

November 4, 2003

**Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the Hermosa Beach City Council**

**Regular Meeting of  
November 12, 2003**

SUBJECT: SOUTH BAY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (SBCOG) LETTER COMMENTING ON SUPPLEMENT TO THE DRAFT EIS/EIR FOR LAX PROPOSED MASTER PLAN IMPROVEMENTS

**Recommendation:**

That the City Council approve the attached letter prepared by the South Bay Cities Council of Governments commenting on the EIS/EIR and authorize the City Manager to sign and forward.

**Background:**

The South Bay Council of Governments (SBCOG) has prepared a draft letter for use by local jurisdictions to respond to the Draft EIS/EIR for the Los Angeles Airport Master Plan Improvements. The proposed project consists of a \$9 billion dollar renovation and new improvements designed to provide, consolidated passenger check-ins at a single location, remote parking and tram connections to terminals with the intent of preventing terrorism and facilitating airport operations. Each impacted jurisdiction has received copies of a Supplement to the previously circulated Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) dated January 2001. The environmental document is comprised of 8 volumes and approximately 4000 pages of text, graphics, tables and maps. That EIS/EIR addressed master plan Alternatives A, B and C for improvements to Los Angeles International Airport plus a "No Action/No Project" Alternative. The new Supplement addresses the environmental impacts of a fourth "build" alternative, Alternative D. The SBCOG has prepared an analysis of the EIR/EIS attached for City Council review and a draft letter for use by the City in preparing comments. (Please see Summary of Plan Alternatives - Attachment No. 1)

On September 20, 2001, the City submitted a letter commenting on the original EIS/EIR addressing master plan Alternatives A, B and C. The City concurred with the extensive criticisms of the EIS/EIR set forth in a letter prepared by consultant Barbara Lichman for the South Bay Cities Council of Governments.

**Analysis:**

The new Supplement was prepared to describe a new Alternative for the LAX Master Plan and address the potential environmental impacts of the new alternative. The new Alternative D was developed in response to public comment on the previous alternatives and the increased security considerations resulting from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

The analysis provided by the SBCOG is that the environmental document is inadequate to understand the full scope of the impacts to ground access surrounding the airport, to the adjacent communities and in the flight path and to enhanced security and safety. There is also a recommendation to cap airport growth to 78 million annual passengers since without such a cap all of the assumptions and analysis in the document are considered invalid.

Staff has the following additional comments to incorporate in the draft letter:

1. There is a lack of analysis of traffic impacts on communities south of the airport such as Hermosa Beach. For example, Sepulveda and Aviation Boulevards are direct links to the airport. These arterials run through the middle of Hermosa Beach (Sepulveda is named "Pacific Coast Highway" through Hermosa). It is likely that a substantial amount of airport traffic from Redondo and Hermosa Beach uses these arterials to get to the airport rather than diverting to the 405 freeway. There should be some analysis of whether the new

proposed Ground Transportation Center (GTC) will increase or decrease airport-oriented traffic on these roads.

2. In addition to the above, Caltrans recently completed a synchronization of traffic signals on PCH/Sepulveda to facilitate airport-oriented traffic. A more comprehensive approach to the traffic impacts of Alternative D would be to analyze the effects of this synchronization on traffic on this arterial further south than the intersections addressed in the Supplement (i.e. the analysis appears to extend no further south than Rosecrans Avenue).
3. Finally, the descriptions of runway modifications and noise impacts in the EIS/EIR seem to indicate that there will be no increase in air traffic over the City of Hermosa Beach. However, we could find no section in the EIS/EIR which specifically addressed this concern. Therefore, this issue should be addressed in the Response to Comments section of the Final EIS/EIR. It should be emphasized that the City's support for Alternative D is predicated on the understanding that this Alternative does not result in such an increase in air traffic over the City.

After comments, such as those submitted by Hermosa Beach, are received, the FAA and LAWA (Los Angeles World Airways/City of Los Angeles) will prepare written responses. Then the FAA and LAWA may either prepare a Final EIS/EIR or conduct additional environmental studies. When the environmental review process is completed, the Los Angeles City Council and the FAA will decide which master plan alternative to implement.

