



# AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION RIVERSIDE COUNTY AGENDA

Riverside County Administration Center  
4080 Lemon St., Hearing Room (1st Floor)  
Riverside, California

Thursday 9:00 a.m., August 13, 2009

CHAIR  
Simon Housman  
Rancho Mirage

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Riverside

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NOTE: If you wish to speak, please complete a "SPEAKER IDENTIFICATION FORM" and give it to the Secretary. The purpose of the public hearing is to allow interested parties to express their concerns. Comments shall be limited to 5 minutes and to matters relevant to the item under consideration. Please do not repeat information already given. If you have no additional information, but wish to be on record, simply give your name and address and state that you agree with the previous speaker(s). Also please be aware that the indicated staff recommendation shown below may differ from that presented to the Commission during the public hearing.

Non-exempt materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Airport Land Use Commission or its staff after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Airport Land Use Commission's office located at 4080 Lemon Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Riverside, CA 92501 during normal business hours.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if any accommodations are needed, please contact Barbara Santos at (951) 955-5132 or E-mail at [basantos@rctlma.org](mailto:basantos@rctlma.org). Request should be made at least 48 hours or as soon as possible prior to the scheduled meeting.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTIONS

### 1.1 CALL TO ORDER

### 1.2 SALUTE TO FLAG

### 1.3 ROLL CALL

## 2.0 PUBLIC HEARING: NEW BUSINESS

### RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

- 2.1 ZAP1047RI09 – City of Riverside – Airport Master Plan for Riverside Airport. The Airport Land Use Commission will review the Airport Master Plan document to determine consistency with the Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, as adopted in 2005. The Master Plan includes a Capital Improvement Program and recommends 40 actions over the next 20 years to improve the airport. The airport would continue to be a general aviation airport. Activity forecasts would not exceed those projected in the adopted Compatibility Plan. The Master Plan includes provision for future 1,000-foot easterly extension of the primary runway (Runway 9-27) and property acquisition, to the extent necessary to meet Federal Aviation Administration Runway Protection Zone requirements. Such extension would only occur in the event of increased activity by large business jets. ALUC Staff Planner: John Guerin, Ph: (951) 955-0982, or E-mail at [jguerin@rctlma.org](mailto:jguerin@rctlma.org).

Staff Recommendation: CONDITIONALLY CONSISTENT

**BERMUDA DUNES AIRPORT**

2.2 ZAP1036BD09 – Riverside County Sheriff Department (Representative: Lieutenant Dan Ybarra) – City Case No. CUP 08-10 (Conditional Use Permit). A proposal for the construction and operation of a new Sheriff station with helicopter takeoff and landing facility (helipad) within the City of Palm Desert, located southerly of Gerald Ford Drive, northerly of Frank Sinatra Drive, easterly of Shadow Ridge Road, and westerly of Portola Avenue, approximately 6 miles northwesterly of the northwesterly end of Runway 10-28 at Bermuda Dunes Airport. The proposed station will have approximately 85,496 square feet with a 20 foot rooftop helipad, parking for 470 vehicles, a fleet fueling station, wash bay for oversized vehicles and bioswales for pollution management. The helipad would be used intermittently for emergency purposes. The property is not located within an Airport Influence Area. ALUC Staff Planner: Brenda Ramirez at (951) 955-0549, or E-mail at brramire@rctlma.org.

Staff Recommendation: CONTINUE TO SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

**3.0 PRESENTATION**

3.1 Presentation by the City of Perris regarding the proposed Perris Valley Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan as it relates to the City's proposed Downtown Specific Plan and adopted Green Valley Specific Plan

