

November 7, 2007 FD&E Meeting

Chair McKasy: Okay, we're going to move on to number 10, the Crystal Airport discussion. Bridget. Commissioner Peilen, I know that Crystal Airport's in your district. I see your hand up.

Commissioner Peilen: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just want to say before we start the presentations, as we all know, there are a number of different viewpoints on this issue, and I've had the opportunity to hear the presentation that Bridget will be making and to meet with officials from the City of Crystal as well as a potential developer for the site and just wanted to set the tone that it's in everyone's best interest to get this issue resolved just to make sure that we do give due consideration to all the differing viewpoints that you're going to hear, and it may be that there's enough presented that we might even feel that we're not able to make a final resolution to this issue today, I don't know, that's for this committee to decide. And not that full consideration wouldn't be given but again just because there are strongly held viewpoints from both sides and I want to say this is casting no excursions on the fine work that Bridget has done, and I've told her that, just too that we remain open minded and consider what other presenters have to say as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chair McKasy: All right, Commissioner Peilen, we'll check back with you at the end of the presentation and see where you are since it's your district. Bridget.

Bridget Rief: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, thank you for your comments, Commissioner Peilen. Your packet contains two reports relating to the Crystal Airport. One discusses the airport closure process, the second report discusses the long-term comprehensive plan, and the preferred alternative that staff is recommending. I'll be summarizing both of those reports this morning. When staff began the long term comprehensive plan update a couple years ago for three out of the six reliever airports, we were also asked to take a look at what the process would be if an airport were closed, what would the cost be, what would the timeline be. Now we focused on Crystal as part of our study, but the process would actually apply to any airport really. The process itself is a five-step process, three of those steps is actually preparing the presentation, the information that you submit to the FAA asking for approval to close an airport. It involves extensive documentation and justification and numerous studies. You need to do a property reuse study to tell the FAA what you would expect would happen with the property, you need to give an indication of how funds from the sale of property would be distributed, you need to complete an Environmental Assessment, a regional impact statement, an economic impact statement, and most importantly you need to complete a justification report that explains to the FAA how closure of a particular airport actually benefits the whole aviation. Prepare the package; submit it to the FAA for their approval. If they approve it, steps 4 and 5 would then kick in. They would basically involve lease terminations for the tenants, removal of the airport facilities, the hangars, the electrical most likely the pavements those kind of things, marketing and sale of the property, and then the federal grant repayment, and we'll talk about that in a minute. Before we get to that, I want to talk a little bit about the Crystal Airport in and of itself. Using our 2005 and 2006 based aircraft data, 81 percent of the pilots that register the Crystal Airport as their base, their home base, actually live in Hennepin County. What that tells me is that is a service area that's being accommodated by the Crystal Airport. They're not opting to go to Flying Cloud, they're not opting to go to Anoka, they're at Crystal. Now at 72,000 operations in 2005 and even fewer in 2006, clearly operations are down at Crystal. So you need to keep in mind that they're down at all airports in the state and even though operations are down, Crystal still remains the 5th 6th busiest airport in the state out of a hundred and sixty-one public used airports. That puts it in the top 3 percent for the number of operations at airports in the state of Minnesota. In the graph, that darkest purple in the middle

represents the Crystal Airport. MSP, by the way, is not shown on this graph. As far as airport closure and specifically focusing on the Crystal Airport, we looked at what the impacts of what the Reliever Airports would be. And we looked at it from two different perspectives, primarily airside capacity and landside capacity. Airside capacity, number of runways you have, we calculated based on the annual service volume or ASV and what that is ASV is FAA's calculation of the estimated number of operations an airport can handle in a given year based on its runway configuration. So if you have parallel runways, you can accommodate more operations in a year than you can if you only have a single runway. Then we compared that number to the operations today and the operations in the future to get the airside capacity percentage. Today with Crystal with all 15 runways that we have in the Reliever system right about 35 percent capacity. If Crystal were to close tomorrow and all of those operations were to be dispersed within the Reliever system, that's not necessarily realistic but worse case scenario they would all stay in the five Reliever Airports, our airside capacity would be 44 percent. Looking 20 years ahead out to 2025 with Crystal Airport all six Reliever Airports and the forecasted increase in operations we'd be at just over 50 percent again close Crystal, close those 4 runways, the percentage increases to 61 percent from an airside capacity standpoint. What I want to note about that is a general rule of thumb in aviation is when you reach 60 percent capacity for your particular facility or in this case, the system, you need to start thinking about how you're going to provide additional capacity in the future. It's a general rule of thumb. The planning that you need to complete, the environmental work that you need to complete, all takes time. So by the time you reach an 80 percent capacity you want to be already implementing whatever projects you need to implement to handle that capacity increase. And so I just want you to note that we're sort of bordering on that based on the forecast by 2025 foreseeable future potentially we'd have to look at providing additional airside capacity if the Crystal Airport were closed. The landside capacity numbers are based off of the number of based aircraft that we have compared to the maximum number of aircraft parking spaces we have at each of our airports. At Crystal today we have estimated 382 parking spaces and we have about 260 based aircraft. So we do have some landside capacity at Crystal. System wide, our capacity number for landside is about 82 percent. If you look out 20 years from now, the forecasted increase in based aircraft, the landside capacity number hits 99 percent. Now we've known for a while that some our airports are really pretty close to capacity right now today and we've included in our capital improvement program hangar expansion projects. There are five of them that still exist in the CIP today in addition to the new Northwest Building area that was just completed at Anoka. So assuming that we do those planned expansions within the next 20-year period, and taking those spaces into account, our landside capacity by 2025 would be about 80 percent. Now if you closed Crystal on top of that, by 2025, and again dispersed those based aircraft to the MAC Reliever Airports in worse case scenario our landside capacity is at 97 percent. So it's clearly more critical than the airside capacity. Here's the thing we think about with regard to the Reliever system, St. Paul, Flying Cloud pretty much already built out by the time we complete the Flying Cloud expansion. Airlake is going to be pretty much built out unless we invest funds to acquire a whole bunch of property down there. Lake Elmo has space for additional hangars, into the future beyond what we're currently planning but hangars at Lake Elmo don't necessarily serve the larger busier west metro/north metro reliever airports. And then there's Anoka that does have land available for additional runways, additional airside capacity in the future, but keep in mind that that's going to come with some pretty significant wetland and threatening endangered plant species impacts. So from a system standpoint we don't a lot of opportunity beyond what we're already planning and have already completed in the last couple years. Let's jump back to the closure process for a minute again and talk about the airport land. When MAC acquired the Crystal Airport back in the early 50's, we used federal funds for all the acquisitions. And at that time, it was about \$200,000 worth of funding. If the airport is closed, those grants need to be repaid and they're not repaid at the original value of

course, they would be paid back at fair market value. In addition to the land acquisition grants, there are construction grants that we would also have to repay for projects completed within the last 20 years as part of our grant assurances. That value is estimated to about \$1.2 million worth of payback. Payback wouldn't necessarily be a handing a check to the FAA saying here it is, they would probably allow us to prepare a plan and show them how we would redirect those funds back into the MAC reliever system and that would be acceptable to them as payback. If the airport is closed and redeveloped, there are a multitude of different types of development that could go in there. We took a look at the different possibilities, we came up with an average cost per square foot or price per square foot and estimate \$70 to \$120 million is what that airport property would be worth. So let's look at the cash flow a little bit. We'll put the capacity argument aside for a minute and just look at the cash flow a little bit if the airport were closed. You prepare the package, you submit it to the FAA with all the studies, that carries a cost of about \$2 million or more. Assuming the answer is yes, you terminate the leases, we've estimated \$30 to \$60 million for lease terminations at Crystal, again, 260 based aircraft there today. Sell the property, get an income offset of the dollars you've already spent on the closure process, leaves you with a pocket of money of \$35 to \$55 million estimated, you repay the construction grants, and then, actually what you'd probably what you'd do is go out and build those five hangar expansions before you close the airport so that those tenants have a place to go. That carries in the CIP today costs \$27 million almost to build out those hangar areas. Subtract that out, leaves you with roughly \$10 to \$30 million order of magnitude is what we've looked at for cash flow. Nice little windfall for the reliever system. But if you look out 20 years and envision the projects that we would have to complete in order to provide additional landside capacity and perhaps some airside capacity, use Flying Cloud as an example, Flying Cloud's program runway extension new hangar area and land acquisition in 1999 dollars is \$50 million. So our little windfall wouldn't be enough to cover a program like that, it probably wouldn't be enough to cover whatever projects we would need to do to replace the capacity that Crystal has today. And that's sort of the message that the closure report sends is that Crystal is here today. Aside from O&M costs and some pavement reconstructions, it's not really costing us a whole lot. You don't have to buy land, it's here, we don't have to complete environmental studies. Given the landside capacity concerns and the long-term cash flow of the reliever system, staff is recommending that the Crystal Airport remain open and continue to serve the metropolitan area as an airport facility. It's precious landside and airside capacity that Crystal allows. And then again, from an economic standpoint, while the short term might yield a windfall for the reliever system, long term we don't believe it makes sense. Does anybody have any questions on the closure report before I move on?

Chair McKasy: Bridget, what comes next? What are you going to move on to?

Bridget: Just a discussion of the long-term comp plan preferred alternative.

Chair McKasy: Okay. Why don't you go ahead and do that and we'll hold the questions.

Bridget: I'll talk about the forecast for just a minute here to note a few things. Similar to the Lake Elmo and Airlake forecasts that we also prepared for those comp plan updates, we are showing over the 20-year planning period an increase in operations and an increase in based aircraft. The thing I want to note is that as far as single aircraft go, the 20-year forecast actually shows a decline in the number of operations by single engine aircraft, the increase comes from very light jets and the forecast assumes that by 2010 we could have about 2,000 operations a year by very light jets and that grows in the forecast to more than 11,000 in the year 2025. So that's where the increase is coming from is the focus on these very light jets. We also prepared a high forecast and a low forecast and that assumes a huge boom in very light jets. We're sticking to

the base line forecast which does assume some success and some use of the Crystal Airport by those types of aircraft. I also want to note that while we don't have any corporate jets based at Crystal and we're not forecasting to have any based at Crystal, there are some operations by corporate jets at the Crystal Airport. The forecast shows about 130 or so a year, not too many, but also showing that growing to over 200 operations a year by 2025. I'm not going to discuss all the alternatives that we looked at because it would take way too much time. The preferred alternative that staff is recommending to the committee is maintaining one primary runway and one crosswind runway. This runway configuration operationally is best for the airport users. It maximizes the utility of the airport, it optimizes the wind coverage. If you close both of the crosswind runways, there would be times there would be days when certain aircraft would not be able to use the airport, the airport would basically be closed due to wind conditions. It does offer an opportunity for future hangar areas although we don't need any at this particular time, and it does offer non-aeronautical development. Operationally, we believe that this is the right configuration for the airport. The number of operations that this configuration can handle, back to that annual service volume, is 230,000 operations per year. Even in our high forecast, we don't even get close to that number. So we believe that for today and into the future, this configuration will serve the Crystal Airport and the service area it accommodates. Non-aeronautical development was one of the things we considered and the preferred alternative has a potential to bring in nearly \$1 million a year in non-aeronautical revenue which is pretty significant. The area shown on the map in green, areas G and alternative I, I want to note that buyout of those areas, removal of those hangars, is absolutely not necessary as part of the preferred alternative. The concept to redevelop those as non-aeronautical though is something that the Commission should consider. It comes at a cost, but it comes at a cost that would be offset by benefit cost ratio in as little as 10 years potentially with the amount of income that they would bring. Once the County Road 81 project is completed and there is a new frontage road constructed, both parcels will have direct access to that frontage road. We also considered the FAA Air Traffic Control Tower. We get a lot of questions about this. The FAA doesn't know what they want to do with that air traffic control tower. It is possible that if MAC selects this as a preferred alternative and goes to a two-runway configuration, the FAA may opt to close that tower. They may opt to turn it into a contract tower. They don't know, MAC, doesn't know, so we didn't use the air traffic control tower as a reason to select or not select any of the particular alternatives. As far the Hennepin County Road 81 project, we had a few meetings with Hennepin County and they are expecting to come to MAC at some point in time and asking for some right of way in order to accommodate the roadway improvements that they want to do. None of our alternatives have an impact on what they will be asking us for. What the County will ultimately want from what they're telling us can be accommodated by this or any of our alternatives. So again that ended up not being a factor in selecting one alternative over another. Then, just really quickly, we have had public involvement along the way, been soliciting informal comments for over a year, overwhelming the number of comments we're getting is to keep the airports in one configuration or another. Very few, less than two, comments received asking for the airport to close, and we did receive a petition that was signed by more than 300 residents, not aviation people but residents, from Crystal, Brooklyn Park, and Brooklyn Center asking that the airport stay. Now upon completion of a draft long-term comp plan that identifies a preferred alternative, we will make that document available for formal public review and comment. So the next steps would be again like I said to complete that draft document upon selection of a preferred alternative and make it available for review and comment. At that time we would come back to the Commission and ask for the authority to submit the document to the Metropolitan Council for their review and in conjunction with that we would also prepare and submit the request for the two runway closures to the FAA and work through the State Legislature process that would be associated with that. And we're expecting that the FAA will require an environmental assessment as part of what we would be proposing to do under this preferred

alternative. It will relate primarily to noise. The noise contour will change a little bit going from four runways to two, not nearly as much as it would change if you would go to only one runway or two parallel runways, but that would be something that we would study as part of an environmental assessment. The long-term comp plan document really isn't the place to do that. The recommendation in your memo is to recommend to the full Commission that the recommended alternative and the project elements identified in the summary recommendations report for Crystal be selected as preferred alternative, that you authorize us to complete the draft and make it available for public comment, and that would be authorized, finalized, the long-term comp plan document. With that, I'll stand for questions.

Chair McKasy: Thank you, Bridget. That's a very comprehensive presentation. I think before we go to questions with Bridget I know there are some people from public that want to testify and I want to make sure we get that in, so, why don't we do that next. Who out there, yes mam.

Good morning, thank you for taking my comments this morning. My name is ReNae Bowman and I am the mayor of the City of Crystal. And I'm very happy to be here today to represent the citizens of Crystal and the Crystal City Council. First I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to speak as you consider the recommendations that your staff has forwarded you today about the long term comprehensive plan for the Crystal Airport. For over two decades, the City of Crystal's official policy position has been that the existence of the airport that is embedded in a residential neighborhood represents a significant risk to life, property, and aviation safety. The Crystal comprehensive plan, the city's primary land use policy document, maintains that the airport operations and residential neighborhoods in such close proximity create problems for both the airport and the area residents. And as such, that policy asserts that airport operations should cease to ensure public safety. If you are not aware, there are nearly 325 residential properties, family homes, within Safety Zones A & B. In light of this overreaching safety concern, let's examine for a moment what the real compelling regional need would be for this airport. If the quality of operations at Crystal are such that they can't be accommodated anywhere else and if the number of operations at the Crystal Airport are such that they system's capacity is threatened and if this government operated facility is satisfying a demand within the region that cannot be met elsewhere, then if all of these factors are true, then one might adopt the position that those 325 family homes within the safety zones live their at their own peril because the regional need for this facility at this location outweighs any concern for their safety. But in reality, there is no objective evidence that has been presented that there is a compelling regional need for this public airport. The evidence presented to you by your staff in their report makes a case for maintaining operations at Crystal. To be quiet honest, the City did not expect the report to recommend otherwise particularly in light of some senior members of your staff offering comments at past public meetings such as . . . "We aren't in the business of closing airports." I would argue that if the operational trends of the last 10 to 15 years and the industry projections for recreational aviation are any indication of the current and future health of recreational aviation, then the MAC, as a public agency, should be closing airports to maximize the effective use of public assets. Government is good government when it addresses the needs of the whole and that happens when we respond genuinely to those needs over and above the needs of special interests. It is a difficult role that you have to play, and as mayor, believe me; I understand the challenges that accompany the responsibility of safeguarding the broader public interest. Nonetheless, that is the role we are elected, or in your case, appointed to fulfill. Some of you may recall that when the reliever airport task force study was completed in January of '06 with an accompanying economic impact analysis, Crystal city staff offered detailed comments on not only the conclusions of that economic study, but the assumptions and methodologies used to reach those conclusions. Unfortunately, the City's comments were ignored by your staff so the final report is constructed on flawed methodologies and assumptions. As a result, the

City in partnership with other agencies sought Legislative authority to have a state-funded, independent, objective economic impact analysis to the reliever system and I am sad to say that these efforts were not successful. Now here it is more than a year later and once again MAC staff is basing their recommendations on flawed assumptions that when examined closely resemble more wishful thinking than a reflection of what is really going on in recreational flying. The assumptions ignore current and past trends in recreational aviation in particular and the methodologies employed are supportive of the predetermined outcome that MAC is not in the business of closing airports. The small packet of information that I've made available to each of you today provides a glimpse of the activity within your reliever airport. I hope that you will note that it is not just Crystal that is experiencing dramatically diminishing operations, it is region wide, indeed, it is nationwide. The diminishing activity in general aviation is due largely to a rapidly decreasing demand for recreational flying. Every year for economic and demographic reasons alike there are fewer pilots flying for recreation. I have included in the packet a couple of articles from some important media sources that document these trends. The bottom line of this issue is that on one side of the equation you have the case for closure. We know for certain that closure eliminates concerns for the safety of the 325 residents, family homes in surrounding neighborhoods. Closure provides tens of millions of dollars from the sale of the land that you, the Commissioners, can dedicate to aviation purposes by making major improvements that strengthen the other reliever airports such as St. Paul, Flying Cloud, and Anoka. Closure satisfies the regional policy to direct new development into sites where infrastructure already exists and closure satisfies the MAC's statutory authority requiring that the Metropolitan Airport systems benefit the people of the state as a whole, renders a general public service, and is of great public economic benefit. On the other side of the equation you have keeping the airport open because we aren't in the business of closing airports and to that I ask it begs the question what happens to the 325 family homes located within the safety zones. All numbers and trends for the past 10 to 15 years suggest to the objective student that the airport is not needed nor will it be needed in the system. The trends indicate that operations are going down dramatically year after year. There will not be, as suggested by your staff's prediction, this miraculous turnaround. Fuel prices won't go down, insurance coverage won't get less expensive, aircraft aren't getting cheaper, mandated aircraft maintenance and their associated costs are not going away, and the level of interest in zeal for flying recreationally that once existed is not shared as broadly by younger generations. In light of these concerns and others, I would ask I would very respectfully ask, that the Commission postpone today's action on this item, and I ask that you have an objective analysis by disinterested third parties conducted on this issue. This decision carries important regional implications and as such should not be based on wishful thinking. There is no down side to postponing this decision if the intent of this is to get it right. I appreciate your attentiveness today and thank you very much for this opportunity to bring to you a message from the City of Crystal. Thank you again.

Chair McKasy: Thank you mayor. Mayor, why don't you be on standby for questions. I think we're going to continue on with the public testimony. Who else out in the audience?

