts Valley from

1987-89.

She said the first thing she will do — once the contract is signed — is to contact developers who have done recreational facilities to see if it is a possibility for Scotts Valley.

"Part of it is demographics," Gilcrest said. "Is this an area that can support it?"

"I don't think it is too wild to think that a developer would want to come over here because it is a wonderful, recreational community. Take water slides, for instance. I don't think they are as popular as they once were, but people would go to a water slide as a destination," she said.