**4.0 ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

4.1 Director's Approval

4.2 Report back from staff regarding the French Valley Energy Plant ZAP1027FV08

**5.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

June 11, 2009

**6.0 ORAL COMMUNICATION ON ANY MATTER NOT ON THE AGENDA**

**7.0 COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

# COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION

## STAFF REPORT

**AGENDA ITEM:** 2.1

**HEARING DATE:** August 13, 2009

### CASE SUMMARY

**CASE NUMBER:** ZAP1047RI09 – City of Riverside

**APPROVING JURISDICTION:** City of Riverside

**JURISDICTION CASE NO.:** Riverside Municipal Airport Master Plan

### MAJOR ISSUES:

1. Limited property acquisition may be required in order to make all of the Master Plan improvements over the course of the next twenty years.
2. The adopted Compatibility Plan is based on the existing Master Plan, which anticipated a 753-foot easterly extension of the primary runway. In the absence of operational restrictions in the form of Declared Distances, the construction and operation of the runway extension would expand the Runway Protection Zone beyond the current boundaries of Compatibility Zone A. However, with the restriction that the use of the easterly extension would be limited to use by aircraft making departures to the west, the Runway Protection Zone would remain within the current boundaries of Compatibility Zone A.
3. The Master Plan noise impact analysis depicts a year 2027 70 CNEL contour extending beyond airport boundaries onto existing residential properties to the south-southeast along the north side of Glenhurst Street. (The affected existing residential properties are located within Compatibility Zone B1.) The location of the year 2027 65 CNEL contour appears to be close to the location of the ultimate 65 CNEL contour, as depicted in the Compatibility Plan.
4. Area residents are concerned regarding noise impact if the runway is extended closer to their homes.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends a finding of CONDITIONAL CONSISTENCY, subject to the requirement that the Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan be amended to reflect the adoption of this Master Plan prior to the adoption of environmental documentation for the runway extension (currently projected to occur in the year 2013). This will involve a cooperative effort by the City of Riverside and the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Riverside Municipal Airport Master Plan, prepared by Coffman Associates for adoption by the City of Riverside, recommends 40 actions over the next 20 years to improve and maintain the airport, the most prominent of which would be a 1,000-foot easterly extension of Runway 9-27. (The previous Master Plan had proposed a 753-foot extension.) The airport would continue to be a

general aviation airport, and activity forecasts would not exceed projections utilized to develop the Compatibility Plan adopted by the Commission in 2005.

**PROJECT LOCATION:**

Riverside Municipal Airport, a 441-acre facility located northerly of Arlington Avenue, southerly of Central Avenue, and easterly of Van Buren Boulevard in the City of Riverside.

**LAND USE PLAN:** 2005 Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

- a. Airport Influence Area: Riverside Municipal Airport
- b. Land Use Policy: Airport Zones A, B1, B2, and C
- c. Noise Levels: From over 60 CNEL to above 65 CNEL (above 70 CNEL at some locations).

**INTRODUCTION – BASIS FOR REVIEW:**

As stated in Section 1.5.1 of the Countywide Policies of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, any proposal for “Adoption or modification of the master plan for an existing public-use airport (Public Utilities Code Section 21676(c))” requires referral to the Airport Land Use Commission for a determination of consistency with the Commission’s Plan prior to approval by the local jurisdiction. The Airport Master Plan must “contain sufficient information to enable the Commission to adequately assess the noise, safety, airspace protection, and overflight impacts of airport activity upon surrounding land uses. A master plan report shall be submitted, if possible. (Section 2.4.1, Countywide Policies). The Commission may find the project consistent or inconsistent with its Compatibility Plan, or may (after a duly noticed public hearing) modify the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to reflect the assumptions and proposals in the Airport Master Plan (Section 2.4.2, Countywide Policies).

In reviewing Airport Master Plans, specific attention should be paid to proposals to “(1) construct a new runway or helicopter takeoff and landing area; (2) change the length, width, or landing threshold location of an existing runway; or (3) establish an instrument approach procedure” and to activity forecasts that are “(1) significantly higher than those in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or that (2) include a higher proportion of larger or noisier aircraft” (Section 5.1.1, Countywide Policies).

Airport Master Plans are the basis for Compatibility Plans. As such, the Countywide Policies envision a process whereby the adoption or amendment of an Airport Master Plan and an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan occur concurrently.

