

Tulsa County commissioners agreed Monday to preliminary steps in the creation of a long-discussed tax increment financing district at Tulsa International Airport. The Tulsa Airports Improvement Trust projects that the TIF proposal would generate \$98 million over 20 years. The proceeds would be used for infrastructure improvements intended to maintain and encourage commercial activity at TIA. Tax increment financing involves reserving tax revenue increases from specific areas, or districts, for improvements to public infrastructure within a project boundaries. The airport proposal is for five independent TIF districts within a single project area encompassing the entire Tulsa International Airport. Each of the TIF districts would utilize its own combination of sales, property and hotel tax revenue. Each could be activated independently or at the same time. The proposed district is unusual in that the land involved is entirely city-owned, which means it is exempt from real estate taxes. Thus, the only incremental property tax increases would be from private improvements to personal property such as machinery or hangar amenities. A presentation prepared by the airport trust proposes \$37 million from the TIF proceeds for financing assistance to developers; \$30 million to prepare building pads; \$18 million for access roads; \$6 million for water and sewer lines; \$4.5 million for taxi lanes; \$1 million for drainage; \$1 million for a compressed natural gas facility; and \$500,000 for intersection improvements. Commissioners voted 3-0 Monday to adopt a resolution formally committing the county to consider the proposal and to participate in a review committee that will hold public hearings and formulate a final plan. In a separate vote, the commission approved a memorandum of understanding with the city of Tulsa required for the TIF proposal to move forward. The Tulsa City Council adopted similar measures last month. Also Monday, the county commission somewhat reluctantly agreed to a zoning change from agricultural to light commercial at the northeast corner of U.S. 75 and 96th Street North. The owners tentatively plan to build a storage facility on the site, which Commission Chairman John Smaligo said he did not think was the "highest and best use" of the land. The commission also authorized four-way stops at three south county intersections: 161st Street

South and Peoria Avenue, 161st Street South and Elwood Avenue and 171st Street South

and Elwood Avenue. Randy Krehbiel 918-581-8365 randy.krehbiel@tulsaworld.com Subscribe to Daily Headlines Si

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