

BOTHELL-KENMORE REPORTER



The Saint Edward Seminary has been unanimously designated as a city of Kenmore landmark. Photo courtesy of King County

Historic Saint Edward Seminary building gets city of Kenmore landmark designation

The rare example of the Late Romanesque Revival style was unanimously designated as a city landmark.

by [Katie Metzger](#)

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

The monumental St. Edward Seminary building — a focal point in St. Edward State Park since 1931 — is now a city of Kenmore landmark.

The Kenmore Landmarks Commission recently voted unanimously to designate the 82,000-square-foot brick and concrete building that features a six-story bell tower and several lower wings, according to a [press release from the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks](#).

“The Seminary has always been a community treasure in Kenmore and we are so pleased to see it formally designated as a local landmark,” Kenmore Mayor David Baker stated in the release. “The thoughtful and careful rehabilitation will maintain this iconic building’s historic integrity, architecture, and picturesque setting, and for the first time in history, the public will be able to experience and enjoy the inside of the building. It’s very exciting.”

The building is currently in the middle of a remodel. The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission started a [partnership with Daniels Real Estate](#), which is undertaking the complete building rehabilitation project, in 2017.

St. Edward Seminary was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2007, making the adaptive reuse project eligible for federal preservation tax credits and ensuring that changes to the building meet adopted preservation standards. The city of Kenmore and Daniels Real Estate jointly nominated the seminary for Kenmore landmark status, with support from State Parks.

The Lodge at St. Edward project will remodel the seminary and operate under a state-approved, 62-year lease. The lodge will have meeting rooms, a lounge and bar, 80 bedrooms and will be able to facilitate conferences, weddings, family reunions and more. Daniels has said they will maintain the historic feel of the building, according to [previous coverage](#), and the iconic bell tower and bells will be repaired.

“When completely restored, the seminary will be reopened as a lodge getaway. Visitors will discover a civic treasure maintaining its historic integrity, architecture, and ambiance while building new community connections,” according to the project website.

Designed by architect John Graham Sr., whose expansive body of work includes a number of churches in Seattle and several buildings on the University of Washington campus, the seminary is an outstanding example of the Late Romanesque Revival style — and is one of few buildings in King County that display this imposing style and scale, according to the press release.

The seminary’s establishment was a seminal achievement in the life of Bishop Edward John O’Dea, who was a leading regional figure in the Catholic Church, serving as the first bishop of the Diocese of Seattle from the time of its official formation in 1907 until his death in 1932.

The building served as the Northwest’s preparatory school for the Catholic priesthood for 45 years and was the first accredited full seminary university in the United States. The seminary closed in 1976. In 1977, the property was sold to the State of Washington and became St. Edward State Park, which includes 316 acres of the original 366-acre seminary campus.

The seminary building sat largely vacant and deteriorating for decades, due to a lack of state funding for programming and maintenance.

“The Romanesque Revival architecture and Art Deco interiors will be restored to federal standards for the public to enjoy for the first time in history,” according to the lodge project’s website. “As a seminary, the building was not open to the public and when purchased by the state in 1976, it was mostly shuttered for over 40 years.”

For more on the lodge project, see www.thelodgeatstedward.com.

The King County Historic Preservation Program administers Kenmore’s landmarks process via interlocal agreement that includes processing landmark nominations and staffing the Kenmore Landmarks Commission. For more information about this landmark designation or King County’s Historic Preservation Program, contact Jennifer Meisner, King County Historic Preservation Officer at jennifer.meisner@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-0384.

Other sites in Kenmore which are included in the Inventory of Historic Landmarks include: the Kenmore Bridge over the Sammamish River, Kenmore Community Club and Thomsen Estate, according to the city’s [historic preservation webpage](#). Properties over 40 years old are eligible for consideration for local landmark status, and anyone may nominate a building, site, object, structure or district for consideration as a Kenmore Landmark.

See www.kenmorewa.gov for more.