

Airport parking facility construction could delay travelers

ANCHORAGE — Construction began on a new \$25 million parking facility at Anchorage International Airport, with Gov. Bill Sheffield turning the first soil at ground breaking ceremonies.

"Alaskans have always been great travelers," the governor said. "We're the biggest state in the Union, and it's important we stay together. That's why we need to have the best possible transportation facilities, such as what we're building right here at Anchorage International Airport."

Included in the construction package are a four-level, 1200-car parking garage, with a ground transportation lobby connecting it to the main terminal, and improved curbside access. The parking garage will be built in front of the domestic terminal.

Hoffman Construction Company of Anchorage was awarded the contract to build the parking garage, which is

Phase Two of a four-phase, six-year capital improvement program for the airport. All phases of the capital improvements are expected to be completed by 1990 and are funded with revenues generated by the airport itself.

"The airport will generate over \$40 million in revenue this fiscal year," Sheffield said. "This parking facility is only one example of how revenue generated by the airport provides an important source of jobs for Alaskans."

During construction, as many as 100 people will be employed in the construction work who otherwise may not have had jobs. Citing a recently completed economic impact study, the governor pointed out that Anchorage International Airport directly or indirectly contributes more than \$1 billion to Alaska's economy.

"Much of this contribution is in

wages paid to over 5,000 people employed in activities related to the aviation industry," he said. "All of this activity is accomplished without one dollar of general fund money from the State Treasury."

Construction of the parking garage project is scheduled for completion in September 1987. Partial occupancy will be possible by March 1987, with three of five bays of the garage available. About 700 spaces will be ready for the peak passenger load in summer, 1987.

"A construction project of this magnitude," said Sheffield, "while vastly improving our airport facility, is bound to cause a certain amount of inconvenience and delay to travelers going through the area."

"To minimize this effect," he said, "the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has instituted a public information campaign called the

Wait Loss Program — to reduce the wait that travelers may experience as a result of the construction activities."

The Wait Loss Program is a communications campaign to inform people about Phase II of the airport expansion and let them know what they can do to minimize their inconvenience. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities recommends that airport travelers allow an extra half hour to get to the airport; call the Wait Loss Hotline at 248-9090 to find out if there are any expected delays; and to use the free airport shuttle bus system.

The shuttle buses will run every four to seven minutes to pick up passengers at temporary parking lots and take them to the terminal. Phase I of airport expansion, completed in the summer of 1985, included the addition of a new concourse at the domestic terminal and extensive terminal renovations.