

# Commissioners support ski plan

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There's a land war developing on the west side of Bismarck.

On one side of the fence is the mayor of Bismarck, who is working with developers to turn land northwest of Bismarck Junior College into a ski area.

On the other side is the president of BJC, who wants the land turned over to the state for future development of BJC and the Community Bowl.

And based on the cross fire that took place at the City Commission meeting, there's little room for compromise.

"Mayor, we clearly differ on this issue," BJC President Kermit Lidstrom said as he left the podium Tuesday night.

**LATER IN** the meeting — after Lidstrom had left — Mayor Marlan Haakenson won a resolution of support from his commission to work toward the development of a ski area on site. Tentative plans by developers call for the construction of several ski runs on 36 rolling acres west of the college between Grant Marsh bridge to the north and the railroad trestle to the south. The city acquired the land earlier this year in a swap with the North Dakota National Guard.

Although no city money would go toward the ski hill, Haakenson said he is providing some of his own money for a feasibility study. He has also suggested the city could offer developers an attractive lease on the land.

A SKI consultant from Michigan will be in Bismarck this week to look at engineering reports, Haakenson said.

But the college president Tuesday advised the city to take its plans for a ski area elsewhere and suggested the commission do something for the community by giving the land to the college for development of the BJC Community Bowl.

Lidstrom sees the Bowl as Bismarck's future premiere track and field and football facility. And the college might one day grow to 6,000 students, he said, adding that he doesn't care for the idea of skiers driving through campus to get to the hill.

"I'M SUGGESTING that we not compromise the future of this Bowl by putting something too near to it," he said. "Have you thought about how many lawsuits you would get from people who don't like the noise from snow-making machines?"

But city commissioners were less than charitable toward Lidstrom's plans for the Community Bowl. Jack Kavaney, for one, said the city has already done its share for the college by building it and then turning it over to the state. "I don't feel we want to spend any more money than that," he said. "This is a separate institution up there, it's not the city of Bismarck."

**AND COMMISSIONER** LeRoy Walker: "I'm not in favor of giving any more land to the state of North Dakota."