Final purchase of Boeing/ NASA land okayed by Council
Museum Consultant also hired.
By John Adams (reprinted from The Downey Eagle– June 29, 2001)

DOwney-The City Council approved the purchase of the remaining two large parcels of NASA/Boeing land from the State Lands Commission for a price of $20 million Tuesday. The two parcels run along Lakewood Boulevard and will become an office park and retail development under the City's Master Developer, Ezralow Co.

Purchase cost of $2 million down and the balance interest only for seven years, will offer the City a great opportunity, according to Darrell George, City Economic and Community Development Director.

He told the Council Tuesday that the potential of the property would soon see its purchase price recovered and more through the lease of the property for development plus resulting sales tax revenue it is expected to generate.

Four parcels of the property, amounting to 67 acres, have already been acquired by the City.

State approval next month

The final papers of acquisition for the remaining 92 acres approved by the Council Tuesday, will be presented to the State Lands Commission next month.

Councilman Keith McCarthy said he couldn't remember the last time he bought anything for $20 million. This is a special moment in Downey history, said McCarthy.

"I am elated to be able to authorize this," said Councilman Kirk Cartozian.

Councilman Richard Trejo said he was happy for the opportunity to be on the Council at such a momentous time. Councilman Meredith Perkins said, "The sooner this is completed the better it will be for everyone." And Mayor Bob Winningham, said with pride, "This is the biggest project in Los Angeles County." He added we all will be hearing more and more of it. And City Manager Gerald Caton called it a historic moment, adding the vacant NASA land offers a real opportunity. He added Darrell George and staff's Christina Vogel have done an outstanding job.

Museum consultant

The Council also approved an agreement to hire a consulting firm to develop strategy for the proposed learning center and aerospace museum for which five acres have been set aside. The City will develop the learning center and museum as a joint effort with the Los Angeles County Office of Education. City staff's Christina Vogel presented the contract for $44,000 which was unanimously approved with consultant Museum Management, to be paid for through a portion of the $4 million appropriated by Congress for the museum.

The Council also established a two member council advisory committee to oversee the museum project, Cartozian and Trejo.

They will sit on a planning panel which will include a member of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) of Pasadena; Ezralow; the Los Angeles County Office of Education; and the Downey Aerospace Legacy Foundation which was represented by several members in the audience.

Ed Dowd, a founder of the Aerospace Legacy Foundation, complimented the Council and staff for a job well done, and pledged his group's efforts toward completion of the museum and education center.

Size of the building will be 30,000 to 40,000 square feet.

Kaiser Permanente has announced it will relocate on 20 acres of the land at the southwest corner of the property. The new medical center will include an eight story hospital and a four story medical office building. The Ezralow development on the remaining 140 acres is projected to cost $250 million. About eight acres have also been set aside for a joint park/school site.

Downey Eagle: www.downeyeagle.com
LATE MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 25TH, I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM OUR DIRECTOR J.C. CRUZ WITH A MESSAGE EMITTING FROM ANOTHER ALF DIRECTOR, DR. JAMES BUSBY (SPACE FRONTIER FOUNDATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR). THE JIST OF THE MESSAGE WAS THAT THE DOWNEY CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 26TH, WAS TO BE “OPEN” AND THAT ONE ADJENDA ITEM RELATED TO THE FINAL PURCHASE OF THE NASA/ BOEING SITE. OBVIOUSLY, WE (ALF) SHOULD BE WELL REPRESENTED.

WE IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED ASSISTANT SECRETARY VIRGINIA SIPE TO ORGANIZE THE PHONE COMMITTEE TO CONTACT ALL MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS, ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE AT THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING. VIRGINIA, BONNIE BOWATER AND MARILYN MADRU DID A SUPER JOB AND EVEN ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE WE HAD OVER 20 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE INCLUDING NEARLY ALL OF OUR DIRECTORS. (OUR FINE PRESIDENT, LARRY LATIMER, MISSED THE FUN AS HE AND HIS FAMILY WERE IN YOSEMITE ON A SHORT VACATION).

IN MAKING THE CALLS WE HEARD THERE WAS AN ARTICLE IN THE HERALD AMERICAN ANNOUNCING THE SAME NEWS BUT WITH THE ADDITION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS FOR THE MUSEUM.

TUESDAY EVENING WE ARRIVED IN STRENGTH, REVIVED THE ADJENDA, WHICH WAS NOT ALTOGETHER ENLIGHTENING, AND WAITED AND WAITED AND WAITED, WHILE OTHER ITEMS WERE HANDLED BY THE COUNCIL. FINALLY AT 11:15 PM, FOLLOWING A SHORT BREAK, THE ADJENDA WAS ALTERED TO HANDLE THE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT’S REPORT AND PROPOSAL.