Mr. Chairman and members, my name is Elwyn Tinklenberg. I'm here on behalf of a group of developers who are looking at the Crystal Airport site as a potential redevelopment site. My testimony to you today is very brief; it is only to say that there is broad interest in this site, in the potential of this site to provide the kind of improvement to that region that can enhance the tax base, the livability, and the transportation systems of that entire part of the metropolitan area. It goes beyond just the impacts to the City of Crystal, it really impacts all of those communities in that area, and I think that's why not only has Crystal supported this look at those broader impacts, but the other members of the north metro mayors who represent the communities in that area also have a resolution supporting the redevelopment of that site. I'm here before you

today as someone who's been involved in the reliever airports system for a while. As the former mayor of Blaine, I spent a lot of time in public hearings defending the reliever airports system. Some very difficult public hearings and I know what that task is and what the challenge is and how important that system is to the overall aviation system here in the Twin Cities area. But I think it is an important discussion to have whether or not Crystal continues to serve that function and whether or not Crystal continues to be a responsibility of the MAC as part of the system. There's no question about the importance of having aviation capacity in the metropolitan area and in the broader part of Minnesota, again, as a former Commissioner of the Transportation Department here in Minnesota, I had responsibility for many of those airports around the state, and again I know how important they are. The question here is whether or not this airport continues to need to be a part of the MAC system to provide those reliever services that are so important to the region, and I think that's a discussion that really does require a broader cost benefit analysis, an analysis that looks not only at its role as part of the aviation system for the metropolitan area, but its role as a development opportunity as a corporate campus as an area for new residential areas in those communities, as an area for office and retail and other spaces in that area, and as a kind of driver that can help support the development of other transportation improvements whether it's the Bottineau Corridor that would connect downtown to this site to the Target Center or other improvements in the region. I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that there would be an opportunity for that broader discussion. I appreciate the staff report, the effort that has gone into this, I appreciate that fact that now it will move forward to discussion with Metropolitan Council, I think that's very important, the discussion with the Legislature where some of those broader issues can be discussed and considered. And I hope I agree with the mayor and would request also that you allow that discussion to unfold for that kind of objective analysis to be made before you move on with the final decision. I confess also that I was somewhat disappointed to read in the newspaper the comment from the MAC staff that this was a done deal. I would hate to think that all of these meetings and all of these upcoming steps were simply perfunctory as an effort to live out a decision that had already been made and I hope that we can have a more broader discussion and broader dialogue of this important regional asset as we move forward. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you, Mr. Tinklenberg, and if you'll be available for questions as well. Bridget, why don't you come back up and we'll see what questions the commissioners have. The floor is open. Commissioner Mars.

Commissioner Mars: Chairman McKasy, in your report you don't talk about any other airports except those in the system. There are a lot of airports in the state of Minnesota and from a land use standpoint; many of them do their job very, very well. A lot of them do. How could we other than enjoying ownership, how could we make a statement that we need this airport when we don't consider any other airports? We don't look at Forest Lake, we don't look at St. Cloud, we don't look at Duluth, we don't look at Rochester, we just take the ones that we happen to have in the system and kind of play a protection game. Can you speak to that?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Mars, I'll answer that in two different ways. First of all, as far as distributing aircraft to other airports, most likely, if the Crystal Airport were closed there would be tenants that would go to other airports. There would probably be tenants that would probably stop flying altogether. There's no way for us to be able to gauge how many would go to Buffalo and how many would go to Forest Lake so what we did is we tried to look at it as worst case scenario for the metropolitan system keeping in mind that statewide, 50 percent of all the based-registered aircraft are at MAC airports. So that's part of the reason why and the second answer to your question is to why we focused just on MAC airports for the study.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Mars.

Commissioner Mars: Follow up, I'm certain when they set up this commission, there was a reason that they put outstate people on the commission. I'm from Duluth. The big guy over there in the corner is from Marshall. It would seem to me that the reason for that is that a study should be made of a larger area as far as the MSP and the reliever system is concerned that it should include a more, wider range of airports and I try and keep in very close touch with the Duluth Airport and their Board and believing that there are issues there that matter to me and issues here that matter to them and I don't see any of that being used in what we're talking about here.

Chair McKasy: Any, Commissioner Sigel.

Commissioner Sigel: Thank you. First of all, thank you for this very comprehensive report. I know this issue has been on the minds of many for many years, and I do appreciate the staff and the City of Crystal and others that are trying to bring this to at least some sort of closure because I know people both staff from a planning perspective and the community would definitely like some closure on this issue. Just a question about cost and an observation. One of the things I noticed in this is staff has done a nice job talking about how much it will cost to close the airport but I don't see a lot of information about what it's going to cost us to keep it open. Specifically, I'm wondering if there's costs associated short-term and long-term and I know there is something in our CIP for this option 4 that you talked about today, and secondly, well, I'll let you answer that and then I will continue.

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Sigel. As far as cost to keep the airport open, I can't speak to the O&M specifically but may ask Gary Schmidt to help me out if you want a more detailed answer. As far as the capital improvement program goes, there are two projects in the capital improvement program right now to reconstruct the parallel, primary runways. One is slated for next year in 2008, and the other is slated for 2010. Both of those costs are \$1.8 to 2 million roughly. There are also projects slated in out years in the reliever model for various pavement maintenance programs similar to our other airports. As far as costs for keeping the airport, one of the things that we considered, looking at the numbers that we have and expecting that we are going to have to replace the capacity at other airports, we're not necessarily saving dollars by closing Crystal hangar areas for example because we're just going to have to build another one at a different airport. So maybe we're not spending it at Crystal, we're spending it at Lake Elmo. So we looked at that more of a wash of a cost if you will.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Sigel.

Commissioner Sigel: One question about the one of the things that's frustrating me is it seems looking at the numbers from, and I did get numbers back from 1995 to today about operations, specifically operations at the airport, we are basing much of what we're talking about today on estimates for planes that currently aren't flying in our system. I know there are people in line to purchase these light air jets but we don't have safety information about them yet, we don't know demographics of who's buying them, where they're going to flying them, and whether or not they're ever going to want to land at Crystal for example. So that's one frustration I have is I don't see what I know about who's got planes at Crystal right now from my understanding it isn't a real young group of people necessarily. These are not new planes, many of them are old, and I'm assuming they are going to continue to move out of the system as time goes on. So just an observation about that. Secondly, when I first joined this Commission a few years ago, we had a different Chair, similar staff, but we did make a very strong commitment to Northwest Airlines and our flying public that we were going to move towards a system where our reliever airports

were self sufficient. I've struggled with that goal since it was made because I wasn't 100 percent convinced that that was realistic. I also think this conversation and this issue has brought it to my attention again that I think getting to that point is going to be difficult and I see this airport and what's potentially, lack of potential I would argue, for development at this airport, even though I know, there is some possibility for that. Actually, moving us away from that and not towards something. So I'm struggling with the economic obligation I have as a Commissioner along with my obligation to the public and the people in Crystal. And frankly I'm just not convinced that we are, I'm not convinced that this is the only way to go in this particular area but if you could just comment on my comments.

Bridget Rief: I'll comment on the operations first. The number of operations at an airport isn't necessarily the justification as to why certain programs are completed. For example the new Willmar Airport, brand new airport, they have about 17,000 operations a year at Willmar. Similar to other airports where runway extensions are completed because there are private businesses or certain people that would benefit from those and the number of operations at the airport whether it's increasing or declining isn't driving the need for that. And operationally again, we're not trying to justify that the airport stay the way it is, we can't justify four runways at this facility any longer, even into the future we don't believe. We don't think we can justify parallel runways. But the two-runway configuration that we're recommending is appropriate for this type of airport and the foreseeable increase or even if it declines in number of operations, having a primary and a crosswind is operationally the best configuration for this airport. Now economically there are other alternatives that would be better. For the airport, though, we think choosing the operationally best alternative as a preferred alternative is a better way to go. And with regard to the economics, this particular alternative has the potential, as we talked about, to bring in almost \$1 million a year in non-aeronautical revenue. That's a lot, that's about what we're planning for at the Anoka Airport per year. That's a significant amount of income to help keep that remodel, keep that reliever model afloat. In looking at 2008 capital improvement program and forecasting out 20 years, we are still even with the Crystal projects included, keeping that surcharge to the tenants at a zero dollar figure. And we'll have an annual effort to continue to look at that, but even though it may be even a little bit limited as far as non-aeronautical, the dollar amount itself is a huge benefit to the reliever model we think.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Boivin, did you have your hand up before?

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you, Chair. First off just for the statement here I echo the comments of Commissioner Mars, Commissioner Sigel and I have a lot of questions and I think, Bridget, I mean I commend staff, you've addressed a lot of issues here but I think there's more out there and so I'm trying to figure out the best way to proceed going forward here. For example, what's the trends around the country? Are other airport groups closing the regional airports or smaller airports or that and selling off land for development and that. I see nothing about that, I don't know what's going on there and I'd like to know because I'd like to know if the FAA granted approval, is there's a history of doing these things or not. I'd like to know about the tax bases here and I don't know maybe the mayor could comment on that I mean what is the City of Crystal currently getting from this airport operation and what do they foresee in the future if things were to change one way or another. These forecasts, I'm very concerned about the forecasts because I always remember going back and looking at the forecasts, we did for the reliever airport system and when they were going to be self sufficient. I see no studies in the past, they were supposed to be self sufficient by now and they're not, I see we got project out, they're going to be self sufficient some time in the future here but again I have to answer to, and I've had this question asked of me, why is the MAC supporting basically a hobby, an airport for guys who have hobbies, that fly planes? It's like having a private country club, why are we doing

that? People have addressed that. Why aren't you just focused on the main airport here? So I have these questions I'd like answered but one of the big keys of this component to analyze is I think Commissioner Sigel hit it is a very light jets. All right. Are they even going to use Crystal Airport if they're all want instrument precision flying systems and that? Are they even going to come on there, okay, so they go to these other airports? These business people want to fly into St. Paul or Flying Cloud airport and is that going to push other people out to Crystal? I don't know. Or will that push them out to some other airport, Buffalo and that. So I just have a lot of questions and I am not prepared to support this recommendation today and I would suggest that we just sort of delay this and maybe come back and I'm happy to put together a whole list of questions I'd like to see answered here but I am just currently not prepared to support the status quo without going further. And I remember when I joined the Commission five years ago, I sat down with representatives of the City of Crystal because it was on their agenda, and they wanted to talk about it and they wanted to talk about what it could do for the community and as you know around the Twin Cities here we have first ring suburbs that have, some have been able to improve with age and do some development, others it's been a little more of a challenge. I certainly see this as a potential boom to the City of Crystal and to the northern suburbs here if something could be done with development whether that ever happens or not, I don't know. But I would like to see us take another step forward in terms of getting some more questions, having some more input into this process, and see where we go from. And one other comment I want to make and remind everybody. We've had some difficult time with our governmental entities around our airports in the past few years, and here we go again. And I think we have to be mindful of that because if we go ahead and say sorry we're just not going to consider that, I know the natural response of Crystal probably will be go to Met Council, go to Legislature and try to force things down our throat there. So, I just don't think at this point in time, today we should be proceeding forward with this recommendation.

Chair McKasy: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Landy, you had your hand up before?

Commissioner Landy: Yes, I did. I serve on the RAC or at least I'm a the Commissioner who attends their meeting as a liaison, and I just want to back to the basis of why are we sitting here as Commissioners and what are the scope of what we do and I think that what we need to do is pay some attention to the notion that we're here and there's really no one else that I can think of that's charged with, in fact the MAC is the aviation of the state as well as its own system, that's in the mission statement of the organization, that we are to deal with, think about, protect those interests. And I take those rather seriously. Now if I was on the Crystal City Council, or I was their economic development officer, I would have a whole different spin and I can understand that spin and I certainly respect it. I've had a lot of discussions with not only Crystal but with Mr. Tinklenberg and others. First of all at the meeting, this last RAC meeting, it was discussed, this cloud that's been hanging over Crystal Airport because this discussion isn't brand new. This decision has been brewing for a very long period of time. We've, I think, goodness, it's been four or five years at least that we've had discussions with Crystal and what are we doing? What we did was established a task force that Chair Lanners was involved in to study basically from all aspects all of our reliever airports and this particular airport was part of that discussion. So to say that we haven't been moving down the path toward this day is probably not fair. I think that this is part of a reasonable approach. Now we're at that day and I can understand the frustration of some individuals because we're getting very close to making decisions. Airports are very hard to develop. I mean if we're suggesting that some time in the near future, we're, the MAC or any other jurisdiction be it any jurisdiction wants to establish an airport, it's almost a task that isn't possible anymore. We know that, it's difficult, so the consideration we have for the ones we have I think is a pretty serious matter. If we do away with it and we're going to need this again in

the future, which the numbers suggest, that we need that capacity, for sure we're needing it on, it sounds like to me, on the landside more than the airside. But proximity to the airports have something to do with their success as well. If you suggest that either individuals or businesses that may be in the northern suburbs have to drive to St. Cloud to use their private aircraft or Buffalo or somewhere in Wisconsin, I think that's not fair. Now, Commissioner Boivin, you said why should the state support some people that may have an aviation hobby? I'm wondering if you've ever been in a state park, if you've ever camped, ever fished in the state of Minnesota. Do you know that the state of Minnesota stocks fish? The DNR does that. Do you know that they're out there protecting hunters from each other? I mean, this is not an unusual thing for a state or a locality to do is to supply quality of life benefits, but this aviation to those people involved is not much different frankly as having some kind of a cabin cruiser down on the St. Croix really. And there is state money going and federal money going to support that kind of activity. Now I've always wondered. Oh, one thing that came up also is the potential for maybe some potential good things that could happen with Crystal Airport as far as even aviation. The proximity to downtown was discussed in our RAC meeting, the notion if we had some better linkage with the Crystal Airport and downtown that people would tend to use it more as an approach to the Twin Cities. As far as the tax base question, if this is based on the tax base of Crystal, the Crystal community, the decision is entirely different, but I'm looking at the health of the aviation. Can this development if it doesn't occur on this site, will this development not occur? I don't think so, it may not occur in Crystal on the site, but will it be in Maple Grove, will it be in Brooklyn Park, will it be in somewhere else in the north suburbs? If we close this airport, are we going to have an airport in Brooklyn Park or Maple Grove? The answer is no. It's not possible. So are we getting in the way of development of occurring period? I don't think so. It may just be on this site. One thing that I discussed with Mr. Tinklenberg is if you look at things based on the value of development alone, I have my eyes on Central Park in New York. I can't think of a better parcel of land for more development interest and more profitability than doing that. Can you imagine encroaching, what it would take to encroach on Central Park? Let's see the first skyscraper go up in Central Park. Someone's decided that these parcels of land, even though they can generate humungous amounts of money, there's something else involved. In this case, it's aviation. And this job, I'm a Commissioner of the MAC, and I want to be real careful about what we do with aviation. And that's kind of, where I'm saying I support this plan. I'm not saying we shouldn't have further discussion so that everyone is entirely comfortable, but when you're done, I think we have to look at ourselves, that we are commissioners of an airport authority and not necessarily just simply the Crystal economic development person.

Chair McKasy: Thank you, Commissioner Landy. Here's what we're going to do. In the interest of time, we have four more items on this agenda and we have two committee meetings scheduled as well today, so, we're going to go to Commissioner Nelson and then we're going to ask the mayor and Mr. Tinklenberg to come back up for questions. I'd ask commissioners, I think it's fairly apparent we're not going to vote on this today, so I'd ask commissioners if they would hold their statements for future debate if you will and let's just stick to questions of our people ongoing. Commissioner Nelson.

Commissioner Nelson: You changed my question.

Chair McKasy: I figured I might.

Commissioner Nelson: Thanks a lot. No, a couple of points for you. Did you consider the LSA market at both Cirrus Company and Duluth as developing and sport aircraft as developing. Because I know in their plan for next year there's like 1,000 airplanes they're going to build

between the two of them. And they're going to go someplace to do flight training and general aviation and so forth. Was that in your equation at all?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner, yes. The sport aircraft were included as part of the forecast.

Commissioner Nelson: Those numbers that they're talking about, they've already got orders for. Those were in there? Okay, fair enough.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Nelson, you're done for today anyhow. Okay, mayor, can you come back up please?

Mayor Bowman: Thank you very much.

Chair McKasy: Mayor, I have a couple of quick questions for you. Has the City of Crystal taken an official position on this issue at City Council?

Mayor Bowman: We've taken the official position based on the perspective is that it would be healthy for the City of Crystal based on the fact that it's not about the tax dollars, it's not about tax base, it's about safety within the community and the fact that if you're going to bring very light jets into that area and you have 325 residential homes in the safety zone, that creates for us as leaders of the community an issue. So that.

Chair McKasy: My question is whether the City Council has passed a resolution either in favor of or opposed to the staff recommendation?

Mayor Bowman: Not for this particular staff evaluation, but for the overall recommendation to close the airport, that we would support it. I believe we have, right? That strong of language. Pardon? Right. As part of the Bottineau Boulevard upgrade to the area.

Chair McKasy: One other question. I don't recall the specifics of what Bridget put up here, but as I recall there were several hundred citizens who had contacted and said that they were in favor of the closure. And I just wonder how you sort of square that with you as a city official.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you. I think that's an important point to bring up. One of the reasons why the, most of the residents who live around the airport, at this point like to have the airport there is because it's very quiet. There's very little activity going on in that area. And so it make it very nice. They're an island in and of themselves. The other side of it is that if you were to bring in very light jets and start landing them regularly within the community, I suspect that the concern would grow. The other side of the piece has been that the opponents to closing the airport as in all opponents to most issues in the political arena, start to spread those rumors that scare people. They've told our Crystal citizens that is you let that airport go, that property is going to be developed as low-income housing and we're going to create a ghetto there is the message that has been sent to these people. And I would like to point out that at this particular time that airport is zoned as R1 or single family residential. So I think that's why you see people supporting the airport at this point, because it is quiet.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Other questions of the Mayor by Commissioners? Chair Lanners?

Chair Lanners: I haven't said much and I really didn't need to follow Commission Landy because I think he spoke beautifully and described our mission and the long-term thinking of

goals and objectives very, very well versus short-term economic thinking. Just one quick question for the Mayor on the City of Crystal. There was a vote and I don't believe that was a unanimous vote by the City, was it?

Mayor Bowman: Not it wasn't, it was a 6/1 vote. Close to unanimous.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. So that's all I have.

Mayor Bowman: May I beg to further comment?

Chair McKasy: Sure, go ahead.

Mayor Bowman: I would just to say that the Crystal's mindset, we're not here to spin anything, and I think that's what's important for this group to remember. We are here because we honestly believe that questions have omitted. Conclusions are based on numbers that are not substantiated and that in all reality we have 325 family homes in the safety zone. And although I respectfully enjoy the analogy to Central Park, as a leader in my community it's fun and it's at the same time unrealistic. We're looking for a healthy resolve for our community for MAC. So thank you very much for your time today.

Chair McKasy: Any other questions for the mayor? Any questions of Mr. Tinklenberg?

Elwyn Tinklenberg: Mr. Chairman, if I could just make one comment in response to your earlier part of the report. You do have a model of a group of folks who are trying to plan for that new generation of aircraft in terms of the northwest quadrant at Blaine. And that is being developed as a public/private partnership. The bonding that is being put into that is coming from the county. It provides a different economic model in terms of the development of that site in that kind of capacity but it also provides a model of what kind of facilities are going to be developed to accommodate that next generation of aircraft. And certainly it's a much different kind of development, both in terms of the financing model but also in terms of the capacity and design of that facility than what is suggested would be a part of the future of Crystal.

Chair McKasy: Thank you very much for both coming and here's what I'm going to suggest. Commissioner Boivin, I know you said you had questions. I'm sure that there are other commissioners that have questions. And if Mayor and Mr. Tinklenberg, you have questions that you think should be answered, I'd ask that they all be funneled in and Nigel who should all these questions go to?

Nigel Finney: Mr. Chairman, either Bridget or myself I think would be appropriate.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Peilen, any wrap-up comments since this is your district?

Commissioner Peilen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Chair Lanners didn't feel that he could really follow Commissioner Landy, I think Commissioners Boivin and Sigel really raised a number of important issues. I think that we are taking the appropriate step here to make sure that more questions are resolved before we move on the issue and I appreciate that happening.

Chair McKasy: All right, well we will hold for today on the issue. We'll get the questions in here and then we'll decide on how to proceed. Thank you.

November 19, 2007 Full Commission Meeting

Chairman Lanners: With that, we will consider Item A10 which is the Crystal Airport Long-Term Comprehensive Plan Update Summary and Recommendation and I would ask Mr. Nigel Finney to comment with regard to that.

Nigel Finney: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. Just a few words on behalf of Commissioner McKasy. This item will be back on the agenda for the FD&E Committee in December. We are looking for any comments, questions that you may have as a result of the discussion at the Committee earlier this month as early as possible so staff has an opportunity to get materials out to you prior to the committee meeting. We've also, and I think most of you have received a couple of letters regarding the airport and its future. We will be summarizing those and preparing potential responses for presentation to you at the committee meeting also. Also just a heads up for those of you on FD&E, given the length of the agenda potentially, Chair McKasy has talked about starting the meeting early, maybe 9:00 or 9:30, but we'll finalize a time for you as soon as we have a better sense of that.

Chairman Lanners: Thank you, Mr. Finney. Any questions with regard to that. Commissioner Landy.

