

# Osmer holds key to airport swap

By STEVE SHENDER

Councilman Frank Osmer holds the apparent swing vote on a proposal by City Manager John Radin to swap 10 acres of city-owned airport land with a Southern California company bent on developing yet another "high-tech" industrial park in Watsonville. But Osmer indicated today that he's no swinger — at least not for the time being.

The councilman indicated this morning that he would withhold judgment on Radin's controversial proposal when the City Council meets Tuesday night, and said he would demand a public hearing on the matter before it is put to another vote.

The City Council, which deadlocked 3-3 over the proposal two weeks ago, is scheduled to reconsider the issue Tuesday. Osmer was absent when Radin first put the matter to the council.

At that time, Radin tried to persuade council members to go along with a land swap deal which would give the developers 10 acres of city land just south of the airport's secondary runway and west of its main runway, in exchange for a seven-acre parcel further to the south known as the Jennings Industrial Park.

The developers said the exchange would facilitate their plans for a 37-acre industrial park at the intersection of the airport's main and secondary

runways. Radin said the deal would give the city industrial leases valued at \$116,000 a year.

But the council deadlocked on whether to allow the city manager to continue negotiations for the land swap. Opposing Radin's plan were Mayor Ann Soldo and council members Betty Murphy and Vido Deretich. Councilmen Rex Clark, Joe Marsano and Roy Ingersoll voted in favor of Radin's request that he be allowed to continue negotiations with the developers, GMC Ltd., of Newport Beach.

Osmer, who said he was "not alone" in his belief about the need for a public hearing on the proposal, said today, "I'd like to hear more about it. I'm not going to go on what I read in the paper or hear second-hand."

Airport Manager Vern Ackerman, normally outspoken about anything having to do with the airport, has had little to say about the land swap deal since the city manager proposed it last month. Ackerman dodged questions about the deal today, saying, "I just go by what the (airport) master plan says and try to comply with it."

Asked what the master plan says as far as industrial parks alongside airport runways are concerned, Ackerman said, "I really don't have anything to say." The airport manager said he would discuss the matter with the council Tuesday night.

GMC not only wants city land in order to develop the new park, but easements across the

airport for utility connections.

According to a spokesman for the developers, the proposed industrial park would be a home for "rapidly growing" computer electronics firms seeking to "come in and develop 100,000 square feet now," with the option to expand later. The spokesman, Capitola development consultant Steve Mills, said last month that if the city goes ahead with the land swap, GMC will build a new road from Buena Vista Drive to Harkins Slough Road, parallel to and level with the airport's main runway.

Mills said the proposed park would be comparable in quality to the Airport Industrial Park on Airport Boulevard, which has attracted such firms as Tandem Computers and Seagate Technology.

Under Federal Aviation Administration regulations, no structures may be built within 300 feet of the center line of any runway. The boundaries of the proposed "Airport West Business Park" would be just outside the FAA limit. The industrial park plan has drawn criticism from Freedom area residents, who say they were never consulted about it.

In another matter Tuesday night, the council is slated to vote on the tentative map for a 56-acre industrial park at the confluence of Highway 1 and Green Valley and Harkins Slough roads.