In the current public sector fiscal environment, this has not been taking place because up to 95% of the cost of preparing an Airport Master Plan is eligible to be funded by the federal government, whereas the preparation of airport land use compatibility plans relies on local (and occasional state) funding.

## **RUNWAY EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENTS:**

The Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (RMALUCP) adopted in 2005 was based on the Airport Master Plan adopted by the City of Riverside in 1999, which had recommended a 753-foot easterly extension of Runway 27 to “accommodate forecast growth in activity by larger business jets.” Based on this proposed runway extension, the RMALUCP designated 55 parcels easterly of the airport as being entirely within Compatibility Zone A and an additional 20 parcels as being partially within Compatibility Zone A.

The volume of aviation activity and the critical design aircraft are important factors to consider in the design of airport facilities. While volume of operations is not expected to exceed 60 percent of capacity, the proposed Master Plan projects that the growth in use by faster business jets may lead to the need for an upgrade in the airport reference code from B-II to C-II.

As stated on page 3-8 of the proposed Master Plan, “[t]he critical design aircraft is defined as the most demanding category of aircraft, or family of aircraft, which conducts at least 500 operations per year at the airport.” Coffman Associates conducted an analysis of instrument flight plan data on record with AirportIQ for the one-year period ending on September 25, 2007, and determined that there were 583 flights in the database involving aircraft in Approach Categories B, C, and D, with 399 of these in Approach Category B (approach speed 90-120 knots). Aircraft in Approach Categories C and D accounted for 184 flights. In considering physical aircraft characteristics, all but 4 of the flights were by aircraft in Airplane Design Groups I and II (wingspan less than 79 feet and tail height less than 30 feet). Based on this information, Coffman identified the current Airport Reference Code [ARC] as ARC B-II.

However, as noted on page 3-10, “it is likely that there are more business jet operations at the airport than are captured by this methodology....” Most notably, operations conducted under visual flight conditions are not included in the database. Annual instrument approaches account for only 1.5% of total operations (page 2-28), and Visual Flight Rule conditions exist approximately 93.5% of the time (page 3-5). Additionally, the database does not include flight plans “that are opened or closed from the air” and local “operations within the traffic pattern at the airport” (page 3-10).

Given these exclusions, it is reasonable to consider that aircraft in Approach Category C (approach speed 121-140 knots) and higher could “exceed the substantial use threshold of 500 annual operations” (page 3-11) in the future. Therefore, the proposed Master Plan considered the improvements needed in the event that the airport transitions into an ARC C-II facility, as well as the improvements needed to achieve compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards for ARC B-II facilities.

The Master Plan cites FAA Advisory Circular [AC] 160/5235-4B as establishing runway length requirements for civil airports receiving Federal funding. The AC indicates that, for airports with Riverside’s elevation, mean daily maximum temperature, and a maximum 58-foot difference in runway centerline elevation, a 5,400-foot runway length is sufficient to accommodate the requirements of small airplanes and 75 percent of large airplanes weighing 60,000 pounds or less at 60 percent of useful load. However, a 6,400-foot runway length would be needed to accommodate the remaining 25 percent of that “family” of airplanes at 60 percent of useful load. Pursuant to the

AirportIQ database cited earlier, the remaining 25 percent, together with airplanes over 60,000 pounds in weight (which would also be accommodated by a 6,400-foot runway) together accounted for only 18.2 percent of the operations (106 known operations) in the database. Since this number is less than 500, the Master Plan concludes on page 3-21 that “a runway extension is not currently needed.”

While there is sufficient land available to extend Runway 9-27 an additional 1,000 feet, there are several constraints that would make this problematic. One such constraint is that a runway extension of this length to the east would expand the Runway Protection Zone into the residential area to the east, as well as over Hillside Avenue. Up to eighty-six (86) residential properties would be affected, and these homes would have to be purchased and removed if the runway extension were to occur without operational constraints.

No extension is proposed for Runway 16-34, the north-south (“crosswind”) runway serving small aircraft.

The Master Plan next considered alternatives for bringing the runway safety area, obstacle free zone, obstacle free area, and runway protection zone into compliance with FAA design standards.

