

# Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission 2007 Report and 2008 Goals and Work Plan

## Charter

The Commission was chartered in 2006 by the City Council to “advise the City Council and the Metropolitan Airports Commission with regard to matters affecting the operation of Flying Cloud Airport.”

The City Council charged the Commission with the following roles and responsibilities:

- A. Advise the Council and the Metropolitan Airports Commission with regard to matters affecting the operation of the Flying Cloud Airport, including: the classification of the airport under federal and state law; rules and regulations of federal and state agencies governing the operation of the Airport; the ongoing monitoring and implementation of the Final Agreement Concerning Flying Cloud Airport and MAC Ordinance 51 between the City of Eden Prairie, Minnesota and Metropolitan Airports Commission, dated December 2002 (Final Agreement); other noise abatement methods to reduce the impact of aircraft noise on the community; and such other matters as the City Council may direct from time to time.
- B. Cooperate with the Metropolitan Airports Commission Staff in reviewing for the benefit of the Council matters affecting the use and control of the Flying Cloud Airport, including the Final Agreement, and shall make its recommendations to the Council and the Metropolitan Airports Commission upon request with regard to any proposal affecting the use or operation of Flying Cloud Airport.

## 2007 Accomplishments

The Commission’s approved goals for 2007 were threefold: To continue our focus on providing **education and information** about FCM to various constituent groups, increase visibility of and **communications** from the Commission, and continue to **monitor the Final Agreement**.

The Commission had a very active 2007. The Commission was pleased that the City Council acted favorable on the Commission’s request to change the meeting frequency of the Commission from quarterly to bi-monthly. The Commissioners believe in taking the time to fully understand the range of issues facing the airport from all the various angles. The Commission strongly believes in its mission and is working hard on behalf of the City Council to educate itself to maximize its value to the City Council and city residents.



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During the year, the City Council directed the Commission to prepare reports on two areas impacting the City. These were **helicopter flight activity** and **airfield security**.

In the case of **helicopter activity**, the Commission, along with the MAC, Air Method and Life Link did a complete review of the helicopter operations, including meeting the Air Methods crew, touring the aircraft and witnessing a takeoff. The review culminated with a complete report presented at one of the City Council meetings and a presentation by the president of Life Link about their local operation. In addition, working with the FAA and MAC, the Commission was able to encourage the creation of a new arrival / departure route to better direct traffic south and then up the river to reduce noise to area residents. An agreement was also made that flights of these helicopters required for the crews to retain their certification will be flown in another area rather than over Eden Prairie. The noise and flight patterns of these flights had been the subject of concern to members of the public and City Council. The Council expressed their satisfaction with the report.

As for **security**, the Commission called a special meeting and asked representatives from a wide variety of agencies with security interests in FCM to review the overall security at the airfield and to make recommendations.

Attending were the FAA, TSA, Dept of Homeland Security, numerous MAC staff and the City chiefs of Police and Fire. In addition, the Commission met with former airport advisory chair Tom Heffelfinger and reviewed its findings with him afterward as well. The Commission found, as reported to the Council, the airport to be among the leaders in general aviation security, MAC and outside governmental parties were impressed by the amount of attention and cooperation concerning security that have been exercised by City and it's Police and Fire Departments. Never the less, several actions were taken, including adding 16 new high intensity lights, replacing older lights, adding / replacing 250 signs and updating the security manual.

## Education and Information

- The Commission implemented a public comment section as a standard part of its meeting agenda. Several residents attended the meetings and a few chose to speak.
- Guest speakers at our meetings included
  - MAC Chair Jack Lanners
  - MAC Executive Director Jeff Hamiel
  - Reliever Airports Advisory Council Chair Glenn Weibel
  - Air Methods local manager Ron Muntifering
- MAC Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) for 2008-2014
  - Sewer and water work is in the MAC 2008-2014 CIP as a 2008 project. This project will cost approximately \$3.8M. Moreover, this project is not eligible for FAA or State airport funding. Pioneer Trail road work is also to begin in 2008.
  - The beginning of the airfield expansion projects are also listed in the MAC's CIP for 2008 -2014. The 300' extension to runway 10L/28R is in 2008 and the 1,100' extension to runway 10R/28L and south area building projects are listed for 2009.
  - The Commission will continue to monitor developments of these projects and inform the Council as warranted. We will continue to be an information conduit for the Council and citizens
- The Commission reviewed and commented on the City's Comprehensive Guide Plan

## Communications

- Commissioner Greg McKewan headed an effort with the City Communications Department to redesign the Commission web site in order to increase and improve resident access to key data about the airfield. The basic redesign of the site has been accomplished. Additional changes will be made as more information becomes available or are warranted.

