

OUR TOWNS

Hartington

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Hartington Public, Holy Trinity Land Swap Planned

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HARTINGTON, Neb. — It took more than 20 years, but a land swap between Hartington Public School and Holy Trinity Elementary is finally taking place.

"We're moving forward now," said Hartington superintendent Randall Anderson. "I think it's going to be a great improvement for the community." The swap — which was approved by the Hartington School Board at its April 19 meeting — involves a segment of land located between the two schools, which are located directly across the street from each other.

"Part of it is the public school property, and part of it is parochial school property," Anderson said. "The way the land is divided, it would work better for each school if it were divided a little differently."

There is no money changing hands in this process, he said.

"It's just primarily establishing different land boundaries for the two pieces of land," Anderson said.

A roundabout parking lot is currently located between the schools. Once the land is divided, a one-way street will be constructed, the center of which will act



A land swap between Hartington Public School and Holy Trinity Elementary in Hartington, Neb., promises to improve traffic conditions between the schools, as well as allow the schools to complete projects on their respective properties.

as the property boundary for both schools.

This street will bend, enabling a portion of land where a Catholic convent had been located to remain under Holy Trinity's ownership.

Anderson said the change in property line will also allow for Holy Trinity to

install a practice football field, and for Hartington Public to get a new parking lot.

"That will be a huge improvement over the present situation," he said. "Presently, you come in, you go around — it's kind of a circular turn — and head back out. There's a lot of traffic

congestion. Tremendous. It's not safe for students crossing between the two buildings when busses are unloading.

"This way, it will be a one-way street all the way through. The traffic will move much more smoothly. It'll be safer," he said. "It's just going to be a definite advantage to the students from

both schools."

The project has been in the making for "a long, long time," Anderson said.

"I think both schools are very pleased that the process is now nearing completion," he said. "Both schools are looking forward to utilizing the property in a better fashion than what it's been, which is just sitting and doing nothing, basically. So we're both excited to get our projects going."

School board members concurred. "This has been a long time coming," board member Colin Kathol was quoted as saying by the *Cedar County News*. "I want to express my appreciation to the other board members for the work that has been done."

"This is worth celebrating," added board member Brenda Steiner.

In the next few weeks, representatives will meet with an engineer, who will help to finalize where the property line will fall, as well as proposing how the road should move between the two schools.

"It'll work real nice when it's all complete," Anderson said.

Calls made to Holy Trinity Elementary for this article were not returned.

Neb. Roads Staff Seeks Public Input With Survey

LINCOLN, Neb. — What important transportation issues does Nebraska face today? Will they be the same in 20 years?

These are questions included in the upcoming Long Range Transportation Plan survey, "The Voice of Nebraska, Contributing to Vision 2032."

Periodically, the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) updates its long range transportation plan. Nebraska's traveling public, business, government leaders, tribal government, and associations will be given an opportunity to express their opinions, in an online survey. All traveling public are encouraged to participate. The purpose of the survey is to gather input to identify statewide, regional and local transportation issues facing Nebraska. The survey results will guide NDOR in developing goals and objectives for the Long Range Transportation Plan: Vision 2032.

Results of the survey will be posted on the NDOR Web site in the summer of 2010, and will be included in presentations at public meetings.

To take the survey online, go to www.roads.nebraska.gov/lrtp/vision2032/. The survey went live on April 26. Be sure to complete your survey by May 21, so your response can be included in the final results. The survey is completely anonymous and responses will only be reported in the aggregate.

Survey respondents will have the option to submit their e-mail address if they would like updates on plan activities. As a member of the traveling public, business, government, or private association, everyone's opinion is needed and all are encouraged to participate.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete and is open to all Nebraska's traveling public 14 years of age and older. The Department of Roads encourages you to spread the word about this survey to friends and neighbors. The more who participate, a better understanding of transportation issues affecting your community, region and state, may be achieved.

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MEETING

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consolidation plan. Viborg chairman Jim Larsen said his board wants to see merger discussions continue.

Hurley chairman Jon Benson said his board authorized Kraning last week to contact an architect or building consultant for an analysis of the district's facilities.

"We talked about what we thought we could handle for remodeling, consolidation and class-sharing arrangements," Benson said.

The Hurley board is also looking at its finances, particularly with state aid, Benson said. "If we lose 10 kids, then it's \$50,000. That's what happens at a small school," he said.

Steve Jastram from Architecture Inc. of Sioux Falls is touring the Hurley school Wednesday and will put together a plan, Kraning said.

Jastram worked on previous Hurley building projects and has blueprints, Kraning said.

"(Jastram) should get a leg up with his knowledge," Kraning said. "Steve said he thought he could have the information within two weeks."

The Hurley remodeling costs will depend on the uses of the school building, Kraning said.

"It's different in how you set them up, elementary and high school classrooms. It's more than just bigger desks. For example, science labs cost a lot more to remodel," he said.

"Then you come up with a Christmas list of what is the most and least we have to do, then something in between."

"I don't think the Hurley board is comfortable remodeling without consolidation," he said, "and I don't think Viborg is comfortable about consolidation without knowing more about remodeling."

PAT KRANING

The Viborg and Hurley boards asked the administrators to draw up possible plans for facility uses and attendance centers. However, the boards emphasized that the two plans are strictly for discussion and are not final choices for a consolidation election.

The first plan looks at the elementary (pre-kindergarten through fifth grade) at one location, with an estimated 204 students, and middle school/high school (grades 6-12) at another location with an estimated 195 students. The district would also operate Cameron Colony school and use the equivalent of 39.5 full-time staff members.

The second plan calls for pre-kindergarten through sixth grade in Hurley and a pre-school through fourth grade at Viborg, with a middle school-high school (grades 7-12) in one location. The district would hire the equivalent of 41.5 full-time staff members.

Under this plan, the district would have 287 students at the Viborg attendance center. The colony school would remain in operation.

"We had 287 students before (at Viborg) and 260 now, so if you go back to having the additional 27 sprinkled around (the building), it wouldn't create crowding," Kraning said.

A consolidated Viborg-Hurley

plan. We need a more specific scope and sequence."

Hurley has the ability to finance its own project but needs the cost figures to help its patrons make an informed decision, Kraning said.

Hurley board members indicated they will share the remodeling cost findings with the Viborg board once they become available.

In response to an audience question, Kraning said consolidation can proceed while remodeling takes place.

"We had it happen at Viborg, where there was construction while the kids were attending classes," he said. "Is it ideal? No, but you do what you need to do. Life goes on."

The final figures will show what Hurley remodeling — and in turn, consolidation — will cost and whether it's cost effective, Kraning said.

"If it's \$50,000, we'll wonder why we waited," he said. "If it's \$900,000, we'll wonder why we called an architect."

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