Commissioner Landy: Chair, Nigel, I'd like to pass along a couple questions now while I think of them. One is that one of the Crystal officials suggested there were 300 homes in the safety zone, quoted that a numerous amounts of times. It would be interesting to find out what the number is in the existing safety zone and then because we're reducing one, we're taking a parallel away, that's going to reduce the safety zones and give us the number of what will be in the safety zones after that runway is reduced.

Nigel Finney: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Landy. We would do that just kind of as by way of information. That's not an unusual situation by the way. We have homes in safety zones at essentially every one of our airports. MSP for instance, a goodly portion of the safety zones fall over residential development in south Minneapolis. So just as a basis for comparison.

Commissioner Landy: But I thought that the numbers seemed to be extremely high to me. We'll find out what they are.

Chairman Lanners: I'm sure staff can prepare a response on that and I would again encourage all Commissioners or any concerned, interested parties in the audience today to produce any questions you may have on a relatively lengthy and complex plan that has been developed for the reliever airport system and the Crystal Airport Long-Term Comprehensive Plan is one of the spokes in the wheel for that and so we need to move forward with it in one direction or another and please get your questions into staff until you obtain a satisfactory response.

December 5, 2007 FD&E Committee meeting

Chair McKasy: Now we'll move on to Crystal. I'm first going to ask for a brief presentation from the staff, and that's probably going to be you, Bridget? And then we'll follow that with any questions by any commissioners. Then we will go to the public testimony of both proponents and opponents so to speak and we won't entertain any questions until everyone has spoken and then we'll go back to the questions and discussion from the commissioners. Bridget.

Bridget Rief: Good morning, Mr. Chair and Commissioners. I thought what we would talk about today what we've talked about presenting today is some responses to the questions that were posed by the commissioners both at last month's FD&E meeting and then over the last couple of weeks. We'll run through those quickly and then if you have any questions for me, we'll go from there. The first set of questions from the commissioners related to not looking at airports outside of the MAC system. Our jurisdiction is limited by statute. We cannot control what happens at airports outside of our systems. We can't require them to develop hangar space in order to accommodate our tenants. But more so than that, it's the responsibility of the Metropolitan Council and the non-aeronautic and state aviation system plan to be coordinating what's happening statewide with the metropolitan system. We used the worst-case assumption. We talked about this at the last meeting because there is no way to know where tenants will relocate if we do close the Crystal Airport. We assumed again worst case that the tenants would stay within the metropolitan system. We feel that we can support that by the fact that almost 50 percent of the registered aircraft in the state of Minnesota are within the metropolitan system. Now that doesn't mean there won't be some that go to other airports, but if you take the 260 tenants at the Crystal Airport and for example equally divide them to four different airports: Buffalo, Forest Lake, Rice Lake, that equates to about 65 tenants some who have more than one aircraft leaving to go to these other airports. And most of those other airports at this particular time couldn't accommodate that number of tenants. Some could never accommodate that number of tenants. Some could with particular development. But again, we're saying with the worst-case assumption as far as our airport closure data report goes. We received questions about how much does it cost to keep the airport open and what costs are associated both long and short term. Between the period of 1997 and 2006, the average O&M expenses for Crystal were \$425,000 annually. Average revenues were about \$218,000 and then during that same 10-year period up through 2006 keep in mind that total average expenses including net depreciation, an inputted interest, admin costs were almost \$1 million. I apologize for not mentioning, we do have a handout that addresses the questions and responses that I'm looking at. Looking forward, the CIP includes a little more the \$4.9 million in capital improvement plans between now and 2014. The preferred alternative that we're recommending also provides opportunities for non-aeronautical revenue generation. With very little work on MAC's part in having developers come in within the City of Brooklyn Park, we're estimating we could generate more \$360,000 annually from that non-aeronautical revenue. If the Commission wanted to pursue additional non-aeronautical revenue and relocate tenants along the County Road 81 Corridor to do so, that annual number could jump to almost \$1 million a year. We just want the Commissioners to keep in mind too that as we move forward for this airport, for all of the airports, the reliever financial model will be our tool to be sure we're not spending too much, we're keeping track of our revenues and expenses and as it stands right now with the proposed 2008 CIP that you will be looking at today, we still maintain a positive cash flow between now and 2020. There was a question concerning the number of aircraft that we're including aircraft in our forecast that are not yet in our system and specifically the very light jets, the VLJs. This is typical for a forecasting effort and we'll use transportation as an example. When a city, county, MN/Dot for example, is looking at a roadway improvement project, they will include and look at parcels that are either not yet developed or potentially scheduled for redevelopment and include

the vehicles per day trip generation that are expected from those parcels when they look at the vehicles per day that are expected on the roadway once it's improved. And aviation really isn't different than that. An example is for the Airlake Airport, one of our alternatives was to extend the runway from 4,000 to 5,000 feet. In doing so, we're expecting that additional jets will utilize that airport once that expansion is done. Now some of those jets aren't there yet and they're not based there yet, but we expect they will be and therefore they're in the forecast. So Crystal and the use of the airport by VLJs follows those same lines. And then keep in mind too that we also calculated a high and a low forecast and one of the main reasons for that is the variability in these very light jets and how successful they will or will not be. We received a question about the trends around the country regarding the closure of airports, and we worked with our consultant, HNTB, in particular on this question because they have such a nationwide presence in aviation and in talking with their people it does appear that there is trend to close privately-owned airfields. They're getting sort of crowded in by developments. As a privately owned facility, they typically do not receive federal funds. And for an airport that hasn't received federal funds, there is no federal approval required in order to close it. The airport owner just needs to notify the FAA that they're going to close the airport. They do not believe that there is a similar trend with regard to publically owned facilities in particular ones that have used federal funding especially for land acquisition like we have at Crystal. And they're expectation is that it would be difficult to get FAA approval to close an airport like ours given the amount of federal grants that we have received. Again, getting back to the forecasts, but the question primarily focused on recreational versus business related flights and this is one of the questions that we continue to get from the City of Crystal as well. All of the MAC-owned airports support recreational business flying. We don't know the exact split, we don't keep track, in a lot of ways we don't care, an operation is an operation. The FAA tower doesn't keep track as they keep track of operations. Trying to discern the difference between recreational flying and business flying to me again getting back to that transportation example, would be like saying only people that are driving to work this morning can use 494, but anybody else who's just running to the market or doing something for a personal reason, can't use that road and has to find a different way to go. The transportation roadway design, they don't differentiate between personal and business use. They don't discriminate between the reason for the trip. And aviation is no different than that. We do not discriminate between the purpose for the trip and a recreational flight is no less important than a business flight in our opinion. Our legislative responsibility is not specific to business related aviation. And then we also want you to keep in mind too that just because one pilot flies a single engine plane and the second pilot flies a jet doesn't mean that the first guy's flying for recreation and the second guy's flying for business. There are a lot of tenants that own single engine airplanes that fly them for their business. We received a couple of questions about whether or not very light jets will indeed use the Crystal Airport. We believe they will. The runway length will accommodate them. There is a GPS approach to that airport that they can utilize. The amount of time that instrument approach would be needed is approximately 7 1/2 percent of the time, so the overwhelming majority is visual approach they can use that airport. Now granted with the Anoka and hopefully soon Flying Cloud having 5,000 feet and an ILS approach we would expect the LJs would use those airports even more so. But we do expect some use by Crystal. We received a question about light sport aircraft and if they were considered in the numbers. This question is a little, we made a couple assumptions in our answer and we can talk about it more specifically. The aircraft that are being manufactured by Cirrus in Duluth which was a reference in the question are actually not considered light sport aircraft. They're single-engine aircraft. They have a parachute, but they fall in the category of being single-engine aircraft. And so from that standpoint we did take them into account in the forecast in that aircraft category. By FAA's definition, a light sport aircraft weighs less than 1,340 pounds and are typically the ultra lights, hot air balloons, gliders, and some single-engine aircraft that fall in that weight category. Now those type of aircraft may or may not be operating

within the MAC system. You need to have a registered aircraft with an N number and you need to have an aircraft-type certification from the FAA in order to operate in the MAC system. And typically, the light sport aircraft can't get those two certifications together. One of the questions that was asked too related to the number of homes within the safety area around Crystal. The presentation by the mayor of Crystal repeatedly talked about 325 homes in the safety areas. So we worked with our MAC Environment department using their GIS capabilities and did a parcel count. That's not a house count like the City of Crystal did so the numbers may be slightly different because of that, we did a parcel and there's a table in your handout and there's also two graphics attached that show where the parcels are located. Within the City of Crystal, under the four-runway scenario that we have today, there 264 parcels. If we move forward with the preferred alternative, under the two-runway scenario that number drops to 216 homes. The City of Brooklyn Park today has 136 homes or parcels, excuse me, within the two safety zones. Under the two-runway scenario, that drops to 131. So there's not much of a change for Brooklyn Park parcels. And then in the City of Brooklyn Center, there are 107 parcels today in the state safety zones and that number would drop to 86 if we went with the two-runway configuration. It's not unusual to have homes in the safety zones around airports. And our MAC system is no different. As an example here at Minneapolis, we have 1,880 homes in the state safety zones. We received a question about the need for additional hangar capacity wondering why, since we have a waiting list at some of our airports, why aren't those tenants going to Crystal right now. Clearly there's capacity at Crystal so why aren't they at least opting to get into the MAC system and have a lease there. And we believe the reason for that is primarily relates to this airport closure discussion that we've been having for so many years. People don't want to be at the Crystal Airport right now because they don't know what value their facilities have. Looking into the future, they don't know what the fate of that airport is going to be so they're not wanting to be in that particular location. We also think that it relates to the service area. Each airport truly does serve its own service area and people who live near the Crystal Airport, they're not going to want to drive to Airlake to fly their plane. We also received a question about what type of investment will happen at Crystal. As I mentioned the CIP includes almost \$5 million for improvements there. MAC will continue to look at the potential for non-aeronautical revenue generation, what cost benefit that brings us. Other investments that relate to hangar aesthetics, we'll be looking to the tenants for that as part of our ordinance that will be coming to you in the next couple months I believe. Once there is some understanding that Crystal will stay, we expect that the tenants will start putting some dollars back into their facilities at that airport and the ordinance will require tenants at all of our airports to start doing that. We received a question about Crystal tenants being able to trust the MAC, trust the governor, this body changes from year to year. The same can be said for the city leadership too. We've tried to be vocal with the tenants that should the Commission vote today to keep the airport and go with the preferred alternative, there is no guarantee that this discussion will not come up again but we believe that this is the right move for the airport now and into the future and that Crystal should remain a viable two-runway airport facility well into the future. We received a question about the number of licensed pilots and that that number has declined since 1980 and asking what the trend for that is. The decline in the ratio of general aviation pilots or operations excuse me to the population has resulted from a reduced pool of military trained pilots, increased urbanization, higher costs of flying, and increased non-aviation recreational opportunities. There are specific reasons why general aviation numbers are declining and not maintaining the same rate as the general population. Our forecasters believe though that many of these factors are becoming less relevant in particular as the business share of flying continues to increase. Commercial travel is becoming less appealing to some of the business owners because of reductions in service, security concerns and time requirements and as that also comes into play we expect that the share of general aviation will also begin to increase and then become more responsive actually to the traditional economic factors versus just population. We also want to note that the

according to FAA's 2006 General Aviation and Air Taxi Survey, less than one third of all aviation operations are recreational related. The majority of them are business related, instructional related, medical flight related, business related. Our forecaster also suggested that I mention that our methodology that we have in our forecasts incorporates the recent decline in the MAC airports share of the GA fleets. We also took into account things such as constrained landside facility possibilities at the St. Paul Airport here at MSP. So compared to what the FAA forecast would be for example, their forecasts are always unconstrained assuming that airports will grow and meet whatever demand that they have. Where as here in our system we know we have restrictions that don't allow us to do that and we took those into account as part of our forecasting effort. We received a question about why MAC airports seem to be so expensive compared to non-MAC airport facilities. There are some specifics for that. Our rates are based on a nationwide market study for facilities that are of similar structure and size. Coupling that with the fact that our rates were extremely low and now, we have brought them to a market share which has raised them in some cases one thousand percent for some tenants and so they're definitely feeling that increase. Most municipal airports in the state do not account for depreciation or inputted interest for past projects which we have always done. Most municipalities do not account for airport expenses separately like MAC does. Most cities can utilize their own maintenance employees for snowplowing, for mowing, for some of those items that we have to hire separate personnel for. The converse to that is that those airports may or may not suffer service related issues because those employees have higher priorities elsewhere in the city. Specifically for South St. Paul, I'll just make mention of this, that particular city, Fleming Field, they control all the fueling on the airfield and so they gain all the revenue from the fueling and that is their primary source of revenue actually at that particular facility. The last couple of questions just relate to whether or not non-aeronautical development is truly realistic around the Crystal airports. We believe that there is some possibility. What we would look to do is follow the same processes that we are following for Anoka right now. In that we have identified the parcels, and we would look to the potential developers to come to us and tell us what we think would be viable there, what they think, excuse me, would be viable, what they think would be the best type of development in those locations and in conjunction with that work with the city staff and their economic developers to get a sense for what they believe would make the most sense in those parcels, and as a team with the city work together on what would be the most successful in those particular parcels. There is no guarantee that there will be a demand for them but we believe that there will be. And with that, I'll stand for other questions.

Chair McKasy: Thank you, Bridget, very comprehensive. Commissioner, questions? Commissioner Peilen.

Commissioner Peilen: Thank you Mister Chair. In looking at the issue, and I'm the first to admit that I've had mixed feelings about this is one of the things I want to say is that whatever mixed feelings I have had had nothing to do with the fine work of our staff and really particularly you, Bridget, and I want to reiterate that in public and thank you. I realize how much effort this represents and I just want to tell you how much I appreciate it. I do have one question. In talking to officials from the City of Crystal yesterday, I believe I can speak for them in saying it's their understanding that closing the airport would not require FAA approval but only FAA notification. Can you clarify that?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Peilen. In our study in looking at the airport closure requirements, if the Crystal Airport were a privately owned facility that did not have federal grants received in the past, it would not receive federal approval. Because we have received federal grants in two forms, 1) by land acquisition grants and 2) by project grants over the last

20 years, we have federal grant assurances that require us to get federal approval in order to close that facility.

Chair McKasy: Other questions? Commissioner Nelson.

Commissioner Nelson: Bridget, item 10 on your list if I may for a moment. One of our major companies in this state is Cirrus; they employ a lot of people. They built 600 airplanes last year. And their 3,400 pounds, not 2,900, just so you know. And they just bought a company in Europe that will produce about 400 LSA models which will be licensed. I assume that they will be able to land at a MAC airport if they're licensed. Sesna has orders for 1,000 of their LSA airplanes all licensed. So your statements about they may or may not be able to land as long as they're FAA registered, I think they can land at the airport. Is that correct?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chair, Commissioner. That's correct.

Commissioner Nelson: Okay, so that's adds another 12, 1300 airplanes in this country that need someplace to go, I think, next year, just for your information.

Chair McKasy: Other questions of Bridget? Okay, at this point, we're going to go to public testimony. Will those of you who are going to testify in favor of keeping the airport open, please raise your hands. Okay, and those who are going to testify in opposition to that, please raise your hands. Okay, all right, we will start out first with those who are in favor of keeping the airport open and here is what I would request of you. First of all, we appreciate the fact that both opponents and proponents have come out on a day like this and we're into due process here as much as we can and we appreciate the fact that you've come and we want you to speak your peace. What I would request, it looks like there's about 12 of you, if you could hold your comments to about two minutes we'd appreciate that and if the initial speakers have made a point and you're going to make the same point, you don't necessarily have to do that, you might want to endorse what they said. So if you've got something new and different relative to the issue, we certainly want to hear that. So with that, who would like to come up first, please come up and identify, all right, come ahead please and if you'd each identify yourself for the tape, that'd great.

Good morning. My name is Gary Grimes. I'm representing American Legion Aviation Post 511 whose host home is at the Crystal Airport. We've been there since the early 1950s. Previous to that, we were at MSP Airport. I've been a resident to the City of Crystal for 39 years. I've been a member of the Crystal City Council for 19 years. I represent Ward 4 which includes the Crystal portion of the Crystal Airport. I'm also the Chair of the Crystal Airport Open House so I would to invite you all and members of the audience to our open house next year on Father's Day 2008. Our Post was chartered in mid 40s; it was founded by Clarence Hank. Clarence Hank operated a flying service out of Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport. His brother, Elmer, operated a flying service out of the old Crystal Airport. Crystal's had an airport since the early 20s. Notorious Don Vogue flew out of there with his flying circus and his racecars; there was a racetrack up there where Glen Haven Memorial Gardens or the cemetery is now. MAC was formed in the 40s I believe. But our Post has been there for over 50 years. We have a hangar that was our adjutant's former hangar and it's been our Post home as I mentioned. We also maintain the flagpole at Crystal Airport. The old flagpole was removed at the request of the MAC staff and the VFW graciously gave us a new one. We'd like to put a memorial there some day for all the veterans, for the aviators. We did send an email to Ms. Rief about our feelings on the Crystal Airport. Our recommendation was to keep it open and to keep the four runways for aviation safety. I concur

and our members concur with the new proposal to keep it open and limit it to both runways. I'm available for questions if anyone has any.

Chair McKasy: Thank you for your presentation. What we're going to do is hold questions till the end and then if any Commissioners have them, we'll invite you back up. Next person please.

Good morning, Commissioners. My name is John Braydinger. I'm a partner with two other guys in a hangar at Crystal. I want to start by thanking all of you for your service. I've had a hard time following this conversation. I have a pretty hectic life outside of the airport. Over the course of the last week, I've had an opportunity to talk with several of you and very much appreciate what you do for us. It's interesting after digging into it more and talking to more of you, it seems very unlikely to me that this airport's going to close, so the real question becomes, what kind of a facility will it be, what will its place in the system be, and how do we maximize the value of this asset? I've owned with my partners three hangars at Crystal and it took us nearly 10 years to buy the first one and then a bunch of guys apparently lost their medicals but there was a period of time where they started to open up. We've put significant improvements into each one. They're all full of relatively new airplanes that are operating regularly. What we really need is more of that kind of investment. The field is not attractive; it doesn't bring passengers and colleagues there.

Chair McKasy: Mr. Brightne (sp?), let me interrupt you there. If the vote is to keep the airport open, I think the discussion about what to do next will be very appropriate but at a future meeting. So if you and other speakers could just hold your comments to why it should stay open, we'd appreciate it.

John Braydinger (sp?) I'll do that. Then the other thing I wanted to address is the economic development within the community. There has been no evidence presented that indicates that the airport is a hazard to the community and I've had a 27-year career of doing development, most of it redevelopment within the metropolitan area. I would argue that the activity at the Crystal Airport is a high-value activity. This is a limited resource that exists in very few places around the metropolitan area. As a strong heritage, the airport's been there longer than any of us and any of the residents who live in these disputed areas. I believe that the airport represents a significant asset that could be leveraged to create more economic development along the Highway 81 Corridor. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Next speaker please.

Hi, Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Commission. I'm Bruce Wiley of Wiley Enterprises. We own approximately 113 sea hangar rental units at Crystal. So I didn't bring my entire dog and pony show along with me. I chose not to involve my tenants in this. So I'll try and speak for them. We rent hangars to approximately 20 corporations. The owner of Opus Corporation being one of those. He chooses not to drive to Flying Cloud for obvious reasons. In our operation, we lease hangar space to approximately 20 corporations. It's not all recreational flying. In the next several years, there's going to be in 10 years of projection at Northwest Airlines half of their pilot population is going to need to be replaced. So we're going to need to train pilots. Crystal over the years has been real active in training pilots. There's been long stretches where the airlines have not hired, we're ending one of those stretches right now. Crystal's a regional asset. It's not the property of the City of Crystal. I don't believe that they could produce the votes needed to support this action and for sure not the action that is going to be required of them financially to close the airport. It's got to be viewed as a regional asset. It belongs to all of us on the northwest side that use the airport. Part of the poor performance at

the airport has been due to the cloud that's been hanging over the facility there. I've been listening to this conversation. I've been involved when my father started in 1964, all through my high school years I worked at the airport building hangars, flying, I'm an active pilot. But this cloud over the airport has definitely affected my tenant base to the point where I can't rent a hangar without going through the discussion of what's going to happen to this airport. We used to have a waiting list of between three and eight potential customers. We were full. Now I've got 20 of them sitting empty and that's due to this cloud. This discussion needs to be put to bed and I hope it happens today or the beginning of it happens today. It's such a valuable asset that can't be replaced. I just can't imagine that you folks wouldn't support aviation to that extent to support Crystal and give us the same opportunity that you've given Flying Cloud, Anoka County. We can do it. My company is more than willing to invest once this cloud is gone. We'll deal with the old hangars; we'll deal with the appearance of the hangars. We want to invest, we're trying to invest, but we need to get rid of this cloud. And I thank you for your time.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Next speaker please.