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- We conducted our annual 1:1 meetings with the businesses based at the airport. This is the second year this has been done and continues to highlight the eight businesses and their nearly 400 employees. This year, MAC District B Commissioner Molly Sigel joined us.
- The Commission will continue to present information to the public to help citizens have a better understanding concerning the issues surrounding the airfield. The Eden Prairie News profiled the Commission in November.
- The Commission attended the MAC's "Tenets Meeting", held at the flight school. Meeting with the tenets and hobby flyers furthered our mission of understanding the concerns of additional stakeholders at the airfield.
- MAC Chairman Jack Lanners attended our November meeting to discuss the MAC system of airports, including Flying Cloud. This was the first time a MAC chairperson has visited with the City. It has been our continuing goal to hear perspectives from all parties involved with the airport. Mr. Lanner's visit also shows MAC's interest in providing such perspectives.
- Laura Neuman of Zero Expansion made a presentation. Ms. Neuman presented the Commission many suggestions that will be discussed at future meetings.
- The MAC FCM Operator of the Year Award was presented to Kurt Schendel of Modern Avionics at the Commission's November meeting by MAC Chair Jack Lanners.
- Three of the four Commission seats representing Eden Prairie residents will be up for appointment in April 2008. The current incumbents of these seats are Rick King, Greg McKewan and Brad Stratton.

### MAC adherence to the Final Agreement is on track

- There has been an increasing number of noise complaints during the voluntary restriction period (10pm – 7am)
  - The Commission has succeeded in its education efforts as an increased exposure to noise reporting has caused more reports while the number of flights has not increased between these hours. Interestingly, there has been a reduction of flights during the voluntary hours.
- Since the inception of Ordinance 97, we have seen a decrease in the number of complaints in regard to nighttime maintenance run-ups. This is partly because of our continuing education efforts, but more or less the decrease in traffic.
- Helicopter and other medical flights were among the largest violators.
- All reported incidents were reviewed to the extent possible.
- All noise complaints sent by residents to MAC via telephone or the internet are recorded and researched as thoroughly as possible. MAC reacted appropriately to the complaints. The Commission reviews MAC's Noise Complaint Report at each of its meetings.



### Goals for 2008

The Commission proposes the same goals for 2008. To continue our focus on providing **education and information** about Flying Cloud Airport to various constituent groups, to increase visibility of and **communications** from the Commission, and continue to **monitor the Final Agreement**.

With work likely to begin on the Pioneer Trail water and sewer project and the potential to have the runway expansion project start, the Commission will need to increase its efforts in 2008 to educate and communicate to residents and the Council with regard to these projects.

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### Staff Support

The Commission has enjoyed exceptionally good cooperation and support from the City Staff, especially its liaison, Scott Kipp. His exceptional knowledge and advice has greatly benefited the Commission. The Commission would also like to thank Carol Pelzel, our recorder, for her tireless work on our behalf. Thanks are also extended to the MAC and its regularly attending staff (Joe Harris, Scott Skramstad, Chad Leqve), all of whom have been extremely supportive of us as we conducted our business. Their responsiveness to our requests for flight maps and special graphics has added immeasurably to the Commission's and the public's understanding of flight operations and to the Commission's ability to fulfill its mission for the City Council.



The Commission anticipates a busy and highly productive 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission:** Front: Mark Michelson, Joe Harris, Rick King (chair), Scott Kipp (staff liaison). Back: Greg McKewan, Jeff Larsen (vice chair), Brad Stratton, Kurt Schendel.