As stated on pages 4-6 and 4-7, “[t]he runway safety area (RSA) is a designated safety area surrounding the runways [that] is to be:

- (1) cleared and graded and have no potentially hazardous ruts, bumps, depressions, or other surface variations;
- (2) drained by grading or storm sewers to prevent water accumulation;
- (3) capable, under dry conditions, of supporting snow removal equipment, aircraft rescue and firefighting equipment, and the occasional passage of aircraft without causing structural damage to the aircraft; and,
- (4) free of objects, except for objects that need to be located in the RSA because of their function (in aiding air navigation).”

The existing RSA for Runway 9-27 at Riverside Municipal Airport falls well short of the FAA standard, which requires the RSA of an ARC B-II airport to extend 600 feet beyond each end of the runway. The standard for an ARC C-II airport is higher: the RSA for such airports must extend 1,000 feet beyond the far end of the runway and 600 feet prior to the landing thresholds. One of the constraints in achieving the RSA standard is that a Union Pacific Railroad spur is located 475 feet from the westerly terminus of the runway. The Master Plan evaluated six alternatives for achievement of ARC C-II RSA standards and determined that the establishment of a 1,000-foot RSA beyond each end of the runway would not be feasible. The only feasible options (i.e., not requiring the relocation of Van Buren Boulevard or the acquisition and demolition of homes easterly of the airport) involve use of an Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS). Installation of an EMAS is considered by FAA to be an acceptable substitute to provision of a full-length 1,000-foot RSA for ARC C-II airports. The Master Plan states on page 4-12 that:

“EMAS is an engineered compressible concrete material that is located beyond the runway end for the purpose of safely stopping an aircraft overrun...EMAS functions similar to the sandy, high-speed exits provided on highways in mountainous terrain in order to safely stop a runaway tractor

trailer...EMAS is designed to stop an aircraft overrun by exerting predictable deceleration forces on the landing gear as the EMAS material crushes ...[and]...to minimize the potential for structural damage to the aircraft, since such damage could result in injuries to passengers and/or affect the predictability of deceleration forces.”

The two options for meeting the ARC C-II standard for a 600-foot RSA beyond the westerly terminus of the runway both involve EMAS. One such option (Exhibit 4E – Option 2) involves relocating the railroad spur 125 feet to the west, establishing an “EMAS Site Prep Area” (or “lead-in” area) extending 380 feet westerly from the runway terminus, and installing a 220-foot EMAS bed westerly of the “lead-in area.” The other option (Exhibit 4E – Option 3) involves establishing an “EMAS Site Prep Area” (or “lead-in” area) extending 210 feet from the runway terminus, and installing a 265-foot EMAS bed westerly of the “lead-in area.” Since there is a minimum 600 foot requirement for an RSA, a displaced landing threshold would have to be established 125 feet easterly of the westerly runway terminus, reducing the “landing distance available” on Runway 9 to 5,275 feet.

The other critical area is the Runway Protection Zone, which is the basis for Compatibility Zone A in ALUC’s Compatibility Plans. Runway 9-27 can accommodate 75 percent of large business jets (under 60,000 pounds) at 60 percent useful load. A runway length of 6,400 feet would be necessary to accommodate the full range of large business jets in this weight class at 60 percent useful load. At present, the aircraft in this remaining group account for less than 500 annual operations, but, should this threshold be exceeded during the Master Plan planning period, a 1,000-foot runway extension could be needed. However, given the potential social and environmental impacts associated with acquisition and relocation, the Master Plan proposes an operational constraint that reduces the acquisition requirement from 86 parcels to 10 parcels.

If the number of operations by Approach Category C and D aircraft remains below 500 operations per year and the airport retains its ARC B-II status, the Runway Protection Zone remains entirely within airport grounds. However, should the airport transition into an ARC C-II airport, the Runway Protection Zone would be larger, crossing over Hillside Avenue and affecting 10 residential parcels. Extension of the runway easterly by 1000 feet would result in a Runway Protection Zone extending across five north-south roads and two east-west roads, affecting 86 residential parcels.