Good morning, Mr. Chair, Commissioners. I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Lieutenant Colonel Dick Johnson, North Hennepin Squadron Civil Air Patrol, located at Crystal Airport. Until recently, I was a commander of that squadron for the past four years. I'm an aircraft owner, a hangar owner, located at Crystal. I've been flying out of Crystal Airport since 1966 and our CAP squadron has had a long tradition at Crystal. And our squadron was founded in 1942, Civil Air Patrol was founded only a year before that. We were the first squadron in the nation to have a combined developed and youth membership. I cannot begin to emphasize the importance that Crystal Airport has had for our CAP squadron. We're a flying unit, we maintain an aircraft at Crystal, we're a unit with 86 members, our members are mainly from the north and west and northwest communities. We have a real mix of adult members, they include realtors, police officers, attorneys, physicians, teachers, clergy, accountants, security guards just to name a few. We provide an opportunity for youth in our area to participate in the civil air patrol cadet program, a program that provides them with strong leadership and discipline in an environment that promotes aerospace education. In fact in recent years, we've had three of our cadets attend both the naval and the air force academies. Our unit's been active in other emergency and service missions. This includes our pilots flew several days last year looking for a North Dakota pilot. We flew missions recently in the southeastern part of the Minnesota area that was flooded. We also flew a recent mission up in the northwest area of the state; our pilots were on the scene when the crash site was found for the two University of North Dakota pilots. Our squadron also sent two vanloads of people down to the southeastern part of the state for the floods. We've also flown missions for the state, Homeland Security Department. We've also worked with the Air Force on missions for Homeland Security. All of these have been flown with pilots out of Crystal Airport. All of this would come to an end for the oldest composite CAP squadron in the nation in our airport was closed. No longer would the youth in the west and northwest communities be able to participate in the CAP unit that was closest to their neighborhoods. We are unique among CAP units in that we own our own facility at Crystal. Adult members several years ago had the foresight to purchase this facility with their own monies. I regularly fly out of Crystal; in fact, 80 percent of my flying is done with the civil air patrol and the rest of it in my own airplane for both pleasure and business. What I've seen in the past year is an increase in traffic. Just a week ago, I was number three to land. I haven't had that happen in a long time. I think flight training will come back to Crystal. Airlines are desperately in need of pilots. Crystal is an ideal place. I know I have friends who own hangars and airplanes at other airports that would like to move to Crystal but because this cloud exists, they don't want to do it. Commissioners, we have a really neat airport at Crystal. It needs some help, it needs some growth, the cloud closure needs to end. It is the most convenient airport for

many of us who live in the west/northwestern communities. It would create a major upheaval if we had to relocate 270 aircraft that exist at that field. I urge you to adopt the long-range plan that would keep Crystal open and put an end to this closure cloud that hangs over us now. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you, Mr. Johnson. Next please.

My name is Kevin Bowder. I'm a resident of Crystal. Nobody lives closer to the airport than I do. If the people in the control tower want to know what I'm watching on television, all they have to do is look. And I'm here to say, that the airport is a good neighbor. I've talked to people from all over the City of Crystal and asked them what do you think of the idea of closing the airport? And with very, very rare exceptions, you don't find people who think it's a good idea. When it comes to the people of the City of Crystal, they want the airport to stay. We know and most of us aren't pilots, we don't have a dog in this fight. But we know that the airport is a wonderful, educational opportunity. Where else can you go to watch a steer man fly? We know that you can go up there on Father's Day and be treated to a terrific open house. We can go up there on Tuesday evening and watch those young people from that civil air patrol squadron training and it makes us proud to be Americans to think that we have young people who are doing that. It's great open space for our community. There are people who come up and in the southeast corner of the airport, run their dogs. It gives them a place to do that. It's just a good neighbor. Now I know there have been business concerns that have been expressed here, is the airport making money, I can't address all of that stuff. What I do know is this, one thing that you've heard several times; there is a cloud over Crystal Airport. The airport is being strangled right now; our neighborhood is being strangled right now because of the inability of somebody to come to a clear decision about this. And I would ask you please let's begin to put this thing to sleep. Let's make a decision. And I think it needs to be the decision to keep Crystal Airport open. Look, if it were an apartment building, and we're trying to rent apartments, but every tenant who came along we said, now we may be tearing this apartment building down in two months. I don't think we'd be renting very many apartments and we sure wouldn't be making any money. So I think it's time to move ahead with the thing. I think it's time to make a decision, I think it's time to go. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Next speaker please.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners on the committee. My name is Calvin Fogelman. I am a member of a flying club based at Crystal Airport. I just want to follow on a couple comments that have been made by others so far and in previous meetings. One of them relates to the fact that there has been a lot of study and a lot of time put into this question and I think everyone agrees that it's time to make a decision. The City of Crystal, the opponents of keeping the airport open will never be satisfied with any study that they have not commissioned or have control of, control of the message and so forth. Clearly, safety is not their main concern. It's not their overreaching concern as was stated in the last committee meeting. It really is all about their economic development, business interests, and so forth. At the last meeting, last finance meeting, one of their partners who was here was a developer. So it's clear to see what their real intentions are, what their real purpose is. You have an obligation by state statute to be good stewards of metropolitan area aviation. This is in Minnesota Statute 473.602. So I would urge you today to adopt the long-term comprehensive plan for Crystal and put to rest the whole question about closure. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Next speaker please.

Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the Commission. My name's Cindy Sherman. I'm the planning director with the City of Brooklyn Park. I was here at your last month's meeting but didn't get an opportunity to speak so thank you for allowing me to speak today. The City of Brooklyn Park supports the City of Crystal and shares concerns regarding the safety of our property owners impacted by the existence of the Crystal Airport in close proximity and the greater impact proposed modifications may have. We ask that you limit capital expenditures if the airport does stay open to allow for future closure impacts not to be as great. Don't build more hangars, don't create more economic viability at the airport if the long-term plan is to close it. We also ask that you take the time to address the questions that have been raised with regard to the long-term use of the Crystal Airport as was discussed at last month's meeting. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Additional proponents of keeping the airport open?

Good morning. My name is John Schleder. I'm a resident of Brooklyn Park in Aviation 511 American Legion. I hadn't planned on speaking but after I think, there's one point. I've got may thousand of hours in the air and as a corporate pilot for a large corporation, I flew a jet. And one of the things we used to look at, what's the closest airport for our executives to save time and get to the meeting. Now if I had a choice of landing at Flying Cloud and having to fight the traffic, northwest area is growing with Target, Maple Grove area is going crazy, I want to get my executives to the closest place for this northwest growth area. Flying Cloud's a long ways away. So if you're an executive from a corporate standpoint, Crystal will be important, the business will grow, and I'm a little nervous, I'm sorry, but just by experience in flying for five years for this corporation, we wanted the closest airport, the safest airport, and Crystal meets that obligation the way this thing in growing in the northwest area. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Additional proponents of keeping the airport open.

Good morning, Commissioners. My name Alex Hack and I represent Thunderbird Aviation. We have a location at the Crystal Airport along with our Flying Cloud Airport. Some of the other speakers so far have talked about colugo flight training. We provide colugo flight training at Crystal Airport currently. In the past, the City of Crystal has used our facility as a role model of what not to be to close the airport. They used the pictures and so forth of our facility. I will admit it is not the best-looking facility. That is purely our reason why we do not want to go spend tens of thousands of dollars to improve the facility if it will be closed. What we are asking is that the Commission will make a decision. We are in a position to basically spend the money to get the facility to look nice, to provide good value to our customers, and we want to remain at the Crystal Airport long term. I also thank the MAC staff for doing a very nice job on the presentation of last month and this month and answering the questions so thoroughly. Also, we are an employer and that has not been talked about is that the airport employs individuals for the City of Crystal who live in the City of Crystal. Some of our employees live in the City of Crystal and are happy residing there. If they were to move or be employed at a different position at a different airport within our company or outside our company, the City of Crystal and the surrounding communities would lose that retail sales tax and so forth and property taxes off those homeowners. Thank you for your time.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Additional proponents.

Good morning, Mr. Chair, Commissioners. My name is Greg Rygel. I'm here wearing two hats. I'm director of the Minnesota Aviation Trades Association; I'm also a tenant at the Crystal Airport. With respect to MATA, we've got several members that are businesses that operate on

the Crystal Airport. We have three FBOs, two of which provide flight training, we have Mr. Wiley who has hangars, and there are a number of other businesses. These businesses not only pay for the airport or help pay for the airport they also bring money into the City of Crystal and the local economy. They're very important. If the airport is kept open, money is put into that airport, it's revitalized, that can only grow and that can only be an additional benefit both to MAC as well as the surrounding community. With respect to staff's comprehensive plan, they have done an excellent job of putting together a plan, reviewing data, doing the research, and putting together a plan that provides for viable airport into the future. I have yet to see any credible data from any of the cities that contradict that plan or that in any way show that that plan is not a viable alternative for the Crystal Airport. I'd like to also point out that the issue of whether FAA approval was required for closure of the airport. The AIP grants that the airport receives specifically require that the airport or that the Commission not discriminate against the type of uses. The cities would like to say well it's recreational use, there isn't any business. The reality is there's both uses. The bottom line is the Commission cannot discriminate against any of those types of uses. From the FAA's perspective, from the AIP perspective, you're required to look at operations, both business and personal. I'd also like to point out that I personally fly out of that airport and I've done so for ten years. I fly both personally and I fly for business. I fly throughout the country coming out of the Crystal Airport. MATA and me personally would both like to recommend and suggest that the staff has done an excellent job with their plan and the MAC, this committee as well as the commission as a whole should support that plan and keep the Crystal Airport open. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Mr. Wiebel, are you going to back cleanup for the proponents?

Chairman McKasy and Commissioners. What you have heard today is a reenactment if you will of what we asked for and supported Mr. Lanners and his evaluation of the relievers two and a half years ago. And that was to develop a business plan. The comment earlier made that it's a hobby, question number 8 from Commission roster that why is MAC supporting this hobby, well apparently there's more corporations out there than flying for hobby than we're aware of. And maybe that's an education that we haven't accomplished. I think the original intent asked for it to close for safety is hidden with really a developer wanting homes. The question I would have is that knowing homes alone don't pay the bills for municipalities, how much tax abatement and tax increment financing is going to be requested of the city residents of Crystal? I rise in support of option 4 of the Crystal Airport proposed by staff of the CIP. That option has been put to the Crystal tenants and other individuals in and around Crystal as being in support of that and I would ask that this Committee advise recommendation to the full Commission that option 4 be enacted and a business plan then further developed and the City of Crystal be invited to participate in that business plan and benefit from economic growth and tax base of businesses that are much more substantial than residential. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Proponent.

Yes. My name is Ray Zitzloff. I own north of 60 Flying, which formerly was northland. There's no question 9/11 had an impact in all areas and it devastated this airport. It is on the way to recovery. There's been a lot of items that have been addressed, but it seems that corporate interest seems to be an issue just to say whether or not corporations would use this airport or do use it. My largest accounts are corporate aircraft. I personally just purchased what you might refer to as a very light jet, and in shopping for those I found that I'm on a waiting list of a year and a half to receive them. Not only because of deliveries but because of the market. And 90 percent of those aircraft are being sold to corporations. All capable of flying in and out of Crystal Airport. There are more charter companies going into very light jets to replace the larger jets

which are clearly capable of coming in and out of the airport. I've had conversations with one of those companies with setting up the service center at Crystal Airport. Impossible to go anywhere on it. Why? Because we don't, whether or not we're going to be open. I have a difficult hiring employees. Why? Because we don't know what's going to happen. Very simply, the industry is going through a change, you will see a large change in that Crystal Airport is an asset that will not only benefit the City of Crystal but the City of Minneapolis and the surrounding area. And the decision is needed. You've got a recommendation; you've got qualified people making that recommendation based on a great deal of information. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Okay, now we're

Good morning Mr. Chair and Commissioners. My name is Kevin Rebman and I'm president of the Crystal Airport Community Group. I first of all want to thank staff and you as well for all of the efforts that you've put forth in this plan and making this all come to this particular point. We've been working hard for two years and more on making this happen. A couple of points. You're going to hear a lot of statistics and numbers thrown out by the people who want to close the airport, but I'd like to recall a couple of statistics for you that we've provided as well. About a year ago, we provided you with a list of about 1,000 signatures of people in and around Crystal Airport who actually support the airport. Several hundred of those were from the communities immediately surrounding the airport itself. I also want to point out the fact that you have in your packet a letter from the aircraft owners and pilots association referencing a survey that the City of Crystal did just recently that shows 61 percent, a statistical count of 61 percent of the residents support the airport and like the airport. So this isn't going to be unpopular decision if you decide to keep it open. That's really what people want to hear. That's really what people want to do. And it is good economy, it is good for the state, and it's good for us in terms of what we can do with the airport in the future and how we can benefit from the economic development potential. So, thank you very much.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Okay.

Commissioner, thanks for having us up here. My name is Ward Anderson. I provided each of you a letter with some information about Crystal Airport. Some of the information we've gathered. I am a pilot, an aircraft owner, and I have a hangar out at Crystal Airport. I fly for both personal and business use. Crystal Airport is very, very crucial to what I do for my business. What I'd like to do here is, I just had a conversation this morning with a resident of Crystal, Tim Widarski. He lives in the twin lakes neighborhood off the end of Runway 14 and he's not a pilot but he lives in Crystal and one of the things that he really likes is the airport. He likes the airplanes; he likes the open space, and doesn't really want to see that change. I think Kevin also mentioned the survey of the citizens of the City of Crystal and the support that there really is for the airport and to keep it the way it is. I want to thank staff for putting together the comprehensive plan. We're very pleased with the effort and the information that went into it, very complete, and I'd like to recommend or ask you to recommend for passage of the comprehensive plan. Thank you.

Chair McKasy. Thank you. How many more people do we have, how many more besides this gentleman who are proponents of keeping the airport open? Okay, sir, why don't you come up please. We'd ask you, I don't know if you were here at the beginning but we asked everyone to hold their comments to two minutes.

I was here at the beginning; I'll try and hold my comments to two minutes. Thank you. I'm John Schmidt. I'm a private pilot from St. Paul. I think any pilot in the nation would have an interest in

keeping Crystal Airport open, not just pilots here in the local twin cities metro, of course it affects us more directly here, but I think Crystal Airport needs to be the gateway to downtown Minneapolis. I drove from Crystal Airport the other day to downtown Minneapolis, down Highway 81. Then, I took the light rail from MSP to downtown Minneapolis. It's about the same time. It's not statistically, significantly different. I thought there was a camera up here before to put papers up on the little screen. Is there a camera here? Crystal Airport Users Association, thank you, prepared some statistics and they talked about safety. I know safety was an issue the last time we were here. Maybe you've seen these already, I don't know. If you look if in accidents or incidents per hundred thousand operations, you'll see the bold print there, Crystal's the third one down, and it only trails MSP and St. Paul in accidents or incidents per hundred thousand operations. And of course, there could be a lot of guesses as to why that is. My personal guess is MSP and Downtown St. Paul have a lot of professional pilots flying in and out of there. They also have a lot of jet traffic flying in out of there. Jets are sometimes considered to be a little more reliable than piston aircraft. And if you look at Crystal, it compares favorably with Anoka and Flying Cloud for safety and I think therefore that the safety argument that may have been presented by some members of the City of Crystal does not stand up when you look at statistics. These are NTSP statistics. I point out that they're from 2005; I think they're the most recent ones available. I don't think they've statistically changed significantly at all since 2005. I've personally flown 96 kids in an introductory ride in an airplane at my own cost. Forty-two of those, I looked in my logbook, were out of Crystal Airport. One of those was carried out of a wheelchair by me into that airplane to introduce them to aviation. If you look on avweb.com, and you look under the columns, you'll see an article about what I'm doing to educate kids about aviation. I teach aviation class in the summertime. I also get a kick out of the cloud hanging over Crystal Airport. The beatings will continue until morale improves and it's the same thing with the cloud hanging over Crystal Airport. Gee, small wonder that there isn't a lot of interest in Crystal Airport, there's a cloud hanging over it. Gee, if we remove the cloud, the development will come. Some people have looked at Crystal Airport and said the buildings don't look very good. I disagree. I go there, I think everything looks terrific. Now, yes, they're not all shiny and brand new and in that wonderful dark beige, light beige, or medium beige color that you see in suburban development, but nevertheless, it's a beautiful airport to me, it just depends on your perspective. Crystal Airport should be the gateway to downtown Minneapolis, yes, I'll cut it off right now, sir, Crystal Airport should be the gateway to downtown Minneapolis and it needs to be advertised as such in business publications, and if it is done so, Crystal Airport will thrive. I support option 4, I support Crystal Airport. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Okay, we've just set an all-time record of 14 testifiers in favor of a position so now we're going to move on to the proponents of closing the airport. How many people want to testify on that issue? Let me see a show of hands. Just one, two. Okay, and who represents Mr. Tinklenberg or Crystal? You do. Okay, and mam, you?

The City of Crystal.

Chair McKasy: All right, well why don't either one of you come up, excuse me, Commissioner Boivin?

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you, Chair. I just want to clarify what we're doing here today to make sure I'm not missing something. Because I went back and was just talking with Commissioner Siegel looking at what was before us at the last meeting and I recall at no time has staff made a proposal to close the airport. Am I correct? That was never an option presented to us. And we've simply gone down this path because the City of Crystal has requested we look at these options also. Would that be a fair summary, Nigel?

Nigel Finney: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Boivin. The issue of closure has been raised. We have been directed to take a look at that; however, you are correct. The recommendation that was presented at the November meeting and at this meeting is simply approval of concept for in the long-term comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Boivin: So make sure that you had seven options sort of laid out. You've recommended number 4. Then the process here is we vote, whatever we do regarding option 4 and other alternative, then gets put into a long-term comprehensive plan that will then be back before us at some point in time.

Nigel Finney: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Boivin. The action of the Commission if it is to approve alternative 4 will be put into a document, we'll go through a public review process of that document, ultimately the Commission will have to review that one more time, and then it moves to the Metropolitan Council for their review and concurrence. Our long-term plan with the aviation system plan that the Metro Council has prepared.

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Okay, will one of you come up and start your presentation please.

Good morning, thank you. I'm Ann Norris, Crystal City Manager. Mayor Bowman cannot be here this morning. I appreciate that this committee took time to take additional questions and get additional facts before they make this decision. And you have some of the questions in front of you but I am very disturbed that Crystal sent in a long list of questions last week that looks like it matches the timeline that you received comments from tenants and yet there are no answers to those questions, a copy of the letter was not provided this morning, so I'm here requesting that those questions be answered and that all commissioners receive those answers and that information before the decision is made. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: And we will respond to that after. You'd like to testify, sir? Please.

