

A G E N D A R E P O R T

DATE February 7, 2006

ITEM Accident Potential Zones & Associated Land Development near MAFB

INITIATED BY Vicinity Property Owners, Developers and Community Stakeholders

ACTION REQUESTED Adopt Resolution No. 9550

PREPARED BY Benjamin Rangel, Planning Director

PRESENTED BY John Lawton, City Manager

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RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the City Commission approve the following motion.

MOTION:

“I move the City Commission adopt Resolution No. 9550.”

SYNOPSIS:

Additional commercial and residential development has recently been announced for the southeast Great Falls area in the vicinity of 10th Avenue South and 57th Street. Three areas for commercial development and one large area for residential development have been specified by property owners and land developers. These announcements have spurred public discussion and debate because of the proximity of the proposed development to the flight approach area of the closed runway at Malmstrom Air Force Base. Resolution No. 9550 presents the City Commission’s interest and position regarding this public discussion and debate.

BACKGROUND:

With the recently announced commercial and residential development, public discussion and debate have centered around the interest to answer the questions, “Do we want to keep all of our options open for the potential reopening of the former runway at Malmstrom Air Force Base for future flying missions, or do we want to allow economic development to occur within the described Accident Potential Zones?”

There are two specific viewpoints or rationale driving these questions. They are 1) The runway is an irreplaceable valuable asset and needs to be preserved to make certain we have a long term, viable military presence; and, 2) The chances of overcoming all the obstacles to reopening the runway are small and we need to “move on” as a community and allow development we know we can get.

The City Planning Office and the City Manger’s Office have prepared a discussion paper to help frame the issues. The paper is intended to provide accurate and relevant information to 1) assist open public discussion, 2) assist in the development of position statements, and 3) assist in the development of a public strategy or strategies.

Copies of the initial discussion paper, dated January 13, 2006, were provided to a number of community individuals and organizations. At the time the initial discussion paper was prepared, it was fully recognized that it may spur additional questions and comments, thus creating the need to provide additional information and clarification. The initial discussion paper has done just that. In response, the paper has been revised. City Commissioners have been provided copies. Attempts were also made to provide copies of the revised paper to the holders of the initial paper.

It was suggested in the paper that it serve as the basis for an initial information meeting of all major players and stakeholders, including base supporters, property owners, City and County officials and the general public. This initial meeting could also serve as a listening session to allow all to voice their issues of interest and concern. Depending on the outcome, those entities interested in doing so would then be encouraged to develop “position statements” to help establish community consensus along with helping to frame a possible strategy to jointly address the issue. Perhaps this could lead to creation of a “working group” representing each of the interested entities to, in turn, structure a “Strategy Plan.”

The overall intent of the suggested decision-making process is to develop consensus and to develop an action plan that fairly and equitably addresses identified issues and concerns.

Attach: Resolution No. 9550