

Editorial



Heritage park is a good idea

The proposed Alaska Native Heritage Park sustained a setback last week when the Municipality of Anchorage Heritage Land Bank voted down a resolution for a land use permit for the park.

It appears, however, that the board of the Heritage Land Bank will decide next month whether to reconsider that action.

The park would be a \$10 million major tourist facility that could open in Anchorage as early as 1992.

Park sponsors are seeking to gain a land use permit for 40 acres of land located near the intersection of Tudor and Baxter Roads in South Anchorage, and Municipality of Anchorage approval is needed.

The park would be on a site adjacent to a planned botanical garden. It would be a stunning way to show Anchorage's many tourists a slice of Alaska Native life.

The park would feature dance, music, song, storytelling and crafts. The idea is to construct four or five pre-contact Native villages.

Besides showcasing Alaska Native traditions and cultures, the park would offer employment opportunities for many Alaska Natives. It would also promote the market for Alaska Native arts and crafts.

We'd like to state our strong support for this park and urge the Heritage Land Bank to reconsider its vote.

A vote in favor of the park could be a vote in favor of Anchorage's future and Alaska's as well. Native cultures make Alaska unique as a tourist destination, and giving tourists a little education on Alaska Natives could go a long way toward promoting better understanding between cultures.

If a tourist departed Alaska with a new respect for Native people, cultures and traditions the park would be well worth every penny of its cost.