Good morning. My name's Michael Gust. I'm with the Tinklenberg Group and I would like to echo the City of Crystal. We worked with them to develop some of these questions and are deeply concerned that they're not addressed in the material that was passed this morning by the staff. We would like the Commission to actually consider whether the airport should be kept open or not. We are deeply concerned by the studies and the reports that have been put out because we're not convinced that the methodology used actually reflects what's actually going on at Crystal. As you'll see by this analysis, this trend line airport operations have been declining at Crystal for a very long time. Throughout the roaring 90s when we had economic boom and after 9/11, the trend line is pretty consistent, air operations are declining. Fuel prices area now going up, pilots are retiring, these very light jets are becoming more and more expensive. Why are we keeping this airport open? The staff in their report put out projections. They used the FAA projections for the corporate reliever airports, but they used their own projections for the recreational airports like Crystal. We asked the question, how do they come to those conclusions? They've used other projections in the past that haven't met reality. We have a report that I was actually handed this morning. Back in 1992, they put out 5-, 10-, 15-, 20-year projections and never have those projections come close to hitting/becoming reality. They projected in 1998 that the Crystal Airport at the minimum of 195 air operations. In actuality, it was less than 180,000. Their upside, the high range, they said there was going to be potentially 204,000 and that's the same no matter if it was 2003 or 2007. The projections did not

even come close to matching reality. And here we're faced with an economic downturn; we're faced with high fuel costs. Why are we moving forward with this decision? And it should be a regional decision. And we should take a step back and look at all of our options closely and thoroughly before we move forward. And I'll leave it at that. Thank you very much for your time and thanks for your consideration.

Chair Lanners: Thank you very much. I didn't notice the Chair disappeared. I believe are there any other members that wish to comment on this item. Otherwise, we will move to questions and comments from the Commission. I believe that was it. Mr. Finney.

Nigel Finney: Mr. Chair. Just a quick comment to the issues raised by Miss Norris. We did receive as she indicated a lengthy list of questions from the city last week. We anticipate having responses to them completed within the next day or so. What I would suggest to the city is when we've done that, we send them the responses and actually schedule a meeting with them to kind of walk through all of the questions. We will do that next week so it has been completed prior to the Commission meeting.

Chair Lanners: Very well. I would also perhaps point out that a vote by this committee, while there are steps in the future that need to be taken to complete the process that will determine the long-term economic viability of this airport represents the support or non-support of this committee of the long-term comp plan being presented. If we are to pass that and if the Commission is to support the recommendation or non-recommendation of this committee, then it is anticipated that it will receive the full support of the Commission and direct the staff to utilize all of our resources to implement the plan going forward so that the cloud is either removed or other steps are taken. So I just want to be very clear that that is the step that this committee would be taking today. I will pass the gavel back to the Chair.

Chair McKasy: Thank you for assuming the gavel Mr. Chairman. Questions or comments by Commissioners of anyone. Commissioner Siegel.

Commissioner Siegel: Thank you, Chair. Just a question about the two other cities that also closely surround Crystal Airport, Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. We really have heard very little from those cities and I just have a question maybe for staff or if there's anyone here in audience that is representing either of those entities if they could comment please.

Thank you. Mr. Chair, Commissioner Siegel. I apologize. I came in late because of the weather. It took me a long time to get here this morning and next time you should meet at Anoka, that would be much more convenient. (laughter) I didn't know I was speaking during the proponent section. I should have waited for my comments but when I came in they said to get in the queue and stand up and speak and so I apologize. The City of Brooklyn Park has had discussions at our economic development authority level with regard to the Crystal Airport. And those discussions were that we would support the City of Crystal position and we weren't taking official action to request closure; however, we believe it's very important that the issue of safety be addressed because we have had incidents in our community, I don't have the numbers with. Crashes in backyards, those kinds of things, because there are many houses in relationship to the pattern of landing and taking off at the airport. So while our council and economic development authority has not taken official position to state we want the airport closed, we have taken the position that we support the City of Crystal in our efforts. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Thank you. Other, Commissioner Williams?

Commissioner Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I want to ask the question why, why, why? Well, you know, we do have a system. And the reliever airports are there for a reason and that is for safety. And I think if we close any airport, particularly Crystal, I think it would be probably encumbersome or overbearing in terms of the traffic, not only at the other relievers, but as well as MSP. And I think we also, Chair Lanners did an assessment I think about a year ago an assessment this analysis of all the relievers and our recommendation was to not close any. And it is what it is. And the City of Crystal, they've taken from Crystal Airport but they haven't given anything to Crystal Airport. So I find that very interesting and I think we do need to move forward and it is what it is and remove the cloud. And when we get to that point, I'd like to move the motion.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Boivin.

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you Chair. First off, I for one would plan to make a motion here to table our vote today just because I don't have staff's response yet to the City of Crystal's concerns and I don't want to vote until I have those. And I think we can just table this until the full Commission. We've heard everybody and we can have everybody together and do a vote at the full Commission in a couple weeks if we want. But, be as it may, as many people know and I've met with a number of people in the audience, I've been one of the people talking about and asking staff to look at the issue: what does it take, what do we need, what are the statistics, what happens if we close Crystal Airport? But we've all got to remember here that all that staff brought to us was a list of recommendations what currently to do with Crystal Airport and that wasn't one of staff's recommendations. And now it's developed into this discussion that we're thinking about closing Crystal Airport and we don't have that recommendation in front of us. We are not voting on that today. But I for one have encouraged the discussion and will continue to encourage the discussion because we need more information, we need to go down the path and think about this. This is a very difficult decision and process. This is no different than a school board looking to close a school. And it is the toughest thing to do for a school board, it is the issue you have the interests of the students, you have the interests of the taxpayers, you have the interests of community in general. And we are doing the same kind of analysis here and my concern is that, and I said this when I met with the tenants the other day, and I really mean this, we can make promises to keep this airport open, but there's no guarantees. We can make promises, we're going to pave the runway, you see that in the CIP, and we're going to trim trees, and let's hope development works and other people want to come in. But there's no guarantees and I want what's best for the system and the tenants and if one of the options is closing the airport, using that money to upgrade our other airports or to get another airport, whatever the case may be, we should pursue that. We are not making any decision here today; we are not making any decision here this month. But I want to take the step a little further to continue the discussion. I had somebody approach me and say what a great location for the Vikings Stadium. We all know that some point in time the State of Minnesota's going to have to pony up for the Vikings or we're going to lose the Vikings. And somebody said what a great piece of land, let's put a stadium there. I don't know if that makes any sense, I doubt it. And I certainly don't bank on any promise of a developer that's going to change the community because we all know and Mr. Breninger can probably talk about it the best, there's a lot of promises that developers make and most of the time they don't come through. But I want to go down the path further and that's all I've been asking about when I've been raising questions about the future of the general aviation, what's going on, what's the trends, does it make sense to take that money, put it in the other airports, and hopefully reduce our tenant prices at other airports. We know this issue about becoming self-sufficient since 9/11. We have focused the analysis; we've been forced to focus the analysis on the reliever airports. Can we make them self-sufficient? And we want to continue to do that analysis. But would it not be better that

maybe you're at Anoka and maybe your rates are lower. I don't know. But that is the process. That's all I've been asking staff to do and take a look at and go down a little further this path. Vote here today, vote here in two weeks, is not a vote yay or nay to close the airport. All it is is to it into a plan and to go forward and see what develops in their planning process. And I do commend tenants and staff for getting together to come up with the alternative number 4. It seems that makes sense and everybody agrees. But again, all we're doing is shutting down runways and somebody said to me that well maybe that is the beginning of closing the airport; we're just pushing it off for another ten years because we're getting rid of runways. That's something to think about folks and I believe MAC staff has the commitment to keep this airport going, to make it functional and that, but sometimes there's things beyond our control, financial, other tenants, that make these decisions more difficult. And so I just ask everybody to sort of keep an open mind, we're voting yah or nay to close the airport, if we vote today or in two weeks and I really, I know you don't believe it, but I will say it again, when I think about closing the airport and talking about closing the airport, just for the betterment of the tenants out there because I don't know if we can make a long-term commitment to that airport given the trends and given the financial situation, and that may be better served at another location. I could be totally wrong, I hope I'm wrong. But as of right now, I want us to go down the path and keep the discussion without foreclosing anything. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Nelson.

Commissioner Nelson: I disagree with the statement obviously, I think it's a regional asset we're talking about. Certainly, Crystal is important in the concept that we have a region asset that we need. You can't get it back once you lose it. It seems to me that if we vote today, and which I think we should, we're voting to keep the airport open. I understand what the staff has done. It doesn't say we're closing it or keeping it open, but I think our support here indicates that that's the road we're going down.

Chair McKasy: Chair Lanners.

Chair Lanners: Thank you Mr. Chair. I support Commissioner Nelson in that I strongly urge a vote today and I strongly urge a vote in support and I'll tell you why. An airport is nothing like a school or a school closure. You can close a school and down the road, you can build another one. You will not build another airport for many, many, many miles away from this location. We have a duty to the long-term viability of the airport system. MSP is a tremendous asset to the community and to the state of Minnesota. MSP, which has a new runway, not too long, will probably not have additional capacity in that respect over the next 20, 30 years. Our future that we have to look towards is not next year, it's not five years, it's 20, 30 years that we need to look for. It would be a grave injustice to disregard 20 years from now which we cannot predict in this airline industry and close a functional, fifth busiest airport in the state of Minnesota at the risk of jamming up our reliever system and MSP. Making us less competitive in a world market makes no sense. We need a vote today to get this cloud on the way out of here and to support our reliever system. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Further, Commissioner Peilen?

Commissioner Peilen: Thank you Mr. Chair. I guess I want to comment because Crystal's in my district so I feel that I should share what my thinking has been. And as I've indicated earlier I've had very mixed thoughts about this. Partly I feel great sympathy for any community that wants to add to its tax base. Especially a first-tier suburb like Crystal. I live in a first-tier suburb, not Crystal, and I know how important that development is to the long-term economic future and

viability of a community. And also, we know that the metro area will continue to grow. I think the Met Council projects about a million more people and so there's some land use issues to meet too as to where those people should be and what the best use of this land is in terms of where people should live. And like Commissioner Boivin, I've shared some thoughts that it may be that the kinder and fairer thing for the tenants is to close the airport you know whether or not it can be viable, I don't know. But I have finally decided and I guess I'm surprising even myself with this that because I do serve on the Airports Commission, not a land use commission, I need to look at it from that perspective. And so I'm going to vote yes today because I feel that for right now, one, I believe I owe the tenants a chance to see if they can make good on what they say they need which is just that level playing field and the commitment that that airport will stay open so I want to give them that opportunity. I also feel that the plan as stated does free up some land for non-aviation use and let's see if that becomes viable and what kind of demand there is for other businesses in a revitalized airport. I think that we owe everyone an opportunity to see if it can go and if it can't, then I think we look at some other options down the road, but that's how I'm going to vote today after a great deal of soul searching. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Commissioner Sigel

Commissioner Sigel: Thank you Chair. First, I want to say thank you to all of the staff at the MAC and certainly the tenants who have many of which have called. I'm sure I'll never make a comment related to demographics of either Asian people flying or the craft aircraft, I learned my lesson there. Although I would think, I was thinking a bit out of context. Just to step back a little bit from a Commissioner's perspective, I think the one thing that's obvious in this issue as with many issues dealing with reliever airports is we have a very passionate group of pilots at all of our airports and while I don't have the luxury of being able to be at Crystal and really be part of the community there, you certainly have done a great job I think of communicating some of that community spirit, some of that commitment to the future of the airfield. I'm enthusiastic about the potential for landside investment that all of you have communicated today. As a Commissioner, however, I feel I also have an obligation to look at things from 10,000 feet up as it relates to all of our airports and some of the questions that I have raised, many of which are related to the economics, certainly not safety or some of the other concerns raised by Crystal, but I did sort of take a look back and try and look at this from an economic perspective, given the situation that we're in financially with all of our airports. On the agenda later today, we are going to be voting on a \$2.1 million investment in Crystal. So I do think it's very timely that we have this conversation first because for me, I certainly wouldn't want to invest \$2.1 million just in 2008 for capital improvements for a facility that I didn't think had a future. So, tying those two things together, I'm very enthusiastic about the comments from the tenants. I certainly hope that all three municipalities can work closely together with the MAC to take a look at the long-term comprehensive plan and certainly any opportunities for non-aeronautical as well as continued aeronautical improvements, economic improvements. So, I have learned a lot. I've learned a lot about Crystal. I thank staff. I hope we didn't put them through too much extra work, but I think we'll have a better work product as a result of it. So, I will support the motion on the table today and I will also support the capital improvement request for capital improvements in 2008 at Crystal. Thank you.

Chair McKasy: Further discussion? Commissioner Williams.

Commissioner Williams: Thank you Mr. Chair. I think I would just like to really applaud Glenn Weibel in regards to his efforts because I don't know anyone who's worked any harder with the RAC and I don't know anyone who's more knowledgeable. And of course, Gary and his staff have done a great job on this. And I think in terms of economic development, I think people will

develop, will invest in the properties and also create some other economic development opportunities once the cloud is lifted.

Chair McKasy: Further discussion from Commissioners? Okay, we have the recommendation in front of us. Is there a motion to approve the recommendation?

Commissioner Williams: Mr. Chair, I'll move the motion.

Chair McKasy: Further discussion? Commissioner Boivin?

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you Chair. Based on the request of the City of Crystal that they submitted their questions and have not yet seen answers to it though I know we have covered some of them and some of the other questions and that but I think for purposes of maintaining an accurate record here and to make sure the Commissioners have a complete understanding of Crystal's issues, they're raising that, I would ask for an amendment here to table or just simply table the motion until the full Commission hearing, I think it's what, December 17, at that time that we just postpone the vote until that time so that we can have staff's responses to Crystal's concerns.

Chair McKasy: Okay, a motion to table a higher motion. It's not debatable, so we will take a vote on Commissioners. Oh, there is no second. Okay. All right. No vote. Okay, we are back to Commissioner Williams's motion to pass which Commissioner Nelson you seconded? Is there any further discussion? Chair Lanners?

Chair Lanners: Thank you Mr. Chair. I would just comment relative to the city's questions that I think it is important that staff over the next couple weeks do the best they can to address those questions and concerns that the City of Crystal may have. If they have not already been addressed or regardless. But I know that these questions, many of them have come up many times over the last two years. This is not a new process, it's a process that's been going on for quite some time and there have been many, many meetings with cities, with tenants, with all parties involved, so, I would ask that the staff does do their best prior to the Commission meeting to address all the questions that the city has presented. But I support the motion as stated.

Chair McKasy: And I would just second what Chair Lanners said to the City of Crystal and to Mr. Tinklenberg's firm. I hope that you will come in and discuss those questions with Nigel, Bridget, and anyone else on the staff between now and the 17th. Commissioner Landy?

Commissioner Landy: I apologize for being late but whatever could happen, has happened. The roads were congested from somewhere just south of Monticello almost to the airport. Our garage downstairs, I don't know if anyone has looked, but it was basically the queue was outside the building, got to the badge and my badge wasn't read and they sent me away to the badging office. I'm wondering maybe if there are a few people on one side of this particular issue that didn't want me present. However, I didn't hear the debate today and the discussion, however, I have paid a lot of attention to this issue and Crystal's prior envelopes of the nature that we got this time. I agree with you, there's something new in this I'd like to fully understand before the Commission meets, however, I certainly support the, and it doesn't surprise most people, that I'd support the motions. Thank you for the time to unwind.

Chair McKasy: We're going to award you a purple heart for services rendered today, Commissioner Landy. Okay, on that note, we'll take a vote. All those in favor of the Committee

recommendation signify by saying I. All right. Opposed? Motion carries. Okay. Our thanks to all of you who showed up this morning in the same weather that Commissioner Landy had to deal with and we'll look forward to seeing you again on the 17th maybe.

December 17, 2007 Full Commission meeting

Chair Lanners: We will move to discussion items A6 which is the Crystal Airport Long-Term Comprehensive Plan as passed on to the Commission from the FD&E Committee earlier this month. This is a process that has been in the works for the better part of the year with the long-term comp plan and the better part of two years perhaps even longer dating back to the origination of the Reliever Airport Task Force. During that period of time, I could easily say dozens of meetings and I suspect Ms. Bridget Rief has more numbers on that than we would/could take a look at, but, plenty of meetings over that period of time with cities involved, the City of Crystal, counties, commissioners, interested parties, groups, tenants, and so on. And with that, I'll defer to Bridget Rief for a brief synopsis of where we are to date and also with regard to some of the comments that were brought up in the FD&E Committee relative to a list of questions that had been supplied that we had put together the answers to those questions from the staff perspective. Bridget.

Bridget Rief: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and Commissioners. Following the FD&E meeting earlier this month, our staff did finalize our responses to the questions posed by the City of Crystal in their letter. Those responses were sent out to all of you via email last week. They were given to the city last week as well as posted on MAC's website last week. On Monday, staff along with Commissioner Peilen and Jeff Hamiel met with representatives from the City of Crystal, the mayor, city administrator, and staff members. We did discuss the letter that they submitted and their questions, but we primarily focused on their questions surrounding the forecast and the assumptions that were made in the based aircraft and operational forecasts. City representatives are here in attendance today. As Chairman Lanners noted, the long-term comp plan process has been going on for about two years, specifically with the City of Crystal, City of Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, and Hennepin County, we have held a half a dozen meetings over the course of those two years. We have also held at least two public meetings, one specifically for the long-term comp plan process, one more specific to the reliever model and the financing, but at that public meeting, the alternatives were also discussed for the long-term comp plan. In addition to those meetings, we have held numerous meetings with the tenants as well all of which we have been requesting informal comments upon completion of a draft long-term comprehensive plan document that will go on the street for a formal thirty-day written public review and comment period. And with that, I think I'll just stand for questions on the information that was submitted to the Commissioners or the process.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. I believe at this time it would be appropriate to open the meeting for questions from Commissioners relative to the committee meeting and relative to any of the responses that have been made since that meeting in the reports that you were given last week or any other questions or comments you may have relative to this subject. Any questions or comments? Commissioner Mars.

Commissioner Mars: I'd just like to comment that it's been disappointing to me that we haven't heard from land owners, business people, school superintendents, physicians, whatever there is that represents the industrial base and doesn't own an airplane. This is a two-way decision. One is accepting the status quo and the other is the vision that some people have for the development of that property and what it would do for that suburb of the Twin Cities. What does it add to the cultural benefits, what does it add to the tax base, what happens if they don't have an airport? We received a map that has a whole bunch of airports and there might be some other towns that we haven't talked to, that haven't come and talked to us that might be very interested in being a part of this system and I have a little problem because it's always been this way, it's got to stay this way. I'm going to vote it, I can tell you that. They elect a mayor and a

council in towns to represent the people and the mayor and the council people have told us what they believe and we're not changing anything.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Bridget, do you have a response that's relative to the residents and/or industry relative to the long-term comp plan? Have we received any input or responses from the surrounding area?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman and Commissioner Mars. Not specifically although staff has not specifically gone out and solicited those parties as well. We did hear in November at the FD&E Committee from Elwyn Tinklenberg and his group expressing some interest in alternate development of that land. I personally have not seen any layouts or received any information from that group about what they are intending to do. With regard to tax base, what staff has done is talked with Hennepin County to get a sense for what the tenants themselves pay in the way of property taxes. We have that information, but have not compared it to what type of tax base could be developed should the airport close. In the airport closure report, we did take a look at what the value of the land would be if it were sold and we based that off of an average of different development types because from our standpoint, there's no way to know in what way that land would ultimately be developed, if it would be industrial or residential, that kind of thing.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Other comments or questions? Thank you, Bridget, Seeing none, I would ask at this time if there are any attendees from the public today that wish to make comments or provide input or ask questions relative to the Crystal Airport long-term comp plan? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Let me ask how many would be speaking in favor of the recommendations? About eight or so. And how many are speaking against the recommendations? Well, I would invite the City of Crystal to approach at this time and I'll give you pretty much as long as you feel you need.

