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Airport plans to buy land

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Bismarck Municipal Airport will purchase about 23 acres of land to the northwest of airport property.

The Bismarck City Commission approved the purchase at a special meeting Tuesday. The land is part of a runway protection zone.

The land is owned by Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Church, and Steve and Karen McCormick. Two other parcels in the runway protection zone are owned by the Bismarck Hockey Boosters. The group did not agree to sell their land.

It will cost about \$2.24 million for the property, or \$2.20 per square foot. Airport management will apply for approval to purchase the land from the Federal Aviation Administration. The property purchase could be paid for with airport improvement project money or passenger facility charges.

"It will probably be PFCs (passenger facility charges)," airport manager Greg Haug said.

The passenger facility charge is a fee charged on airline tickets. The fee would be about \$4.50 per ticket for this project. The ability to assess this charge changes as projects are paid off and new projects are approved, and passengers can pay a maximum of \$9 per ticket, Haug said.

At \$4.50 per ticket, the PFC would generate \$750,000 per year.

It will take about a year for the project to be approved. There will need to be an environmental impact statement as part of the procedure.

The airport could close on the property as early as July or as late as December. The airport will pay \$3,000 quarterly until closing, and that money will be a credit toward the purchase price, Haug said.

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