Given these issues, the Master Plan proposes that the 1,000-foot easterly runway extension be included in the intermediate-term Capital Improvement Program, if justified by activity levels, but that this additional runway area be utilized solely for take-off operations to the west utilizing Runway 27. It is projected that this would be usable by 90 percent of departing traffic, given that the predominant wind direction is from the west and that aircraft will normally take off into the wind. With this restriction, aircraft taking off to the east would not be able to utilize the 1,000-foot easterly extension, and so they would not be overflying the homes to the east at a lower altitude than at present. Similarly, aircraft landing from the east (except in emergency situations) would not be authorized to land on the easterly extension. The restriction would be implemented through the use of “Declared Distances”. The “Landing Distance Available” would remain 5,400 feet. The “Take-Off Run Available” and “Accelerate-Stop Distance Available” for eastbound take-off movements (from Runway 9) would remain 5,400 feet. The “Take-Off Run Available” and “Accelerate-Stop Distance Available” for westbound take-off movements (from Runway 27) would increase to 6,400

feet.

The one-way use, 1000-foot extension accommodates 90 percent of departures while limiting impacts on the properties to the east of the airport.

#### **COMPATIBILITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS:**

Staff has compared the possible Runway Protection Zones illustrated on Exhibit 4F of the Master Plan with a map plotted by the Riverside County Land Information System illustrating Compatibility Zone A boundaries overlain on parcels easterly of the airport. The results indicate that, if the 1,000-foot easterly extension were implemented without the operational restriction effected by use of “Declared Distances,” the Runway Protection Zone would encompass all or portions of 24 parcels not presently included in Compatibility Zone A. This would require either: (a) a finding of inconsistency with the 2005 Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or (b) a concurrent amendment to the boundaries of Compatibility Zone A, in order to bring the Compatibility Plan up to the minimum requirement that the entire Runway Protection Zone be included in Compatibility Zone A. Thus, the operational restriction is essential to a determination of consistency in this situation.

With the operational restriction, the number of properties easterly of the airport that would be included in the Runway Protection Zone would be limited to ten parcels. This would allow up to 65 parcels to be considered for a possible change from Compatibility Zone A to a less restrictive Compatibility Zone as part of a future Compatibility Plan amendment. Almost all of these parcels are occupied by single-family residences.

#### **NOISE:**

The Master Plan also includes noise contours developed using the FAA-approved Integrated Noise Model (Version 7.0). While the Model projects Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contours, only the 65, 70, and 75 CNEL contours are mapped. The future (year 2027) contours indicate that both the 65 and 70 CNEL contours extend beyond the airport onto residential properties to the southeast. The affected areas are located within an existing single-family residential subdivision. The 70 CNEL contour affects portions of eight properties located on the northerly side of Glenhurst Street. The 65 CNEL contour includes most of the properties facing onto Glenhurst Street, as well as some properties facing onto Morningside Avenue and Crystal Hill Street.

Of course, community concerns regarding aircraft noise are not limited to persons living within the 65 CNEL or 70 CNEL contours. Residents in the area easterly of the airport are concerned that the extension of the runway will result in the noise source (the engines of the faster business jets) operating in an area closer to their neighborhood, even if the safety issue is addressed by restricting the runway extension area to westbound departures.

#### **COMPATIBILITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS:**

The 2005 Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan noise contour maps do not depict any 70 CNEL contour; however, ALUC staff has checked with Mead & Hunt (Ken Brody),



who determined that the omission of the 70 CNEL contour on the Ultimate Noise Impacts exhibit was erroneous. Exhibit C3 in Appendix C of the proposed Master Plan depicts a 70 CNEL contour extending beyond airport grounds. The properties within or partially within the 70 CNEL contour are all within Compatibility Zone B1, and the properties within or partially within the 65 CNEL contour are within Compatibility Zones B1 and C, so amendments to the Land Use Compatibility Zones Map would not be required to address this situation. Furthermore, based on the information provided by Mead & Hunt, ALUC staff can advise that the 70 CNEL contour depicted on Exhibit C3 of the Master Plan does not encompass more parcels than the 70 CNEL contour that should have been depicted on the Compatibility Plan Ultimate Noise Impacts exhibit.