Thank you very much, Chair Lanners and Commissioners. My name is ReNae Bowman, I am the Mayor of the City of Crystal, and I do appreciate this opportunity today to speak as you consider the recommendations that your staff and the FD&E Committee have forwarded on the long-term comprehensive for the Crystal Airport. When this item was first considered at the November 7th FD&E meeting, the City of Crystal, along with others were invited to ask questions pertaining to the Crystal Airport study. The City prepared its questions and submitted them a week prior to December 5 to the FD&E meeting. We were quite disturbed to learn at that December 5th meeting that not only did the MAC staff not prepare responses to our questions prior to that committee action, but our questions were not even included with the other material that was handed out at that meeting. By now, you should have received a copy of not only our questions but the responses offered by the MAC staff. Without going into all of the problems and inadequacies of the staff responses to our items, 1 through 11, you need to be aware that the MAC staff did not even attempt to answer items 12 through 15 that included questions related to the ongoing costs of keeping Crystal in operation. Whether any value is placed on the safety of life and property in the surrounding neighborhoods, MAC staff continued misunderstandings of FAA authority related to your ability to close one of your airports and the opportunity that closure of Crystal presents for the five other airports in the reliever system. The process would benefit from having staff responses to those questions as well. It has taken MAC staff almost two years to come up with their recommendations on the long-term plan for the Crystal Airport. And it is clear from our meetings with MAC staff last week that they are not about to spend any time seeking out a conclusion that either considers the interests of the greater good or even hints at acknowledgement of the sea of change that has been taking place in personal aviation for almost two decades. Let me first address the forecast used in the report. You need to know that MAC staff and their consultants have an almost perfect record of getting it wrong when it comes

to forecasting demand for personal aviation. In previous comprehensive plans for your reliever systems, they always have forecasted growth, not only system wide, but for every individual airport in the system. The reality, however, has been stagnation for one airport and decline for the other five. Even after decades of stagnation and now a conspicuous decline in personal aviation, MAC staff and its consultants continue to forecast growth. The MAC reliever system was conceived over half a century ago in an era when it was assumed that personal aviation would be the future. Public facilities nationwide were developed and improved and they continued to receive generous subsidies with that future in mind, but, the reality is the future of personal aviation hasn't happened. There is less personal aviation activity now than there was in 1964 despite the fact that metro population has doubled and employment has soared since then. The overall demand for personal aviation is shrinking nationwide and has been for almost two decades, not just since 9/11 as MAC staff would have you believe. And there is no up and down cycle here. There is only a trend and that trend has been downward. As guardians of public assets, you, the MAC Commissioners, have a right to expect objective analysis based on reality, and not on forecasts that somehow mysteriously always seem to argue for more of the same, no matter what is happening in the real world. In fact, I question whether it's even possible for the MAC staff to come up with an alternative other than growth, growth, growth. So, recognizing that reality, our intention throughout this process was to help you, the MAC Commissioners, see beyond what MAC staff wants you to see and to try to ensure that you who are entrusted with managing public assets have the information that you need to consider what is in the best interests of the MAC system and the region. Our hope was that this planning process would offer MAC Commissioners an overdue reality check about your system's future. Instead, as personal aviation continues its nationwide decline, and as the MAC system struggles to optimize its efficiencies in economies by deciding to rely upon MAC staff projections and go ahead with the wishful thinking approach, you are leaving it up to a future board to make the tough decision and adopt a plan for the Crystal Airport and the other reliever airports that is truly comprehensive and will serve everyone's best interest. Regarding the issue of landside capacity, an issue that MAC staff considers key to its recommendations, one of the reasons MAC hangar capacity is constrained is because the MAC allows people to store aircraft that are not airworthy. Not to mention all the other non-aviation storage and other uses that occur in these hangars. For example, Crystal has 382 hangar spaces, but in 2007, only 214 airworthy aircrafts were based there. This means that airworthy aircraft take up only 56 percent of the hangar space at Crystal. What is going on in the other 168 hangar spaces? This again raises that nagging, qualitative issue of the activities that occur at Crystal so important that they trump all other considerations like the hundreds of families living in the safety zones. Thus far the answer from the MAC to that question continues to be an unqualified yes, but it is all based on MAC staff's presumption that the enabling legislation requires them to not only accommodate any possible increase in future aviation demands, no matter how far fetched that might be, but also actively work to create that demand if the market fails to do so. The City recognizes that the MAC can ignore the actual regional and national trends and accept a staff recommendation that is based on wishful thinking. We also understand that the safety of life and property on the ground may not be part of MAC's concern. And we understand that the MAC may also be unconcerned with the regional economic benefits of developing a 435-acre infill site instead of 435 acres of cornfields and forestland somewhere on the fringe. But you cannot ignore that from the perspective of your own systems, overall health and viability, closure of Crystal represents an opportunity for positive change for MAC's reliever system. You have five other reliever airports, all of which need capital improvements now and into the future and all of which are exhibiting decline, declining demand, or as in the case of Holman Field, near stagnation. This is the time to right size the reliever system to match the way things really are and to match the way things really are likely to be to make the system more responsive to the true demands of personal aviation and true needs of the region. By adopting a plan for Crystal this agency's

reliever system that truly is comprehensive, sustainable, and based on reality. Thank you very much.

Chair Lanners: Thank you, Mayor. I heard quite a number of things and I think what we'll do is see if there's any questions from Commissioners, but some of those were dealing with the response to the listed questions from the City, another comment was aviation decline, safety issues, and then issues dealing with our ordinance process which is underway that we'll deal with standards and facilities and those kinds of things. Perhaps, Bridget, could you respond first to the questions that the City did present to us and what our response there was. And I just would like to note that on the aviation decline, I just pulled out a graph that was supplied and has been available for quite some time, that our Reliever Airport system in 1974/1975 had 824,000 operations and amazingly enough in the year 2000 it had 824,000 operations with ups and downs in between. Also, the Crystal Airport had a 165,000 operations in '75 and 176,000 operations in the year 2000, if I read this correctly. So, it just appears to me that the decline has certainly come since 2001. Bridget, could you respond to the questions the City supplied?

Bridget Rief: Yes, Mr. Chairman. A couple of the notes that I took as well. With regard to the timing of the letter, in total there were approximately 45 questions embedded within the City's letter. We did our best to get those addressed before the meeting, the FD&E meeting, but weren't quite ready, wanted to have sufficient answers and have them completed. The reason that we met with the City is so that we could review some of those questions. And I will note too that it was a staff oversight not to include responses from questions 12 and on. Most of those questions had been addressed in other documents that were already prepared and had been provided to the City and to this Board, but we did not acknowledge that in the responses and should have done so. With regard to a couple of the other comments, if I may Mr. Chairman?

Chair Lanners: Yes, please.

Bridget Rief: I believe the graphic I put up was one of the ones that you were talking about with regard to the operations, just a graphical sense of what's been happening with the Reliever Airports since the mid 1960s. And our interpretation of this graph does show that there has been quite a fluctuation of operations at all of the Reliever Airports over the years. With regard to airworthy and non-aviation related storage and hangar use at Crystal. The way the landside capacity calculations were done, is that it assumed that every single available space at the airport would have to have an aircraft in it in order to obtain 100 percent landside capacity. And so we were not softening our numbers, if you will, assuming there were certain vacancies or other types of storage at the aircraft. If we were to actually to reach a hundred percent landside capacity, every single space that would be available would have to have an aircraft in it in order to do that. So, again, we used a conservative analysis in our computations. As far as airworthiness goes, we do have a number of tenants that construct their own aircraft, kit airplanes if you will. While they are under construction they are not registered, they're not considered airworthy; however, it is clearly an aeronautical use. As far as the trends in some of the forecast assumptions, I just wanted to cover this a little bit because we keep hearing about general aviation. A number of the forecast assumptions that we have were taken right from the FAA and the forecasts that they are using nationwide. And a few of these focus on business use of general aviation and what the FAA is assuming and it's based off of from what I understand surveys that they take as well as their own expertise. Business use of general aviation aircraft will expand faster than personal and sport use. The business side of general aviation will benefit from the introduction of very light jets. Industry experts suggest that the market for the new very light jets could add 500 aircraft per year to the active fleet. And that general aviation hours flown will grow faster than active general aviation aircraft because of the increased flying by business

and corporate use. A number of the assumptions that the FAA is looking at focuses on business use of general aviation aircraft and I just wanted to make a note of that. And lastly, with regard to the comment about stagnation, it's not the case at any of our airports. The reference was specifically to the Downtown St. Paul Airport, and if you look at the closure report, the number of aircraft that we are showing as based aircraft at St. Paul, is the same number between today and 2025. But that's not because of stagnation, it's because it is anticipated that at the St. Paul Airport the use by single-engine aircraft will continue to decline but the use by military and corporate aircraft will increase and offset. It just so happens that the number ends up being the same 20 years from now as forecasted. If there are other questions, I'll be happy to answer them.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. I'd like the Commissioners then to question staff or whoever they wish to question.

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you, Chair. Bridget, could you put that chart back up because the problem is I can't tell, could you just sort of circle for us which one's Crystal on there, because we can't tell on our screens the colors.

Bridget Rief: Crystal is this green one right here.

Commissioner Boivin: Okay, could you circle, okay. And what is the source of this information?

Bridget Rief: This information comes from the FAA. It is a summary of their towered operational counts from 1964. The Airlake Airport which is the short one here wasn't a MAC airport until the early 1980s which is why we're not tabulating information prior to that date. And since Lake Elmo and Airlake are non-towered, the numbers shown on this graph are estimates for their operations.

Commissioner Boivin: All right, and would it be fair to say then since at least 9/11 or 2000 there that Crystal has declined by, I'm trying to do the numbers quickly here in my head, but obviously there's been a downward slope that's sort of stabilized now.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Boivin, that's correct, and we talked about that at the last meeting.

Commissioner Boivin: And that'd be fair to say that our only hope for Crystal to come back to those pre-2000 levels would be an increase in business aviation based on the forecast of the FAA.

Mr. Chairman, Commissioner, that is the assumption in the forecast, yes.

Commissioner Boivin: All right. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Any other questions, comments? Commissioner McKasy?

Commissioner McKasy: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the Mayor if we're done with Bridget. Mayor, thank you for coming today. I think when you were here before, I had asked you if there was a resolution of the City Council supporting your position and I think at that point as I recall there was not. Is there now?

Mayor Bowman: There has been a resolution , when did we pass the resolution, the resolution was to support the City's own comprehensive plan which calls for/supports closing of the airport and that passed by a 6/1 in favor of that resolution.

Commissioner McKasy: Okay. When was that resolution passed Mayor?

Mayor Bowman: The 2000 comp plan, but I know our council in my term like in 2005. 2005 with the current seated council.

Commissioner McKasy: All right, thank you.

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you. Mayor, I know one of the ideas here that I think the MAC hopes for is development out at the Crystal Airport and can you talk to us for example what kind of development has the City seen along Highway 81.

Mayor Bowman: Well, there really hasn't been a lot of development at this point along Highway 81 for a variety of reasons, probably not aviation related, just limited dollars for upgrading of roads or that hanging question of public transportation. So there hasn't been a lot and in fact, the one business, one of the larger businesses next to the airport at this point has just recently moved out.

Commissioner Boivin: In fact a follow up to then, some questions have been raised previously about and to just sort of follow up on Commissioner McKasy's question about the position of the City, what about, I know there's two other jurisdictions, I believe, Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center that also touch the airport and have at least zoning and planning issues with the airport there. What is been the response of the other communities?

Mayor Bowman: I spoke with Mayor Wilson and Mayor Lampe last Wednesday night. They're in support of what the City of Crystal is doing. Unfortunately, due to prior commitments, they couldn't be here today to speak for themselves. And we share similar concerns and issues of again those that don't want the airport to be closed. There sort of that rumor monger stuff going on in the community, they'll build a ghetto. So, but we know that that's valuable land that we could do very many great things for our community if that land were made available.

Commissioner Boivin: And if I could follow up. What would, I mean if your ideal situation if the community had that land, what would you like to see happen?

Mayor Bowman: Well, there are a number of things. You know, obviously anything to do with redevelopment of that land is going to take a broad base of community input, which is part of the way we do business out there and there's excitement to talk about to go back to a comment made earlier where is the rest of the community? I met with Superintendent Stan Mack, superintendent of Robbinsdale schools the beginning of this month, and he made a statement about the Crystal Airport and said, "Just remember when you plan to develop it, we get to build a new school there." So the Robbinsdale school district would be very happy to be able to put in a new school somewhere in that area to accommodate the families we could bring in.

Chair Lanners (?): Thank you.

Mayor Bowman: Let me just add another thing, I mean there's a lot of wishful thinking that's going on. We have the business boosters, I think it's called business community, it's organized in my City, and there's been discussion there. There's not enough office space for the

businesses that would like to come in to my community, there's not enough of it to go around, so lots of wishful thinking.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Commissioner Harris.

Commissioner Harris: Mayor, I have a quick question, kind of a follow up to Commissioner McKasy's question. So the council took a position in 2005, they took the position on the comprehensive plan which included a section on this. It's a monstrous issue in an impending vote in the next couple of minutes. How come there wasn't anything taken like a specific vote before the council in the last couple of months? Was there an attempt to do that that failed or?

Mayor Bowman: No, there wasn't an attempt to do that. I mean this council took a vote on it and you know the 6/1 vote, and I don't think anyone ever thought that we had to rerun through the vote just to prove our seriousness of the issue. So, I think that was the intent on that.

Commissioner Harris: The council?

Mayor Bowman: Ya, it's the same council, so.

Chair Lanners: Good point, Commissioner Harris. Commissioner Landy?

Commissioner Landy: Hi Mayor.

Mayor Bowman: Hi.

Commissioner Landy: There was some discussion that the neighboring jurisdictions those the Mayor said you spoke of weren't able to be here today. Did we get anything in writing from any of those governments with respect to this from those Mayor instead of their, has the MAC received anything? Do you know of any letters that have been sent to the MAC?

Mayor Bowman: I'm not aware of any, but certainly, in the 30-day comment period I'd be more than happy to ask our mayors to send forth their thoughts.

Commissioner Landy: With respect to the citizens, have we seen, I mean as you know, I've certainly been involved in municipal government, and sometimes we don't see a lot of outpouring of activity. However, I don't see a whole lot of your citizens either or have heard from a number of them with respect to one way or another excluding the folks that are related to the airport. Is this something that city government is doing or is it the citizens? I'm just trying to figure out why we aren't hearing more from them.

Mayor Bowman: Right. It's a good question. Thank you. Personal belief on this, part of this whole process has been just the collaborative effort between the City of Crystal and the Metropolitan Airports Commission. Part of my response is to say we're the elected or appointed officials that are here representing people and supposedly tasked with the job at hand to make good decisions for your community, that's what we hope we do all the time. As per your specific comment of not seeing a lot of people up here, there are some other issues currently in our community with some road reconstruction. I don't hear a lot either way about the airport. When we do talk about the airport in the community and I'm out in the community quite a bit, there's that general as I stated before kind of wish list of, wow, what could we put in there. So, and actually quite frankly when I heard here today that the comment about we haven't heard from the superintendent of schools and we haven't heard from the business community, give me the,

I mean within those 30 days we'll have those comments because my personal sense about the process it was us working with MAC, so, if that's important, I can bring that forward.

Commissioner Landy: You mentioned the new school. Is Northport School located in Crystal?

Mayor Bowman: It's, no, it's in Brooklyn Center, I think.

Commissioner Landy: I mean I understand the Robbinsdale system according to the news reports are closing up.

Mayor Bowman: Well, can I comment to that please.

Commissioner Landy: Well, it just seems to be odd that we'd be wanting to build schools if they're closing.

Mayor Bowman: Right, and that does seem to be odd, but the reason why it's being closed is because, and I spent five years on the Robbinsdale School Board, so, the reason why it's being closed is according to Hennepin County birth rates, population is declining for these areas for school-aged children. It's closing due to a current budget crunch, but if we were to redevelop that area and add a significant and add a significant number of households, the school system does not have the capacity to put them in an elementary school.

Commissioner Landy: Thank you. I have one more question and just a side comment with respect to aircraft. And this is more of a comment I wanted to make. There were many years that general aviation aircraft weren't being constructed for mostly insurance reasons and we were obviously using an older fleet. That's not the case anymore. The folks in Duluth are making a number of aircraft, there's others that are doing the same thing. I just want to point that out that there is some vitality to even the general aviation business. And one last thing, I graduated from Robbinsdale, it was a good system.

Mayor Bowman: Can I just make comment to the growth in the aviation industry and the building of aircraft up in the Duluth area? Our question when we were in a small meeting last week was, "But where are those planes going?" I look at where Boeing is selling airplanes and they're not selling airplanes in the United States, they're selling them at the foreign level. So, my comment to that is make yea for the aviation industry here in Minnesota and we'll support them, but where are those airplanes really going and are they staying here in the United States and are they going to increase the business at Crystal?

Chair Lanners: Commissioner Peilen.

Commissioner Peilen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I only wanted to respond to Commissioner Landy that I believe that at the Finance and Development Committee meeting the Mayor of Brooklyn Park did testify at that meeting if my memory serves me correctly. So there was that testimony.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you.

Chair Landy: Thank you, Mayor.

Mayor Bowman: Any other questions?

Chair Lanners: At this point.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you very much. Let's hear public testimony. Are there any other speakers that are not in favor of the recommendation? Then are there any, let's see the hands of speakers and quite a number of you could come up in order, state your name, any order you want, I'll let you fight it out amongst yourselves, and try not to repeat points made and keep it as short as you possibly can. Thank you very much.

Good afternoon. My name is Gary Grimes. Today I am representing American Legion Aviation Post 511. Our post home is at the Crystal Airport. We're the only American Legion Post eligible to wear wings next to the American Legion emblem. A little background, I grew up in south Minneapolis here, went to Teddy Roosevelt High School, that was a great school and still is. I joined the Navy, spent some time at naval air station in Minneapolis, and my only other full-time job was at Honeywell Aeronautical Division in military and commercial aviation. I've lived in the City of Crystal for 39 years. I've been on the Crystal City Council for 19 years. I represent the citizens and residents of Ward 4 which encompasses the Crystal portion of the Crystal Airport. Now I want to talk about the American another I got the commercial. I'm also the chair of the Crystal Airport Open House Committee, so I welcome everyone to come next year, 2008, Father's Day, to Crystal Airport for our open house. Our American Legion Post was found in Minneapolis. Our founder was named Clarence Hank. Clarence Hank is in the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame. His brother, Elmer, had a flying service out of the old Crystal Airport from basically between Douglas Drive, Broadway, old Highway 8, 47th, I believe, to 51st. He also had a little race track up there. And then Clarence opened a flying service at Crystal Airport in the mid-40s when MAC took over and they built the new airport up there. He was located on US Highway 52 by the Pixie Drive Inn if anybody remembers that. It's now County Road 81. But, our legion post, we have a hangar there that we rent, we have an aircraft, one N35C, stored in that hangar. And I say they've been since the mid-50s, and we hope to remain there for a long time. I guess that's all I have. If you have any questions for me related to the American Legion Post or the City of Crystal, Ward 4, which I represent, I'd be happy to answer.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Any questions?

Commissioner McKasy: Sir, question for you. So you were on the City Council when that 6 to 1 vote was taken?

Gary Grimes: I'm the 1. I'd like to see the vote today.

Commissioner McKasy: Why, what would the vote be today?

Gary Grimes: I don't speak for my colleagues.

Commissioner McKasy: Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Any other questions? Commissioner Boivin, Commissioner Williams follow.

Commissioner Boivin: Can I just talk about a practical matter with you, if, is there reason if we were to shut down that airport that your American Legion hangar couldn't be at for example Anoka or another airport?

Gary Grimes: Well, I know when the City of Brooklyn Center shut their American Legion Post down, they gave them a Burger King (?), that's what they're in now. We want a hangar, we want an airport. I don't know if we can afford it. Most of our members live in the Crystal area or they're in retired elsewhere out west or they're in active military.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Commissioner Williams.

Commissioner Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One quick question in regards to the school that was located at 36th and 100. That school was closed down and I guess the land has been used for a housing development and now the school system wants to put another school, build another school when they just sold the elementary school?

Gary Grimes: I don't think so, and I don't think we'd want it on that land because it would be tax free. If we want economic development there, I think we'd want a tax base.

Commissioner Williams: Because that was a very large parcel from 36th up to 42nd on the eastside of 100, so, I was just curious. Thank you very much.

Chair Lanners: Thank you, sir. Next speaker.

