



COUNCIL AGENDA: 1-10-06
ITEM: 2.3

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Harry S. Mavrogenes
Executive Director

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: January 9, 2006

Council District: Citywide

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION TO ITEM 2.3

RECOMMENDATION

The Redevelopment Agency is supportive of a comprehensive and balanced effort to look at the issues of building heights in the Downtown with regard to airport operations.

BACKGROUND

On the January 10, 2006 Agenda, Item 2.3, there is a recommendation from William F. Sherry, Airport Director, to add funding to an existing contract with David J. Powers & Associates to, among other things, provide "technical assistance on assessing the compatibility of aircraft operations and downtown high-rise building development . . ."

ANALYSIS

There has been a recent case of a new residential development proximate to the flight path, which raised concerns from the airlines. While this was an unusual case, with the proliferation of new high-rise development over time, there does need to be a comprehensive and balanced review of existing practices and approaches.

This is a critical issue that needs to be addressed, and the agency is supportive of a study that takes not only the engineering calculations in mind but good urban design, as well as economics.

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OUTCOMES

This needs to be a win/win situation where developers get additional certainty on what can be built in the Downtown, while future airport operations are not curtailed. At the same time, the study needs to be sensitive to the directives of the City Council that the downtown should have a distinctive and varied skyline. While the study may identify areas of restrictions, it should also identify other areas of opportunity for height in the downtown.

I have spoken with the Airport Director and he has committed to work with the Agency and the Department of PBCE to promulgate guidelines that are sensible, and which will allow for the future expansion of Downtown, as well as enhanced safety for airline operations. The results will then be brought back to the Council for action.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

While no scope of the study is yet available, the scope needs to be developed jointly between the Airport, PBCE, and the Agency. It needs to also involve key stakeholders, downtown property owners, developers, and residents.



HARRY S. MAVROGENES
Executive Director

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