#### **AIRCRAFT TYPE DISTRIBUTION:**

The Master Plan noise study is based on a different fleet mix (share of operations) than the Compatibility Plan. The Compatibility Plan noise contours assumed that the share of operations by twin-engine turboprop aircraft would increase from 2% in 2002 to 11% in 2025, and ultimately to 23%. The Compatibility Plan also forecast that the share of operations by business jets would increase from 1% in 2002 to 17% in 2025, and ultimately to 20%. The share of operations by helicopters was forecast to decrease from 3% in 2002 to 2% in 2025, but ultimately to increase to 11%. The share of operations by single-engine and twin-engine piston aircraft was forecast to decrease from 94% in 2002 to 70% in 2025, and ultimately to 46%.

In contrast, the Master Plan noise study is based on the following shares of operations: single-engine aircraft, 71%; multi-engine, 10%; turboprop, 3%; business jet 3%; and helicopters, 13%. Helicopter operations are expected to account for 18,164 of the 136,800 annual operations in the year 2027, while business jets would account for 4,000 operations.

#### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:**

The Master Plan proposes that the City undertake the following actions over the course of the next twenty years:

Years 1-5:

- Preparation of environmental documentation for planned north side development
- Design of north side parallel taxiway
- Obtain reimbursement grant for purchase of land in Runway 9 RPZ
- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance, year 2009
- Gas pipeline relocation
- Drainage, grading, and site preparation for north side parallel taxiway/Runway 27 RSA
- Electrical vault, lighting, and signage for north side parallel taxiway
- North side ramp/public apron design – Phase 1
- Relocation of Union Pacific Railroad spur (Improvement to Runway 9 RSA)
- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance, year 2010
- Construction and pavement of north side parallel taxiway
- Drainage, grading, utilities, and site preparation for north side ramp/public apron – Phase 1
- North side ramp/public apron design – Phase 2

- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance, year 2011
- Construction and pavement of north side ramp/public apron – Phase 1
- Drainage, grading, utilities, and site preparation for north side ramp/public apron – Phase 2
- Design and construction of new access road from Central Avenue
- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance, year 2012
- Construction and pavement of north side ramp/public apron – Phase 2
- Preparation of environmental documentation for easterly runway extension
- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance, year 2013

Years 6-10

- Reconstruct Taxiway J and connectors
- Hillside Avenue Runway Protection Zone Property Acquisition
- Relocation of Hillside Avenue
- Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) Siting Study
- Building Demolition and Ramp Construction for Replacement ATCT
- Design and construction of replacement Air Traffic Control Tower
- Relocate localizer
- Construct 1,000-foot runway extension
- Extend taxiway to new easterly terminus of Runway 27
- Installation of EMAS westerly of westerly terminus of Runway 9
- Redevelopment Ramp (T-Hangar area) – Phase 1
- Airport Master Plan Update
- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance.

Years 11-20

- Terminal area apron reconstruction
- Update Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study
- Runway 16 Runway Protection Zone property acquisition
- Redevelopment Ramp (FBO Area) – Phase 2
- Widen Runway 16-34 to 60 feet
- Annual pavement preservation and maintenance.

**FAA REVIEW OF AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN:**

FAA review of the proposed Airport Layout Plan has not yet occurred.

**FINDING:**

1. The forecasts and development identified in the Airport Master Plan would not result in greater noise, overflight, and safety impacts or height restrictions on surrounding land uses than are assumed in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

**CONDITION:**

1. The City of Riverside shall submit the Notice of Preparation for the environmental analysis of the runway extension to the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission and make a presentation at a regular Commission meeting within one month following the issuance of said Notice of Preparation. In the event that the Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan has not already been amended to reflect the adoption of this Master Plan prior to the issuance of said Notice of Preparation, the City of Riverside shall work cooperatively with the Airport Land Use Commission in order to provide for an environmental analysis that addresses both the runway extension and the amendment to the Compatibility Plan.