Good afternoon. My name is Richard Vosika. I'm 66 years old and my eyes have seen. And I hope through my eyes you will see and all of you will see all of the things that I want to bring up. I've been involved in aviation my entire life. It began at the age of 13 when I won a raffle ticket through the St. Anne's Boy Scout Troop for an airplane out of Crystal Airport. Since that time, that one-hour flight put me on a career in aviation that I would never want to go ahead and change. Since that time, I've build model airplanes, I went ahead and joined the Air National Guard, became an area back medical technician (?), I ultimately joined the Air Force ROTC Program, and became a commissioned officer. I joined the Air Force to fly but my glasses then stopped me from flying and as a result, I chose the next best thing to flying—meteorology. I always said I'd stay in the Air Force as long as I enjoyed it, and I enjoyed it for 21 years. I retired out of the Air Force. During that time period, I taught, I earned all my instructor ratings, I've taught hundreds of students how to fly. My last four years in the Air Force were at the ROTC Program, University of Minnesota, Duluth, where I commissioned 67 cadets. Half of those are pilots today flying in the Air Force defending you and you and you. After I retired from the Air Force, I went to work for Northwest Airlines, I earned my commercial ratings in the A330, and I've taught hundreds of pilots how to fly A320 and the A330 in the ground school. I did not fly for Northwest Airlines. I ultimately became manager of the A320 training program and the A330 training program. So I think with that background I think that you can see that I have a fairly good knowledge of aviation. I think you can also see that my one experience, 50+ years ago, at Crystal Airport led me to influence thousands, thousands of students in a career toward aviation. With my 21 years in the Air Force, 13 years at Northwest Airlines, teaching pilots how to fly through military aero clubs, and by the way, I've been a member of Civil Air Patrol for about 17 years also. It is true that there has been a decline in flying because not only have I been involved in flight instruction, I've been teaching at Inver Hills Community College aviation. I've taught all the aviation courses there for the last 17 years. And this year I started teaching for St. Cloud State University when they needed an instructor at short notice, and so I taught a course for them this semester. I'll be teaching at Inver Hills next year. Since 2001, maybe a year or so before that, the number of students interested in aviation has gone down drastically. My instrument ground school used to have 40+ students. A couple semesters have been cancelled because of a lack of enrollment. What is the reason for this? The reasons are very extensive. Number 1: it costs a lot of money to get a pilot rating, a private, an instrument, a commercial,

flight instructor ratings to build up your flying time. The cost of fuel has driven up the cost of learning how to fly drastically. There's been a lot of negative press coming through commercial airlines as far as layoffs and pay cuts. I've participated in those when I was at Northwest Airlines. As a result, our enrollment in aviation has gone down. This has led to a very serious problem in aviation right now. Mesaba Airlines typically hires pilots many years with 2,500 hours minimum time. You can now get a job with Mesaba Airlines or any regional airline with only 250 hours because the pilots out there do not have the experience. If this trend continues, you will be hiring foreign pilots to fly your aircraft in the United States and that is not something I want. I have taught many a foreign pilots on contract training over at Northwest Airlines and it is disturbing to see a pilot who comes in with 200 hours of light bulk engine flying time be upgraded to an A320 five weeks later and fly commercial in an A320 hauling passengers. It's scary, and I made a resolution I'll never fly for a third world airline or in a third world airline aircraft. So that is the current situation right now. There is a serious pilot shortage. I believe that Crystal Airport should not be looking to close but be looking to go ahead and expand, to encourage pilots to fly, to fill this vacuum that is occurring. Look into the future. I think my background as one person in 50 years will certainly prove to you that it has had a good tax return, and I, one person, in 50 years, have influenced thousands of people in the aviation industry. So you multiply my one over 50 years by all the others that have gone ahead and lead boys and girls on their dream to fly, and you cannot shut down an airport and shut off the dreams of young people. We are facing a pilot shortage, and without an airport, without visibility, you will not have the people going this direction. Thank you. One of the reasons, they're not going to flying, by the way, is because the tremendous expense right now. You can get a nursing degree for a lot less money and go earn, pardon me, become a nurse at twice the salary when you graduate after four years. Why should a pilot put all the expense out to do this? So what is the future? I think we need to go ahead and support this airport, we need to support programs to encourage people to come into flying or we are going to see foreign pilots flying our aircraft. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you very much. How many more speakers do we have? I think we might have to try and keep this to a couple minutes at the most if you could to make your points. I'd appreciate that.

Certainly. Chairman, Commissioners. Thank you for seeing me today. My name is Keith Struck (sp?). I'm a resident of New Hope, not quite Crystal, but pretty dang close. I'd like to speak today about a comment that has been made in the past. Crystal Airport really is just a playground for rich people. Well, I can stand here today and honestly tell you that not everybody that flies out of Crystal is a rich person. Crystal Airport is a facility that I would call more of a focused-use type facility for business as well as recreational purposes. We have many of recreational or focused-use type facilities around. We have campgrounds, city parks, ice arenas, public swimming pools. These are all focused-use facilities that not all of the public takes advantage of. I don't play hockey, I don't use much of an ice arena, but I support it. My children were in the park system many years ago, back when the park system was thriving. The park and rec program today is just a shadow of what it used to be when my children were attending in the parks, but now that my children are grown, it doesn't mean that I want to go in and bulldoze those and turn them into strip malls. All these facilities add to the quality of life in our metro area. And there's more than just recreation that takes place at Crystal Airport. We do have commercial firms that people use Crystal Airport to commute to work with, they deliver goods in and out of Crystal Airport, training for aviation employment, and also good deed doers that do things such as angel flights, civil air patrol. I'm a member of the civil air patrol and I've flown out of Crystal Airport on rescue missions and I can guarantee you these are not recreational purposes. As a public use facility, an airport provides a place for many activities

with a broad range of uses, and it's not just for the rich. Most of my friends would not fall in that category. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you.

Commissioner Mars, you wanted to hear from

Chair Lanners: Could we have your name.

Yes. You wanted to hear from Crystal residents, well, you got your wish. My name is Kevin Bowder (sp?). I live directly across the street from the airport. I'm not a flyer, I don't have an airplane, don't have a pilot's license, got no vested interest, but I have an opinion here. I hate to contradict my mayor whom I respect and whom I generally support, but I am a little concerned about one aspect of what's been going on from the City of Crystal. Three times in my mayor's presentation, she made reference to value of life to hundreds of families in safety zones to the safety of life and property. This is language that continues to come out of Crystal City offices, and it's language that I would like to take on here, I'd like to challenge it very directly and I'd like to offer three reasons that I don't think safety should be a concern in this debate. Number 1: The airport's been there a long time. The airport was there before those houses were there. During the time that those houses were built, it was the City of Crystal that had control of the zoning and of the permitting processes. If there was a safety problem with the airport back then when traffic was double what it is now, instrumentation was less than it was now, then it should have been addressed then. It amazes me that we've suddenly discovered a safety problem at the very moment we discovered that there may be income to be made from this property. But as a matter of fact, I think the neighbors of the airport are perfectly safe. In fact, I've prepared a chart indicating the number of Crystal homeowners and tenants to be injured by falling aircraft through the years. As you can see, the chart runs from 0 to 1 and it's never gone to 1. It's been very consistent, the rate has been constant, as a matter of fact, you take a far greater risk by driving on Highway 81 than you do by living in the airport's flight patterns. Based on past performance, the risk of a Crystal resident being injured by a falling airplane is approximately the same as their being injured in a meteor strike or their being injured by a Canadian invasion. There is no appreciable risk! And even if there were, we would still have to ask whether the risks posed by the airport are greater than the risks that might be proposed by any suggested alternative. For example, at the meeting of the Finance Committee last month or earlier this month, someone suggested that the airport might make a good sight for a Vikings Stadium. Now think about it folks. Where do you feel safer? Under an airplane that's being flown by a highly skilled, highly trained pilot or in the direct path of 70,000 celebrating Vikes fans? Even if the City turned the airport into nothing but a big park, just green space, ya know what? It becomes a conduit for gang activity from the Brooklyns, crime rate goes up, we suffer more damage than we've got now, and if you put homes there, if you put apartments there, if you put businesses there, if you put schools there, it does nothing but multiply that risk and it multiplies it exponentially. Gentlemen and ladies, the airport is not a danger, and by talking as if it is, the officials of the City of Crystal are actually harming my property values and the property values of other people who live around the airport. So, as a resident from the City of Crystal, and there are so many other issues I'd like to address here, but as a resident of the City of Crystal, I urge this Commission to disregard the scare tactics and once for all to put this thing to bed, and let's go on and adopt the plan that the MAC staff has developed. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you sir.

Thank you, Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Bob Swanson, and I also am a Crystal resident. I'd like to address as a Crystal resident and I live about a half a mile off the end of Runway 14L. I've been there for 35 years. And it give me a great view of seeing a lot of planes taking off and coming into Crystal Airport. And so I'm out there all the time, oh, I wonder if I know that person, but anyways. Ya know, the comments were made that the recreational airport people fly, I see a lot of that. I see people going out for breakfast Saturday mornings rather than flocking to the golf course or whatever, but I also see doctors going out to see a patient, I see business/charter flights leaving the airport, I also see the Civil Air Patrol going out on search and rescue or disaster relief, or I see training going on of a young individual that got his first flight and his dream of one day being an airline pilot or professional pilot somewhere going through the training and initializing that. And I also see Civil Air Patrol or the EAA (?) in giving young adults the chance for their first flight and experiencing the fun of flying for themselves. So I see a lot of that going on and I'm gong to reiterate something about that safety thing as being on the end of what's half a mile of the end of Runway 14 for 35 years, I've never had a concern with safety. Nor has a lot of my friends and neighbors who've I've taken up on flights.

Chair Lanners: Is it safe to say you enjoy the airport?

Bob Swanson: Yes, I am a pilot. When I moved into Crystal Airport, I've always had an interest in aviation. My brother was a pilot in Vietnam and was killed Nam and that didn't, I enjoyed the flight aspect of it, I went over there when I started training at Crystal Airport, I over there a lot, spent a lot of money at Crystal Airport learning to fly. Now I'm a member of the Civil Air Patrol and through my years I was a Cub Master at Northport, the school mentioned in the area, I was involved with Boy Scouts and working with the youth programs there. I own part of the Civil Air Patrol located at Crystal Airport in the North Hennepin Squadron and working with the Cadets there again is just a thrill and the Civil Air Patrol North Hennepin Squadron at Crystal Airport is one of the best-kept secrets in the Crystal residential area. So, I just want to thank you. I want to thank you your support. I want to thank your staff for doing a good job and the FD&E Committee for passing on that proposal and I'd like to hope for a quick resolution and pass and move on and eliminate some of this cloud that has been sitting over Crystal Airport for a while. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Any new points to make relative to the Crystal Airport?

Good morning, Chair. Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Dick Johnson. I'm the ask commander at North Hennepin Squadron Civil Air Patrol located at Crystal Airport. I also addressed the FD&E Committee on December 5, and as I stated then, I started flying out of Crystal in 1966. I've been an active pilot since then, an active member of the Civil Air Patrol, I own an aircraft, I own a hangar at Crystal. And in that meeting, I stowed the value of Crystal Airport not only to the tenants, not only to the pilots, but more importantly to our Civil Air Patrol Squadron which is the oldest squadron in the nation with its history going back to 1942. I cannot begin to emphasize enough the value of Crystal Airport to our squadron and what it's meant to the youth in our community, in the neighboring communities, and how it's provided services throughout the state of Minnesota in the area of emergency services. As I indicated before, our unit is a flying squadron. We keep an airplane at Crystal and our pilots and our aircraft have been most active in emergency services work throughout the state of Minnesota and the floods in southeastern Minnesota as well as recent searches for downed aircraft. Our squadron provides an opportunity for leadership and discipline for the youth in the surrounding areas which has resulted in some outstanding mature young men and women. Airports are far more difficult to build than shopping centers and condos, and that is why extreme diligence must be taken as you contemplate the future of this airport. Airports are an important part of our U.S.

transportation system. Our U.S. aviation system is unique because of our nation's size and typography. Our reliever airport system in the Twin Cities has been a model for many big cities and demonstrates the commitment by the State of Minnesota to have a strong aviation system. Our state has been the home for a couple of aircraft manufacturing companies in the past, and it was no casual decision that led to current, major aviation aircraft manufacturing company to locate in our state. A continued cloud of closure over Crystal Airport is like a small cancer that eats away at our state's great aviation system. Crystal Airport is just not a local asset, it's a state asset. Our airport deserves a chance to grow. I've talked to hangar owners, tenants, pilots, and so on who are willing to spend the money if we can remove this cloud of closure that has been fostered by local government and developers. Commissioners, I urge you to vote for the long-range comprehensive plan that keeps the airport open. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you.

Chair, Commissioners, my name is Bruce Wiley. I'm a tenant at the Crystal Airport. I have 113 hangars. I spoke to many of you before. I've just got a couple quick points that I want to bring across. I think we need to look at this for what it is, a land grab. It's a land grab for developers, it's a land grab for the City of Crystal. This is not the City of Crystal's asset. It's MAC's asset, it's the whole northwest metro area's asset. I can't for the life of me understand why we're even discussing closing Crystal Airport. This closure issue's been going on since 1985. I have a forty-year history personally. My company, my family has about a 45-year history down at the airport. We rent to 20 corporations from Opus Corporation on down. There are a lot of business interests at Crystal Airport. For an inner ring reliever airport, Crystal has the chance if we accept the comprehensive plan to grow, to prosper as our other relievers have. And I'll go back again, this has not been going on for two years, this has been going on since 1985. I can look at my vacancies; I can attribute 20 of them, a high of 27 directly to the closure issue. And I hope six months from now, I'm growing at the airport. I'm ready, willing, and able to invest at the Crystal Airport, I'm a developer in the northwest suburbs, and it's going to be a detriment to the entire northwest metro region including Maple Grove, who has not said a word, they haven't been asked, the City of Plymouth, the City of Golden Valley, the City of St. Louis Park, and I can go on and on and on. They haven't said a word because they don't want to irritate the City of Crystal, I'm not so obliged. Fifty percent of the Northwest Airline pilots are going to retire in the next 10 years. I don't know who's going to fly the mayor from the City of Crystal or any of the rest of us around to our destinations in the wintertime if we don't start actively promoting general aviation and training facilities that are capable of turning out four-year degreed pilots, not just your recreational flight school where you learn how to fly a 172 and you go off and play around. This is serious business. So I'm looking for your support to support a regional asset. Maybe this whole discussion about a regional asset needs to go to a higher authority, but this is a good place to start, and I would hope that you can support us down at the Crystal and give us the same fair chance that the rest of the relievers have enjoyed going back 20 some years. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you, Mr. Wiley.

Thank you Commissioners and Chair Lanners. My name is Robert Schroeder. I am the RAC representative for the Crystal Airport. I'll make this short, quick, and to the point. Let's get to the lowest common denominator—money. We, the tenants of the airport have invested in Crystal Airport. We've invested thousands, hundreds of thousands of dollars. We've shown our commitment to this facility and also recognize a change could come. Now there's been an estimated value put out at a \$120 million. In our discussions among us, we figure that the non-

litigated, let me repeat that, the non-litigated cost to close the airport at about \$200,000. That includes repositioning our hangars, developing areas for us, and relocating.

Chair Lanners: Did you say \$200,000?

Robert Schroeder: \$200 million. \$200,000, boy, I'd sign up for that one. Nonetheless, we've got an \$80 million differential in what the land might be versus what it's going to cost to get us out of there. And again non-litigated. As I understand, the state of Minnesota currently has a \$374 million budget shortfall. The state's not stepping up to the board to pay for the \$80 million differential. The MAC certainly doesn't have \$80 million sitting in a checkbook that they all want to write to relocate us and at the end of the day, we would get relocated, new hangars would be built, new facilities would be developed because there's commitment to the MAC to its tenants and although Mr. Anderson may disagree with me, to make a land grab on the tenants would constitute a takings and that wouldn't be a very good thing for all of us. It would result in litigation. MAC certainly does not have a responsibility to underwrite the cost of development for the City of Crystal or the City of Brooklyn Park. That is your land. We as tenants have invested in your land, and we don't have a responsibility to underwrite the development to the City of Crystal and the City of Brooklyn Park by giving by giving you our investment and walking away. At the end of day, we don't provide you with wish lists of things we want to do at the Crystal Airport facility. We don't tell you about things that we're dreaming up, in fact, we've invested our hard-earned dollars and committed ourselves as tenants, as hangar owners to the continued operation of this airport. Thank you so much, and I expect that we'll be hearing positive outcome because quite frankly that is the only answer that is economically reasonable. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. How many more speakers do we have? One here and one there, four more. If we could get 'er down to one minute or so, we'd sure appreciate it. Thank you.

Chair Lanners and Commissioners, I'll be brief. I just wanted to rebut a few of the items that the City of Crystal brought up. First of all, yes, there has been two resolutions that they voted on. One was for a comp plan and one was for a support for Bottono (sp?) Boulevard redevelopment, which of course included a statement in nearby Hennepin County and a few others about closure of the airport. But more recently within about the last year and a half, they actually put a motion out to do a restudy of the airport and they wanted the state to fund it. And the vote on that was 4 of them for and 3 of them against, and the only reason that that 4 to 3 vote was in favor of the restudy, was because one commissioner told me that or city councilmember told me that it didn't cost them anything to vote for it. So, in reality if it had cost the City of Crystal money to reinvest in that study to do another statistical study of the airport, it would have actually been a 3 for and 4 against. I want to make sure that you understand that not only does the City of Crystal have an obligation to make good decisions for their community, but you also have an obligation to make good decisions for your community, and I'm hoping we get a unanimous vote here today for the comp plan. Thanks.

Chair Lanners: Thank you.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Calvin Fogelman (sp?). I'm a tenant at Crystal Airport. I belong to flying club based at Crystal Airport. As you've heard from a number of speakers and the city themselves, City of Crystal, they've been after the Crystal Airport for 20 years perhaps even more. There's been numerous studies conducted since the 1980s timeframe, perhaps even more. For myself, I'm relatively new at this whole debate. I got engaged probably in the last six months. So I had a lot of catching up to do. There's been safety reports; there's been economic analyses of the whole reliever system and of Crystal itself

specifically. There's been several of each type, and each time the City of Crystal responds with a series of questions like this most recent 45. And I think we need to understand what this really is first of all, and second of all, what they're really saying. What it is is a delay tactic to get the whole Commission to pause and say well are we really doing the right thing. What it's really saying is that they don't believe the staff is credible, they don't believe the staff is competent. The Mayor of Crystal all but said those things a little bit ago. And by proxy, they're saying, ya know, the Commission is those things as well. There have been no independent studies made by the City of Crystal. They won't fund them apparently. I don't know what their reasons are. They're satisfied to poke holes in your studies, your reports, and even their comp plan, their 2000 comp plan says we're going to play along with the airport because we can't do anything about it in effect, but we're not going to do anything to help the situation. We're not going to try to alleviate some of the safety issues and concerns that they have and so forth. They emphatically say in their comp plan, we're going to do nothing. There's no more studies needed really. You have an actionable plan before you. The staff has been diligent over the course of time at seeking public input, addressing the city's concerns, maybe not to their satisfaction. And the airport community is ready to move forward and move out from under this cloud. I'm asking for your unanimous support, your unanimous approval of the action before you today on behalf of the airport community. And further, I would ask you to maintain your resolve and support of this plan as it moves forward and see that it's fully implemented. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. I don't have a prepared statement. I'm here just sort as an observer, but I do have maybe kind of a unique take on this position in that I'm a businessman in the aircraft parts business, one of the largest in the country. My offices are based in south Minneapolis. I employ quite a few people there. I also have related businesses including at the Airlake Airport, and I've recently purchased property at the Crystal Airport. I plan on investing and going forward with Crystal Airport. I learned to fly there, I soloed there on my 16th birthday. I've been involved in the Crystal Airport for quite some time. I'm a business aviation user of the reliever airport system. I travel all over the country using my airplane in a business manner. My wife doesn't like to fly. I'm not one of these private pilots, recreational pilots that most of the people here are. I use mine exclusively for business. As do a lot of people that I know that maybe will also go on a golf vacation. So, to be able to imply as the Crystal Mayor did, that we're all just out there running around in a little puddle jumper to be able to go nowhere, that's not the way the reliever airports are used, not as I see it. Investment that I've made at the Crystal Airport just recently, is in addition to the investment that I made six years ago. Some of you will remember you approved me for a commercial lease at the Airlake Airport. I've expanded that facility and continue to expand it with the help of the MAC staff, who's always very cooperative. I'd like to be able to do the same at the Crystal Airport and help to renovate some of the properties that I've just purchased that have fallen into hard times. And there's no reason to be able to be even discussing the idea of closing the closest aviation airport to downtown Minneapolis. To be able to do so disregards everything that's in the MAC mission statement about keeping the reliever airports open. By closing that airport, you're requiring people to use Minneapolis International, which is not favorable to anything other than, as I said I'm a business flyer, but I won't go in Minneapolis International if I have any other choice. As the very light jet market expands, I'll expand into that market also and there's no reason to suggest that the Crystal Airport can't be a very big link (?) in the reliever airport system. As someone else said, you can't just go build an airport. You'd have a hard time once you've lost one to be able to build another. Also as one of the commercial operators at Airlake, I'd like to address something that Crystal the City of Crystal has brought up, and that it would be easy to just relocate some of the hangars and hangar owners that are at Crystal if that was closed. That's

absolutely ridiculous. You've had people come before you concerning Airlake with the fact that there's a waiting list of 180 some people, staff could tell me specifically, 180 some people, I believe, at the Airlake Airport for landside space. So there is no landside excess in the reliever system to be able to absorb that and nobody wants to be able to fly an airplane fast and drive an hour and a half or two hours to get to that airplane, just as probably you don't want to do. How many times would you go to the health club if you had to drive an hour to get to the health club? You wouldn't do it. Needs to be able to be reasonably close to where you are. So, that's all I've got. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Sir.

