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## Plan approved for The Reserve

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SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM

**MANSFIELD** - City and real estate officials expect that a zoning compromise hammered out during Monday's City Council meeting will quickly spark development in The Reserve at Mansfield.

One land broker said he has \$40 million worth of medical facility projects ready to move forward now that an ordinance specifying landscaping, architecture and other standards is in place.

Late Monday, the City Council unanimously approved the development plan for 1,588 acres, bordered by Texas 360, U.S. 287 and East Broad Street, after more than two hours of discussion. The action followed six weeks of intense meetings and phone negotiations between staff, several council members and property owners who said the standards were too demanding.

"I think now we can go out and develop some land," said Tom Ritter, a property owner and key negotiator for owners who had opposed the plan.

Greg Morris, senior vice president of Dunn Commercial in Arlington, said the details of the compromise were not as important as its conclusion.

"We needed to get it passed and get it off the agenda," he said. "It takes away the uncertainty."

He said Dunn has seven planned medical facilities that were waiting on the zoning ordinance. He declined to give details but said one is a \$22 million project and the remaining six total about \$18 million. All were spawned by the recently announced plans for three hospitals in The Reserve.

The negotiations resolved more than 100 issues raised by landowners, ranging from minor clarifications to potential deal-breakers over tree plantings, parking and construction materials.

Owners of more than 20 percent of the affected land initially opposed the ordinance. Faced with that opposition, council members needed a 6-1 super-majority to approve the rules rather than the traditional 4-3 simple majority. At the Jan. 9 meeting, the council mustered only a 5-2 vote. But the two dissenters, Councilmen Larry Broseh and Michael McSpadden, led a successful last-minute campaign for more compromises.

Councilwoman Linda Herndon contended that the city gave up too much, noting that some originally proposed landscaping standards were scaled back to the level of existing regulations.

"This hasn't been negotiation," she said.

Frank Bonilla, president of the sales-tax-funded Mansfield Economic Development Corp. board, said the revamped plan preserved the concept of The Reserve becoming a visually distinguished economic center for the city.

"This plan ensures that development here will be done correctly," Bonilla said.

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