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COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE  
AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT

**AGENDA ITEM:** 2.2

**HEARING DATE:** August 13, 2009

**CASE NUMBER:** ZAP1036BD09 – Riverside County Sheriff’s  
Department (Representative: Lieutenant Dan  
Ybarra)

**APPROVING JURISDICTION:** City of Palm Desert

**JURISDICTION CASE NO.:** CUP 08-10 (Conditional Use Permit)

**MAJOR ISSUES:** The applicant was not able to submit the noise study for the proposed project until July 31, 2009. Staff will need additional time to review the document.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends a CONTINUANCE to September 10, 2009, in order to allow time to review the noise study evaluating existing ambient noise levels and the increase in noise levels that would result from the operation of the helipad.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The project is the construction and operation of a new Sheriff station of approximately 85,496 square feet with a 20 foot rooftop helipad, parking for 470 vehicles, a fleet fueling station, wash bay for oversized vehicles and bioswales for pollution management. The helipad would be used intermittently for emergency purposes.

**PROJECT LOCATION:**

The project is located southerly of Gerald Ford Drive, northerly of Frank Sinatra Drive, easterly of Shadow Ridge Road, and westerly of Portola Avenue, approximately 31,692 feet northwesterly of the northwesterly end of Runway 10-28 at Bermuda Dunes Airport. The property is not located within an Airport Influence Area.

**LAND USE PLAN:** None Applicable

## **INTRODUCTION**

As stated in Section 1.51 of the Countywide Policies of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, any “new airport or heliport whether for public use or private use” requires referral to the Airport Land Use Commission “if the facility requires a state airport permit.”

The Commission will need to focus on the noise, safety, airspace protection, and overflight impacts upon surrounding land uses. Other impacts such as, but not limited to, air quality and vehicle traffic are not within the scope of the Commission’s review.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Land Use/Intensity: The applicant proposes to construct and operate a new Sheriff station of approximately 85,496 square feet with a 20 foot rooftop helipad, parking for 470 vehicles, a fleet fueling station, wash bay for oversized vehicles and bioswales for pollution management. The helicopter takeoff and landing facility would be used intermittently for emergency purposes.

The project location is not located within an Airport Influence Area (AIA). The site is approximately six miles northwesterly of the northwesterly end of Runway 10-28 at Bermuda Dunes Airport and approximately 10 miles southeasterly of the Palm Springs International Airport. The project is within the City of Palm Desert’s jurisdiction and has been reviewed by the city’s Planning Department. On June 26, 2008, the City Council approved the project, which has since moved into the construction phase according to a document published on the City’s website in February 2009.

The helipad will require a State Special-Use Heliport Permit. The California Code of Regulations defines Special use as an “airport (heliport) not open to the general public, access to which is controlled by the owner in support of commercial activities, public service operations, and/or personal use” under Title 21, Section 3527. Action by the Airport Land Use Commission is required in order for the applicant to complete the State permit application.

Notification was provided to only three surrounding properties encompassed in the minimum 300 foot radius, as the parcel is mostly surrounded by vastly undeveloped land. ALUC staff also contacted Tony Bagato, City Principal Planner, who was in charge of the case, and he confirmed that the City also used a 300 foot radius in the notification to surrounding properties. Staff advised the applicant that residents located to the south, who would be directly affected by the proposed approach zone, would not be notified, as a result of the use of a minimum radius. The applicant representative stated that he was aware of this but was content with what had been provided to staff.

Part 77: The project has been reviewed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and was determined acceptable from an airspace utilization standpoint in a letter dated February 19, 2009.

The proposed heliport approach surface has slope of 8 to 1 and a transitional surface approach surface at a slope of 2 to 1, as the heliport is civil heliport, and complies with Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77.

