



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 23, 2007

To: Chair and Members
Pima County Bond Advisory Committee

From: Hank Atha 
Deputy County Administrator

Re: **Acquisition of Open Space to Prevent Urban Encroachment on Davis-Monthan Air Force Base**

Background

In February, 2004 the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base / Tucson / Pima County Joint Land Use Study was completed. This study was coordinated by the Arizona Department of Commerce as part of its Arizona Military Compatibility Project.

The Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to Pima County's comprehensive plan; and the City Council approved an amendment to the City's Land Use Code to include recommendations from this study. Among the many recommendations designed to promote compatible land use in the vicinity of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base was the recommendation of land acquisition under the primary flight paths to help prevent encroachment of inappropriate land uses upon the Base. As part of Pima County's May 2004 bond election, voters approved \$10 million for this purpose.

Per the May 2004 Bond Ordinance, the Davis-Monthan Open Space Advisory Committee was created to analyze and prioritize land parcels in the vicinity of the Base, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for purchases with the County bond funds. The Committee includes representatives of the Arizona Department of Commerce, DM-50 Citizens Group, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Pima County, City of Tucson, and Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. I am the representative for Pima County.

Importance of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

According to the *2006 Davis-Monthan AFB Economic Impact Analysis*, the base employs 6,623 military and 3,315 civilian personnel and has an annual payroll of \$420,263,677. In 2006 it contracted for \$18.5 million of construction, \$73 million of services and over \$132 million of materials, equipment and supplies. Total economic impact was estimated in excess of \$866 million per year.

Project Area

For the purpose of this project, the Committee identified the open space acquisition project area as the trapezoidal Approach-Departure Corridor (ADC), which extends 50,200 feet southeasterly from the southeast end of the DMAFB runway, as identified in the *Joint Land Use Study* (see *Overview map*). This area is further divided into Approach Departure Corridor 2 (ADC-2), encompassing 4,016 acres or 6.3 square miles and extending from the end of the runway southeasterly out to a distance of 30,000 feet (see *ADC-2 map*), and Approach Departure

Chair and Members, Pima County Bond Advisory Committee
Acquisition of Open Space to Prevent Urban Encroachment on Davis- Monthan Air Force Base

October 23, 2007

Page 2

Corridor 3 (ADC-3) encompassing 6,069 acres (9.5 square miles) and extending from 30,000 feet to 50,280 feet from the southeast end of the runway (see ADC-3 map). Approach-Departure Corridor 1 (ADC-1) is located at the northwest end of the runway. This area is a fully built out, mostly residential area, and is not considered feasible for purchase.

Maps and Information

Pima County produced: (1) detailed GIS maps identifying all parcels in the both ADC-2 and ADC-3; (2) spreadsheets listing all the parcels within ADC-2 and ADC-3, divided into priority and non-priority lists and showing ownership, acreage, jurisdiction, zoning, estimated value, status under the Joint Land Use Study, and other acquisition information. Letters of inquiry were sent to all owners of "priority vacant property", first in ADC-2 and subsequently in ADC-3.

Prioritization and Recommendations

The criteria developed by the Committee to prioritize potential acquisition of land for open space preservation includes: (1) private ownership; (2) vacant/undeveloped properties; (3) properties with limited potential to conform to the Joint Land Use Study recommended use restrictions (based on nonconforming residential or commercial zoning) and development standards (based on small size); (4) proximity to the runway; (5) owner willingness to sell; (6) contiguity or grouping of parcels, including vacant recorded subdivisions with one or few owners, providing opportunity to acquire an expanse of open space; (7) cost; and (8) opinion from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base staff.

Current Status

The County, with the support of the Committee, entered into negotiations on fifteen properties, totaling approximately 315 acres. Approximate value of these properties is \$8,800,000.00. Generally the purchases and proposed purchases fall into two roughly contiguous areas. The first area is at the northwest end of ADC-2 near the southeast end of the runway (see *Detail Area 1 map*), and the second is in the eastern half of ADC-3 (see *Detail Area 3 map*).

Eleven of the fifteen properties, totaling 185 acres and \$6,203,274, including diligence costs, were recommended to the Pima County Board of Supervisors and purchased. In compliance with the bond ordinance, all properties were purchased at or near appraised value.

Negotiations continue for acquisition of the remaining four properties, totaling 130 acres and approximately \$ 2,700,000. Owners of five additional properties have recently expressed interest in selling.

Additional Funding Needed

It is expected that the County will expend the \$10,000,000 authorized by voters, by the end of this fiscal year, to acquire a total of 300 acres of priority land.

ADC-2 encompasses 4,016 acres of land. 376 acres were considered high priority for acquisition because of non-compliance with the Joint Land Use Study. 90 acres have been

Chair and Members, Pima County Bond Advisory Committee
Acquisition of Open Space to Prevent Urban Encroachment on Davis- Monthan Air Force Base
October 23, 2007
Page 3

acquired by the County, leaving 286 high priority acres to be acquired. Average acquisition price was \$50,000 per acre, for unimproved land. Experience indicates that, absent condemnation power, 75 percent of these owners are not willing to sell, leaving 25 percent or approximately 70 acres as likely parcels for acquisition. The estimated cost to acquire this land is \$3,500,000.

ADC-3 has 6,000 acres of land, however, 4,300 is already in public domain (State Trust land, County, University, City), leaving 1,700 privately owned. Twenty-five percent of these private lands equal 425 acres. The average acquisition price in ADC-3 was \$16,000 per acre. The estimated cost to acquire this land is \$6,800,000

Combined, the total funding needed to continue the acquisition of unimproved priority lands in both of the critical Davis-Monthan approach-departure corridors is approximately \$10,300,000.

Recommendations

I respectfully recommended that the Pima County Bond Advisory Committee consider allocating \$10 million in the 2008 bond election for the continued purchase of land to Prevent Urban Encroachment on Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

HA/cbc

c: The Honorable Chairman and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
C. H. Huckelberry, County Administrator
Chairman and Members of the Davis-Monthan Open Space Advisory Committee
Nicole Fyffe, Executive Assistant to the County Administrator

Attachments