Mr. Chair.

Chair Lanners: Yes, Commissioner Westerberg.

Commissioner Westerberg: I didn't catch the gentleman's name or name of his company.

Steve Wentworth, Wentworth Aircraft, and I also own Airlake Flight Line Services, and ATN (?), Incorporated. Those are operations at the Airlake Airport that will be moving to Crystal.

Chair Lanners: Thank you for spotting that, Commissioner Westerberg. Yes, sir.

Hi. My name's James Cottingham. I see you're all starting to slump in your seats a little bit so I'll be as brief as I can. I'm a resident of Brooklyn Center. I live at 5244 Greatview Avenue right under the path of 14L. I love sitting out there in the summer watching the planes go by wishing I was up there. I'm currently in, I learned to fly and earned my wings at Crystal in '99/year 2000, and I'm currently in negotiation for the purchase of Mooney M20E 1967. I just wanted to kind of cross a couple of t's that have been put out there. I am one of those dreaded recreational pilots. I'm also in recovery in that I'm a recovering soccer dad. My daughter learned to play soccer at the age of 7 and fulfilled her childhood dream of playing pelagic ball, soccer up at University Minnesota Duluth. Can you tell I'm proud? And as her chief fan and chauffeur, I felt obliged to follow her around. And it would not have been possible for me to observe and participate in her realization of her dream had it not been for the placement of Crystal Airport where it is. I live about five, six minutes away. And also speaking of dreams, my dad was a Navy pilot and towards the end of his life, I always wanted to complete the circle, and I had the opportunity to fly down there to Texas and fly him to an airport where they restore WWII aircraft and so that was another one of those once in a lifetime opportunities that I was able to partake of because of Crystal Airport. I appreciate the work and your forbearance. Thank you very much.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Any other speakers here today?

Mr. Chair, Chief Commissioners. I had a whole list of things I wanted to say, but sometimes it's good to play cleanup when everybody else has made the hits before you. I'm here on behalf of the Minnesota Aviation Trades Association, and I would just like to point out that you have a staff that has investigated

Chair Lanners: Your name is?

Oh, I didn't give you my, Greg Reigel, sorry. You have a staff that's spent a lot of time and energy investigating this issue, researching it, relying upon credible data; they are the experts on this issue. I haven't seen any other credible data presented by anyone else to contradict

what your staff has come up and what they are recommending. On behalf of MATA, we encourage you to support that plan. This is not the status quo, this moving this airport forward, it is providing for a further economic development. We have members there that bring money into the community, employment, and we encourage you to support staff's plan. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you.

Real briefly, my name is Craig Rose. I'm a business owner and a tenant out at Crystal. My little brother and I both learned how to fly out of Crystal Airport. He's a '99 graduate of the Air Force Academy, he's currently December '06 graduate of the Air Force Weapons School a year ago, he's probably one of the top dozen, two dozen pilots in the world right now, fighter pilot. He specifically trained initially at Crystal Airport. I trained at Crystal Airport, I continue to train at Crystal Airport, I'm a business owner. A little perspective on our aviation use. I don't know if I'm a general aviation person or not but Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, I represent a number of the health care systems in the Midwest. I'm often out of state, back and forth, that particular day, to and from meetings. Thursday afternoon, Friday afternoon, we push the flow plan out, put the kid, the wife, and that, wheels up, three hours later we're in a remote area of Canada. That's my use of the Crystal Airport. I'm heavily invested into the airport in both hangars and am willing to invest more when the vote comes through today. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. One more speaker. Any other speakers?

My name is Gary Grillus (?). I've been a tenant, well, I actually own two hangars at Crystal Airport. I've been around the airport since '56, started flying in '59. I went to the airport back when I was thirteen sitting in between hangars flying a J3Cub, sitting in it, pretending like I have one, now I own one. But anyway, I think everybody that spoke today pretty much summed up that the airport could be really beautiful except I would really feel bad if you're going down Highway 81 and all of a sudden, you see like when they closed down Robbinsdale Junior High and put row houses all over. And I think the airport's more beneficial than people realize. And I think that a vote to keep the airport open would be a real beneficial vote. So I would appreciate it if the vote for keeping the airport open and beautiful, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Chair Lanner: Thank you. And that is it for the speakers I believe. Oh, one more. Are there any more speakers? Any hands, any hands at all?

Last but not least. I'm Ted Hoban. I'm a Crystal resident. I'm a member of Aviation Post 511. I joined that American Legion Post because its got the wings on the American Legion. It's the only one there is. I'm very, very active in the Minnesota Air National Guard. I've been asked to leave as soon as I turned because I was too old. I had over 30 years in there. But I've been with the Air Guard Museum since 1980. I'm trying to establish history of the aviation and get young people interested in aviation. We've got an airport out here. You guys, you people, know you can expand because land is valuable. You've got a Crystal Airport and you start selling off or getting rid of some that land, you'll never be able to expand. That airport, every time I go by I think of the possibilities of somebody coming in and selling aviation parts or medical supplies or something. That airport could be so used because it's so close to the Twin Cities but there's always that cloud hanging over that. Nobody knows whether they should invest any money in it or not. I think with an approval that it's going to be there for a long time, people are going to put more money back into it. I know Aviation Post 511 will. Now if you look out there at those airplanes, they're getting bigger and faster and they're flying longer. We gotta get some young people interested in aviation and the local airports are gonna show that. I was out in the street on 32nd right off of Douglas last summer, a guy came by in a hot rod. I waved him down. By that

the neighbor kid came. This man told us about his t-bucket, what kind of engine, transmission, rear end, what it cost him for everything. When you see an airplane fly over, you don't have the faintest idea what anything about it. I can call Crystal Airport or some place and find out if aviation fuel is more expensive than mine. I don't have the faintest idea how old that airplane is, how much money is invested in it, what the insurance is, or anything else. All's I know if that's high-priced investment. And you don't see that many planes flying over like you see cars at the State Fair Grounds for back to the 50s. But there's a big investment in aviation. If these people are willing to go out and buy a plane, maintain it, and fly it, and it's not only recreation. It's business, too. I think we need to support to it and have a local one, like Crystal is. So it's close to the highways, close to everything else to make it viable, to make it used. And I would endorse and certainly hope that you people will back us up and keep that thing open for the next 200 years. By the way, I've only had a plane ride in a light plane once in my life. That's when I was in active duty in '61, '62, but I firmly believe in aviation past, present, and the future. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. And that concludes our public testimony. Now I know the last two or three meetings we've had a number of developers here that have spoken and put forth their views, but I don't believe there are any represented today to speak. Is that correct? Seeing none, we will move again to Commissioner questions and comments. Commissioner Landy.

Commissioner Landy: I'd like to get this motion on the table. We had from our Finance, Development, & Environment Committee four items, but I don't know if we have the same items in front of us now. Do we? Bridget. What's the requested action? Is it different from the FD&E. Do we have that?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Landy. The committee action requested is the same as in the FD&E memo.

Commissioner Landy: It would be the same?

Bridget Rief: Yes. If you'd like me to read them, I can.

Commissioner Landy: No. I have them in front of me, I just wondered if there was anything different. Then I will move approval for those four items that are listed on page three of the memo that we were given. Reports a discussion item.

Chair Lanners: Moved and seconded. Items 1 through 4 as approved by the FD&E committee.

Commissioner Landy: I'm urging my colleagues here to support this. I've gone on at length about why before, I'm not going to go on lengthy on this but the MAC, the primary reason is the mission of this particular board, if I were sitting on the City Council of Crystal or have some other interest in that site, I may have a different opinion of it. But from the aviation interest in the state, I think staff proved up the necessity and the justification for this approval and I just hope that my colleagues support it. It makes all the sense in the world.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Commissioner Harris.

Commissioner Harris: Yes. Just a process question on that is that was there a second?

Chair Lanners: Yes, there was.

Commissioner Harris: Oh there was. All right. Item number three on that says that staff be authorized to make the draft available for public comment. I'm a little confused as just the process because.

Chair Lanners: If we could run through the process again. You want to run through the process?

Commissioner Harris: It would be nice just because these four items were moved to the full Commission so the Commission hadn't approved making the thing available for public comment yet, but I feel like there has been public comment. I'm just confused as to what the public comment period would be based on this thing right here, you'd think that there still would be one more swipe at the Commission

Chair Lanners: It's a multi-level process here. Commissioner Landy.

Commissioner Landy: Chair, that was one of the reasons I asked if it's the same issues that we're moving ahead. I would think that number three doesn't belong in this list any longer with respect to MAC, does it?

Chair Lanners: Bridget, could you comment on the process again. Thank you.

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. The reason that number three is listed in the item is that the actual written draft of the long-term comp plan is the next step once the preferred alternative is selected. And that way it is published in the newspaper that the document is available, we'll put it on the website and that way we can ensure that not just aviation people but residents in the communities have the opportunity to review the document in its entirety and make written comment if they so choose. It's a 30-day written comment period.

Chair Lanners: And that is followed by?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman, once that is completed, staff will review any comment letters that we receive. If we need to make any modifications, more updates to the document, in by way of responses, or if something is significant enough for us to have to review some study, we will take a look at that as well. Otherwise as in the case for the Airlake and Lake Elmo documents that this Board adopt a preferred alternative for last year at this time, those documents are just finalized with any responses and then we're holding it at this point in time. The step after that would be to come back to the Board, request the authority to submit the document or documents together to the Metropolitan Council for their review.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Does that answer your question?

Commissioner Harris: Not totally.

Chair Lanners: Okay.

Commissioner Harris: Being that city council members are sitting here, I'm trying to be sensitive to the public process here. So, are you saying that it's going to come back to us one more time or it comes to the Metropolitan Council one more time or one time? I'm just a little confused because it seems to me, we have this tax issue and everything is that when you're asking for public comment, there ought to be one more time where you're going to be able to listen to that public comment. Because one of the things that's kind of catching me today a little bit, I seem to find myself in the middle here somewhere where I'm not quite supportive of either side given the

fact that I think a lot of the support issues that we're hearing seem to be so anecdotal, well the mayor said. My mayor says things and I don't agree with it. It doesn't mean just because the mayor says it doesn't mean the city says it. So, I 'm a little concerned that communities haven't actually weighed in and you have one councilmember saying that the vote would be different today. So, from a process standpoint that I'm having is is this thing going to be back to us another time where we can actually maybe give those communities an opportunity to take some official position?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman and Commissioner Harris. I believe that the point of the written comment period when the draft document is completed provides that opportunity in and of itself. If this Board chooses to revise the motion and give us the authority to submit it to the Metropolitan Council upon completion of that written comment you may do that as well. But it is our intent to make that draft document available for public review and comment.

Chair Lanners: I hope that answers it. I think basically the process, which has gone on for a couple of years now, has had numerous public hearings, meetings, and a tremendous amount of time for public input. That said, we've had I believe the three public meetings here in a row before we got to this point. Depending on the outcome of the vote today, it would then proceed perhaps to the draft issue which obtains public comment again over a 30-day period and comes before us to review the public comment and see where we stand at that point and if any changes are necessary, then it would go to the Met Council. Does anyone not follow that process?

Commissioner Harris (?): What is that vote going to be on?

Chair Lanners: The vote is on the motion by Commissioner Landy.

Commissioner Harris: Is that the four items that were on the

Chair Lanners: For items 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Commissioner Harris: And the public comment is complete?

Chair Lanners: At this meeting.

Commissioner Harris: Huh?

Chair Lanners: Bridget, if you could repeat it one more time. If the motion is approved today, what occurs?

Bridget Rief: Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. In order for staff to complete the draft long-term comprehensive plan, we need to have a preferred alternative included in the document that is the basis of moving forward with the airport plan. The vote today, the motion today, is a request by staff to support the preferred alternative in the reports we've provided which is taking the Crystal Airport which today has four runways reducing it to a two-runway configuration. With that preferred alternative, we will finalize the draft document including some remaining pieces on environmental and the process. Discussions from this meeting and the previous two meetings will be included in a public informational chapter that's included in that draft. Then we make it available for public review and comment—the entire document—with the preferred alternative. To this point, the comments that you have received have been on what the alternatives are, the

number of different ones we're looking at as well as the airport closure question. And so this next round of public comment will be on the draft itself, the actual preferred alternative.

Commissioner Harris: We had four points in the FD&E. Are we voting on point four that says upon completion of the public comment period staff be authorized to finalize the LTCP documents? Is that what we're voting on today?

Chair Lanners: All four. Yes. Commissioner Landy.

Commissioner Landy: Maybe a point of clarification because there were things done at the FD&E meeting that I think were different than this and there was an earlier meeting. We spent a great deal of time talking about the alternatives prior to this meeting. This meeting hasn't discussed to this point a whole lot of about the alternatives. It's about should we exist or shouldn't we exist? But we have in fact discussed these alternatives with the RAC Committee itself, the Reliever Airport Group, and the FD&E. I think I was late but I think you guys had a presentation on that as well. So, this meeting, we haven't even talked about that, but I think we came to the consensus with those groups at least this is the right way to move on. If that helps.

Chair Lanners: Yes, Commissioner Peilen.

Commissioner Peilen: Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you for your indulgence. I don't mean to drag out these discussions, but I do feel that I should comment again because Crystal is in my district. I've had the opportunity to meet with both officials from the City of Crystal and with the tenant group that I know included Mr. Wiley and for a while, I struggled on what the right course of action was at least for me. On the one hand, no one is more sympathetic than I am to a community's desire to increase its tax base whether that's through residential, industrial, or retail commercial development. I do believe that this staff proposal does allow for at least some compromise in that area because it does free some additional lands for non-aviation development. And I also believe that a revitalized Crystal Airport that isn't operating under the cloud that it has been operating under, will become a much stronger airport and that we do owe the tenants that opportunity. So I have as I've decided at the Finance and Development Committee meeting to vote for the staff proposal. I understand that there are reasonable disagreements on projections. I know that our staff has done or put forth its very best effort in coming up with its projections and Crystal has its own view of projections, and I think the bottom line is that only time will tell. I've decided to vote for our staff recommendations and give the tenants and the airport a chance, and I think that there is room for a win-win situation for all parties. Thank you.

Chair Lanners: Thank you. Commissioner Boivin.

Commissioner Boivin: Thank you, Chair. As everyone knows, I've been one of the people probably most vocal about taking this issue down further down the process about whether or not we should maintain the Crystal Airport. And you've all heard my arguments before in that, and I just want to make sure that everybody understands here that by taking this vote doesn't change anything. We're not giving these people 20-year leases to give them a commitment to the airport. We're not saying we're putting all kinds of money in there. We're shutting down a runway, we're going to repave a runway, we're going to trim some trees. That's what's going on at the airport. And I hope to god that I'm wrong. I really do because I really do support general aviation. But I always thought the best way to support general aviation may be to take the money from a closing of the airport and see if it makes sense to give it to the tenants and get them in other places here when we have this trend that's going this way. I hope I'm wrong, I

hope business aviation comes in but right now, we don't have a commitment to make this a business aviation airport. We're not spending money out there. We're not doing anything for these people, and I am concerned for the tenants that we will be down this cross, down this pike, somewhere down the line again with a new Commission, new staff, whatever the case may be here, if the trends keep going downward, this thing's not over. And I just feel so bad for these tenants to sit out there with this cloud, and this does not alleviate the cloud today. It really doesn't, and don't kid ourselves. All we're saying here is this is the plan as of now and that a new Commission can't come, the Legislature, the Metropolitan Council, whoever it may be, take away that land if they want to at some point in time. There's only one guarantee they have and that's 20-year leases. And if we really want to support that airport, I think that's what we better talk about doing.

Chair Lanners: Any other comments? I would perhaps only add that when I first started looking at the Reliever Airport system on behalf of the task force that was established a couple three years ago, it took about a year, I had some of the same feelings that looking at the surface numbers, the Reliever Airport system may have had excess capacity, and perhaps Crystal could be in line for elimination. But after reviewing in depth detail and actually what is occurring found myself trying to determine the best course that not only will preserve the capacity of the Reliever system which exists for the main benefit, one of the main benefits, of relieving traffic at MSP. If we look into the future of 2030, we don't know what that will be in aviation. So we need to use our best guess. But most importantly, we need to be sure that we're protecting the assets that we have, and MSP is certainly one of the greatest assets in the Twin Cities in excess of \$10 billion economic benefit, and I think that's growing on an ongoing basis despite some of our numbers being off, it's exponential. If we look out to 2030, we're projecting closing in on 800,000 operations out of MSP. We have very limited if any expansion capabilities at MSP. We can't afford to have G.A. traffic coming into MSP to any great degree, especially in the future. We don't have the congestion that the east coast has today, and that's a great benefit to Minnesota. We're situated well to grow into the future and to increase our economic drivers. We need to protect that viability if there's any risk of it being diminished, and by eliminating airports that actually relieve traffic from MSP, whether it's first-tier traffic of larger corporate jets at Flying Cloud or Anoka or St. Paul that then have relief into the other airport systems of Crystal, Airlake, Lake Elmo, and South St. Paul, we cannot risk that system backing up into MSP. That said, that deals with the long-term obligations that we have to protect our aviation environment. Not necessarily dealing with aviation itself as a hobby, as a business growth to the communities where the airports exist of which some communities embrace, others don't embrace so well. We need to take our responsibility as a steering authority for aviation in the metro area. We need to take our responsibility very dear. MAC was set up with a vision and a Reliever Airport system for a good purpose. I'm a firm believer that if the communities themselves owned our Reliever Airports, we'd maybe only have three airports right now as our relief. And that would be a very bad thing for MSP and for our system. So we need to take the broader look. We need to take the tough steps. And it's difficult to close runways knowing full well you'll probably never get them back. But the analysis shows that through 2030, that we should have good capacity by maintaining two runways at Crystal, capacity not only being land-based aircraft capacity, but also air traffic capacity and they both play a part. With that said, I've come to the realization that this is a win-win in preserving a valuable asset to the entire system and to the community and also providing avenues of growth and development area for non-aeronautical uses along the 81 Corridor and others. And so I'm supportive of the staff recommendation. I applaud the staff for a lot of hard work and many, many, many meetings, and would ask if there's any further questions or comments, I would entertain a vote. Seeing none, we'll call a vote.

Sallye Douma:

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|--------------------------|-----|
| Commissioner Boivin: | No |
| Commissioner Foley: | Yes |
| Commissioner Harris: | No |
| Commissioner Landy: | Yes |
| Commissioner Mars: | No |
| Commissioner McKasy: | Yes |
| Commissioner Nelson: | Yes |
| Commissioner Peilen: | Yes |
| Commissioner Rehkamp: | Yes |
| Commissioner Siegel: | Yes |
| Commissioner Stenerson: | Yes |
| Commissioner Warner: | Yes |
| Commissioner Westerberg: | Yes |
| Commissioner Williams: | Yes |
| Chairman Lanners: | Yes |

Passed by majority vote.