

Centinario, Michael

Subject: RE: Remote Airport Parking

From: Robert Coleman

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 11:49 PM

To: Council Secretary <councilsecretary@BloomingtonMN.gov>; Johnson, Nick M <nmjohnson@BloomingtonMN.gov>

Subject: Remote Airport Parking

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Good evening again,

I have class again on Monday night, so I would love my written testimony to be read into the record.

I yet again speak out to voice my opposition to the weakening of standards relating to remote airport parking in Bloomington. Again and again, the operators of these facilities in Bloomington have stated that their current business is too lucrative to abide by the agreements they signed with the people of Bloomington, and weakening of the requirements these temporary uses will have a disastrous affect on the people of Bloomington. I would like to reiterate that millions of dollars are lost every year that these sites sit underutilized, dollars that are supposed to pay for the bonds the city (and county) has already issued for improvements that these sites benefit from, even though there is ample evidence that high-density developments are moving forward all over the Twin Cities despite these terrible economic conditions (many without any TIF or government subsidy). Everyone else in Bloomington pays that difference, increasing our property taxes. Let alone the payroll, income, and sales tax that is lost without mixed uses.

These operators have used the exact same excuse, saying that market conditions aren't ready for redevelopment, for decades, in good economic times and bad economic times. They are not negotiating in good faith. In many other cities in the US, there has been great success in redevelopment near airports that take advantage of the huge opportunity that MSP airport and the Mall of America give these sites, and capitulating will set progress back decades. These business owners have zero incentive to consider the impacts to Bloomington residents like I, who will live in Bloomington for decades to come. They explicitly are land speculators, with Mr. Williamson saying that he wants to leave the land clear for future investment opportunities. I encourage the City Council to contact our state legislators to allow the City of Bloomington to enact a partial (or universal) building exemption for Bloomington property taxes, also known as a land value tax.

Land is finite, and in Bloomington, there is so little left for redevelopment that we must demand a higher standard from these operators if they wish to maintain their cash cows. It is important that we both benefit if they wish to continue operating. Furthermore, there is a glaring issue that the ordinance approved last year flies in the face of the purpose of the HX-R district, as permanent remote airport parking is the EXACT OPPOSITE of the district's purpose. The City of Bloomington made a promise to the region when taxpayer dollars were used to build the Blue Line, and it is our duty to pull our weight in putting our foot down and ensuring our tax dollars aren't squandered to protect the profit of two parking lot magnates. Again, to the Planning Commission, Mr. Williamson's intentions were clear. He would operate his business illegally to avoid his contractual obligation to

redevelop.

And to any Bloomington residents reading this, I would love to mention that St. Paul Union Depot offers \$2 per day parking, plus \$4 for two bus rides on Route 54 to the airport. You don't have to spend \$27 dollars a day to put that money into the pockets of the people who are spending tens of thousands of dollars on lawyers to screw over Bloomington residents. Robert Coleman wholeheartedly endorses Union Depot for all your airport parking needs.

It is imperative to me that exclusive permanent remote airport parking be not allowed in these sites, and the redevelopment setaside is wholly insufficient as a concept. The proposed redevelopment setaside sets 10 years as a deadline for these operators to stop parking cars on 120,000 sqft. This is as simple as putting up a fence to block off that section of the parking lot. In one decade from now, *nothing would have to be built*. It is just a plot of land that *might* be able to be redeveloped. And they have a decade to put up a fence. This is an insult to the taxpayers who paid for light rail improvements, road improvements, a new firestation, in exchange for an empty plot of land that hypothetically could be redeveloped. If the operators want it to. They would have no obligation to do so, instead they could continue to leave that land vacant for hundreds of years, and stiffing the people of Bloomington in the process. At the very least, they should be required to sell that land to the HRA using the Opportunity Housing Ordinance to ensure it doesn't continue to be used for land speculation, and on a much shorter time span than a whole extra decade.

I have brought this up before, but I have refined my proposed changes to remote airport parking:

1. Remote Airport Parking be allowed as a conditional use in the HX-R district, as a new incentive in the HX-R toolbox. If remote airport parking is included as a permanent use in the HX-R district, it increases the minimum AND maximum Floor Area Ratio by 0.5, necessitating that it be redeveloped underneath to high-density development. (As a clarification, since this subsection modifies the primary FAR, other bonuses are added on top of the change in the baseline FAR.)

Inserted in the HX-R section: (G) Remote airport parking bonus. Developments including remote airport parking must include additional non-remote airport parking floor area. If greater than 100 structured parking spaces are constructed pursuant to this section for the purpose of remote airport parking, the minimum floor area ratio in § 21.207.03 (g) (1) is increased to 2, and § 21.207.03 (g) (5) is increased to 2.5. Remote Airport Parking shall not exceed 25% lot coverage without other uses on top of it.

2. A modified definition of Remote Airport Parking that bars operators from providing shuttle service during hours that Metro Transit serves American Boulevard with direct transit. Today, there is ZERO REASON why these businesses need to exist in such prime land, when these operators A. compete with Metro Transit and B. provide zero retail or residential uses in prime Bloomington land.

§ 21.601 be amended to read "...which ~~may or may~~ shall not include shuttles to relay passengers between the off-site parking and the airport terminals during periods with nearby access to high-frequency public transportation."

3. Other changes related to the previous remote airport parking ordinance to make these changes function.

Thank you very much, and I hope you will continue to hold strong to protect Bloomington's interests,

Robert Coleman