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NEWS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY OFFICIALS GIVE GREEN LIGHT TO PROSPECTIVE ASTRODOME SUITORS

*Commissioners Court Unanimously Approves Measure
Encouraging Potential Stadium Redevelopment*

Harris County Commissioners Court voted unanimously Tuesday to encourage Astrodome Redevelopment Corporation and all other interested parties to move forward with plans to redevelop the county-owned stadium once dubbed "The Eighth Wonder of the World."

County officials are hoping to find a viable economic use for the vacant stadium, which costs county taxpayers approximately \$2.5 million a year to maintain. County officials have stressed repeatedly that there are no discussions or proposals to raze the Dome, which captured worldwide attention when it opened in 1965.

"Commissioners Court is in complete agreement," said County Judge Ed Emmett. "We want the Astrodome redeveloped into a profitable venture once again – one that respects the history of the stadium while recognizing the needs of the Harris County taxpayers who own it."

Today's action by the court encourages Astrodome Redevelopment Corporation (ARC) or any other vendor to proceed with any economically viable venture that could make use of the stadium.

Harris County's Management Services Department presented court members with a 110-page report last week outlining ARC's proposal to reconfigure the Reliant Astrodome into a hotel. ARC had exclusive rights to propose redeveloping the Dome from July 2006 until Jan. 29, when its letter of intent expired. At that time, the county became free to consider proposals from ARC and all other groups interested in redeveloping the site.

Although the county's Management Service Department reported that the draft of a lease agreement with ARC is near completion, County Judge Ed Emmett has said repeatedly that he wants reassurance that the group has the necessary financing to proceed with the project.

"The Astrodome is an extremely valuable asset to this region, economically and emotionally," said Emmett. "It's crucial that we protect the stadium and the financial interests of the taxpayers who own it."