

Tidal surf

Should city take on high speed internet?

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Hills got in the high-speed Internet service provider business? Councilwoman Vicki Barnett thinks the idea has some merit

when it comes to promoting technology in areas of the city where high speed Internet service is lacking.

She discussed the idea at a recent study session held by the Hills City Council.

During recent visit to a city in Georgia, Barnett said she learned city officials there came up with a plan to sell bonds to launch their own cable Internet service. Leases pay the bond debt to get the service up and running and revenues managed to exceed expenditures, she pointed out.

The citizens there benefited because they could get Internet through their cable TV connection, she said.

Getting high speed cable would also help the city's business community in the north-west corridor, the councilwoman said. "In our commercial centers we can't get cable to buildings."

She said the Hills should take the initiative to build such a system and involve competition with Time-Warner Cable.

She said new, wireless technology may not require the city to endure the costly prospect of digging underground to install cable lines.

"It might pay to investigate this," she told council members.

Aerotropolis from page A1

Pennsylvania.

The project began in 1998 when the three communities around Metro approached the planning consultants about a land-use proposal that took advantage of their proximity to Metro while also protecting the residential areas. McKenna did a separate project for Van Buren Township for development around Willow Run.

The proposals, which include road projects, consistent zoning plans and buffers for residential areas, will now go to the communities for consideration.

Accessibility is key

Kasarda, who has written extensively on aviation and airport logistics, will focus his attentions on marketing the "aerotropolis" concept and identifying potential developers.

Kasarda said airports have become essential to the way the world does business.

"It is not location that is so critical, we used to talk in commercial real estate of the three L's: location, location, location," Kasarda said. "The three L's have been replaced by the three A's: accessibility, accessibility, accessibility, where time-cost access to the airport is really the driving factor."

Kasarda said that airport driven development marks a fifth wave in the history of transportation.

"Changes in transportation infrastructure have always shaped business location and urban development," he said.

Development has built up around seaports, river towns and rail terminuses. In the latter part of the 20th century, the development of the highway system led to a mass decentralization. But the advent of global business, e-commerce and advanced communications have now made airports the linchpin of development.

Speed and agility

Kasarda said the current recession, including the decline in air traffic, is only a cyclical event and that things will turn around in a short time. For modern business, speed is the determining factor of development. Business needs air transport.

"There is one law, the fastest will be the fittest," Kasarda said.

Another key factor is agility, the ability to adapt quickly and meet the demands of customers in a short time. He said customers are willing to pay a little more to get what they want more quickly.

The growth of the Internet is also pushing the growth of air-

ports. "E-commerce will change everything, it already is," Kasarda said. "Don't confuse the death of dot-com companies with the death of e-commerce. Anytime a new business or process arises there is a massive shakeout ... and that's healthy."

Communities have started to rise around international airports to take advantage of these new business realities, Kasarda said. The need for speed is driving development.

These developments have included corporate headquarters, warehouses for catalog companies, cold storage facilities for fresh food, high-tech companies that need to move software quickly, luxury hotels and resorts to cater to the business traveler and high-end shopping malls and mass transit feeding into the airport.

Gem in the rough

Kasarda said Los Angeles International Airport is responsible for 400,000 jobs and generates \$80 billion in business annually.

Amsterdam's Schiphol airport has become a city unto itself with a major shopping center, office buildings, warehouses and light industry all built around access to the airport and employing 62,000 people.

Similar developments have arisen near Paris, Sao Paulo, Hong Kong, Dallas-Fort Worth and other cities.

"You're going to see this in Detroit, the only question is whether it will be in 2010 or 2020," Kasarda said.

Considering Detroit's strategic location, Kasarda said, development has been lagging. He said the combination of the two airports gives Detroit a gem in the rough for major development.

"If you look at Detroit Metro, and you're talking about speed and agility, it's amazing you haven't taken advantage of this," Kasarda said. "Drive around this airport it's horrible, you haven't even come close to what your potential is."

Sean Brosnan, director of Willow Run Airport, said he's excited by the prospects outlined by Kasarda.

"This is the kind of economic development stimulus we have been talking about for years. We can develop a synergy between the two airports to be at the crest of new economic development," Brosnan said.

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