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Sol Blumenfeld, Director  
Community Development Department

Concur:

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Stephen R. Burrell,  
City Manager

Attachments:

1. LAX Master Plan Alternative Summary
2. Draft Comment Letter

H:/LAXLetter

## ATTACHMENT NO.1

### LAX MASTER PLAN IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY

- Alternative A: A new runway would be added to the north airfield complex and two existing runways would be lengthened. This alternative would fully meet the projected demand for airport services by increasing passenger capacity from the present 78.7 to approximately 97.9 million annual passengers (MAP) in 2015, and increasing cargo capacity from 3.1 to 4.17 million annual tons (MAT).
- Alternative B: A new runway would be added to the south airfield complex and two existing runways would be lengthened. The alternative would also fully meet the projected demand for airport services by increasing passenger capacity to 97.9 MAP and cargo capacity to 4.17 MAT.
- Alternative C: The number of runways would remain at four. One existing runway would be widened and three runways would be lengthened. The alternative would not fully meet the projected demand for passenger capacity, which would be increased to 89.6 MAP, a shortfall of 8.3 MAP. However, the projected demand for cargo capacity would be met by an increase to 4.2 MAT.
- Alternative D: The new Alternative addressed in the EIS/EIR Supplement is referred to in the text as “The Enhanced Safety and Security Plan”. In this plan, the number of runways would remain at four and two existing runways would be lengthened and all runways further separated to improve operational efficiency and safety. The alternative would accommodate approximately 78.9 MAP and 3.1 MAT of cargo, essentially equivalent to the No Action/No Project Alternative activity level. Alternative D would enhance security by limiting access by private vehicles to the main airport area. Instead a new Ground Transportation Center (GTC) and an Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) would be constructed east of Aviation Boulevard as the primary access points for all passenger dropoff and pickup and for vehicle parking. Like the other build alternatives, Alternative D would provide for extensive intersection and other traffic improvements in the vicinity of the airport.

November 14, 2003

Mr. Jim Ritchie  
City of Los Angeles/Los Angeles World Airports  
LAX Master Plan Office  
P.O. Box 92216  
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2216

Mr. David B. Kessler, AICP  
Federal Aviation Administration  
P.O. Box 92007  
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2007

Subject: Supplement to the Draft EIS/EIR for LAX Proposed Master Plan Improvements

Gentlemen:

By order of the City Council, the City of Hermosa Beach would like to make the following comments regarding the subject EIS/EIR Supplement.

The City of Hermosa Beach is in agreement with the South Bay Council of Governments regarding the LAX Master Plan Improvements. As other South Bay cities, we have concerns about a variety of issues in the environmental document. Our conclusion is that the EIR/EIS is inadequate to understanding the full scope of impacts to ground access surrounding the airport, to the adjacent communities to the airport and in the flight path and to demonstrating enhanced safety and security. Additionally, the City supports a cap on airport growth at 78 million passengers per year as described in Alternative D in the EIR/EIS.

We believe that the Responses to Comments section of the Final EIS/EIR should address the above matters and the following specific issues:

1. There is a lack of analysis of traffic impacts on communities south of the airport, such as Hermosa Beach. For example, Sepulveda and Aviation Boulevards are direct links to the airport. These arterials run through the middle of Hermosa Beach (Sepulveda is named "Pacific Coast Highway" through Hermosa). It is likely that a substantial amount of airport traffic from Redondo and Hermosa Beach uses these arterials to get to the airport rather than diverting to the 405 freeway. There should be some analysis of whether the new proposed Ground Transportation Center (GTC) will increase or decrease airport-oriented traffic on these roads.
2. In addition to the above, Caltrans recently completed a synchronization of traffic signals on PCH/Sepulveda to facilitate airport-oriented traffic. A more comprehensive approach to the traffic impacts of Alternative D would be to analyze the effects of this synchronization on

traffic on this arterial further south than the intersections addressed in the Supplement (i.e. the analysis appears to extend no further south than Rosecrans Avenue).

3. The descriptions of runway modifications and noise impacts in the EIS/EIR seem to indicate that there will be no increase in air traffic over the City of Hermosa Beach. However, we could find no section in the EIS/EIR which specifically addressed this concern. Therefore, this issue should be addressed in the Response to Comments section of the Final EIS/EIR. I wish to emphasize here that the City's support for Alternative D is predicated on the understanding that this Alternative does not result in such an increase in air traffic over the City.

The City of Hermosa Beach thanks Los Angeles World Airports for the opportunity to comment on the EIS/EIR Supplement.

Sincerely,

Stephen R. Burrell  
City Manager

cc: City Council