IN SUMMARY----THE DREAM OF JEANNE DOWD AND GERRY BLACKBURN, STARTING IN 1995/96 IS TO BECOME A REALITY.ALTHOUGH THE FINAL FORM IS YET TO BE DETERMINED THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT DOWNEY WILL HAVE A COMBINATION EDUCATION CENTER AND SPACE MUSEUM IN THE YEARS TO COME. GERRY BLACKBURN IS REPRESENTING ALF AND HIS OWN DIRECT APPOINTMENT IS TO SIT ON THE ADVISORY PLANNING PANEL, CONSISTING OF THE JET PROPULSION LABORATORY (JPL), EZRALOW, LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION (LACOE), AEROSPACE LEGACY FOUNDATION (ALF), AND COUNCILMEN TREJO AND KARTOZIAN WITH THE CONSULTANT (MUSEUM MANAGEMENT OF SAN FRANCISCO). ALL THE LOYAL MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS OF ALF OVER THE YEARS HAVE BROUGHT THE DREAM TO A NEW BEGINNING: THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN BRINGING THE MUSEUM/EDUCATION CENTER TO OUR COMMUNITY. THIS NEW EFFORT WILL NEED EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY WE CAN MUSTER IN THOUGHT, PLANNING, AND EXECUTION BY ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN THE “PLANNING PANEL” TO THE ADVISORY GROUP.

ONCE CONCEIVED AND BUILT, THE MUSEUM WILL NEED TO BE FILLED WITH HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY “HANDS ON” DISPLAYS TO MOTIVATE THE PATRONAGE IT WILL BRING TO DOWNEY. WE CAN ALL BE PROUD TO SEE ITS GROWTH. SEE YOU ON JULY 15TH TO CELEBRATE AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE. Ed

Much has happened since we last met! Recently, the Downey City Council came another step closer to purchasing a very large and extremely historic property in Downey. The former Boeing/NASA site will be the home of a development that can reinvigorate Downey by creating jobs and stimulating the city’s economy. Most importantly, the City Council and Development Department are making plans for a significant museum and educational program. I have great confidence in our current City Council, including Councilmen Rick Trejo and Kirk Cartozian. The inclusion of the Aerospace Legacy Foundation, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education as advisors is also a positive direction to showcase and educate the legacy of Downey’s most historic site. I am elated the City’s current proposal includes a school/park component. Many of our efforts and proposals through the years will become a reality soon. We will continue raising support and awareness for the establishment of a significant museum and educational facility which honors a great legacy the NASA site is to Downey and America. Larry
Museum to Honor Downey Role In Space Exploration

(From Rep. Horn’s 38th District Web Site)

Thirty years ago, American astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first man to step onto the surface of the moon. He got there aboard a spaceship built with skill and ingenuity at the NASA manufacturing plant in Downey.

Now, Downey’s critical role in our nation’s space program will be preserved and used to educate potential astronauts and scientists of the future under the city’s plan for a Space Science Museum and Educational Program that Congress agreed to support with a $4 million grant.

The federal funding will help the city as it redevelops the 160-acre site of the NASA plant that produced the Apollo command capsule and service modules that carried Armstrong and other American astronauts to the moon and back. The Space Shuttle also was built at the Downey plant. At its peak in the 1960s, the plant employed 28,000 workers but all work there will be phased out by the end of next year.
“To protect and preserve America’s most significant historical site of the Twentieth Century.”

The foundation was founded in 1995 by a group of scientists, engineers, business people, educators, retirees, and the public at large. Incorporated as a nonprofit foundation in 1997. The foundation seeks historical integrity and educational use of a reasonable portion of the NASA/Boeing site in Downey, which is being acquired by the City of Downey. Aerospace Legacy’s vision of the NASA site is: A self-sustaining development of national interest on a section of the site. The foundation would like to see tourist revenue come into all sections of the community. The Aerospace Legacy Foundation has an honest and viable plan to bring a significant scientific, educational, and entertainment facility to Downey that will benefit all segments of the city.

Aviation Heritage on the web: http://www.aviation-heritage.com/eZine/Col04.htm

“On November 30, 1934 the Vultee concern was reformed as the Aviation Manufacturing Corporation, thus acquiring all of the Cord interests. By this time the V-1 and eight V-1As were built and delivered to American Airlines, plus two to private owners. Under new management an additional four were delivered to American and another 10 to other interests. In April, 1936 when the facilities were moved from the hangar/plant at Glendale to larger quarters at Downey, California, taking over the old E.M. Smity (EMSCO) field and plant, the last of 24 V-1As were delivered”.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, September 16th, 1:30 pm, at the First Baptist Church (Downey) on East 2nd Street, across from the Verizon office building and behind Embassy Suites Hotel. Look for the brown building off 2nd St, enter the double doors and turn left into Room 120.