Noise: On July 31, 2009, a noise study was submitted to ALUC staff. A noise study is a requirement for all new airports or heliports (per Section 5.2(b) of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Countywide Policies). Staff recommends this case be continued to the September 10, 2009 ALUC hearing in order to review the document and its findings.

**CONDITIONS:**

1. The following uses shall be prohibited:
  - (a) Any use which would direct a steady light or flashing light of red, white, green, or amber colors associated with airport operations toward an aircraft engaged in an initial straight climb following takeoff or toward an aircraft engaged in a straight final approach toward a landing at an airport, other than an FAA-approved navigational signal light or visual approach slope indicator.
  - (b) Any use which would cause sunlight to be reflected towards an aircraft engaged in an initial straight climb following takeoff or towards an aircraft engaged in a straight final approach towards a landing at an airport.
  - (c) Any use which would generate smoke or water vapor or which would attract large concentrations of birds, or which may otherwise affect safe air navigation within the area. (Such uses include landscaping utilizing water features, aquaculture, livestock operations, production of cereal grains, sunflower, and row crops, artificial marshes, wastewater management facilities, composting operations, trash transfer stations that are open on one or more sides, recycling centers containing putrescible wastes, construction and demolition debris facilities, fly ash disposal, incinerators, and landfills.)
  - (d) Any use which would generate electrical interference that may be detrimental to the operation of aircraft and/or aircraft instrumentation.
2. Any outdoor lighting that is installed shall be hooded or shielded so as to prevent either the spillage of lumens or reflection into the sky, and shall comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, if applicable.
3. The applicant shall adhere to the following conditions pursuant to the FAA letter dated February 19, 2009:

- (a) The landing area is operated for private-use only.
  - (b) Operations are to be conducted by this facility only during Visual Flight Rule (VFR) conditions, and in accordance with restrictions/communications requirements of the overlaying class of airspace.
  - (c) Routes of ingress/egress are established in accordance with Flight Standards recommendations and maintained obstructions-free, so that helicopter operations do not conflict with the fixed-wing operations landing or departing, or in the VFR traffic patterns, at the adjacent public-use landing areas of Bermuda Dunes Airport and Palm Springs International Airport.
  - (d) The following comments/conditions were received from CalTrans:
    - 1. The initial copy of working drawings received by their office for the proposed facility need to be clarified. The plans show that the actual Final Approach and Takeoff Area (FATO) is 65 feet by 65 feet, vice the 54 feet square as indicated on the submitted FAA form 7480-1 application. The larger FATO is consistent with the 43 foot overall length of the heliport's design helicopter. They request that the updated information from these drawings be made a part of the conditions under which approval is given for this airspace study. Therefore, it is noted the FATO be constructed at the 65 foot square design, which meets the minimum design standards for State approval.
  - (e) If operations are to be conducted between sunset and sunrise, we recommend that landing area lighting be installed in accordance with FAA Advisory Circular 150/5390-2B, Heliport Design.
  - (f) Heliport is designed and constructed in accordance with FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5390-2B, Heliport Design.
  - (g) Coordinate with the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), Aeronautics Division to obtain the necessary application and approval before proceeding with the establishment of the subject landing facility. A copy of their correspondence is enclosed which lists all necessary documentation needed to get permitted by the State.
- 4. No operations (takeoffs or landings) shall be conducted until the applicant obtains a State Special-Use Heliport Permit.
  - 5. Any new plans for structures or buildings within the edge of the final approach and takeoff area shall be required to be submitted to ALUC for review.

6. The applicant shall mark all wires and other objects within a buffer zone below the standard 8:1 approach/departure surface slope of helicopter facilities.

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# RIVERSIDE COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION

## STAFF REPORT

### ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- 4.1** Director's Approvals. As authorized pursuant to Section 1.5.2(d) of the 2004 Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, ALUC Director Ed Cooper has approved two non-legislative cases determined to be consistent with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. Staff is attaching copies, for your Commission's information.
- 4.2** Report back from staff regarding the French Valley Energy Plant (ZAP1027FV08). During the "Oral Communication on Any Matter Not on the Agenda" section of the agenda, three persons addressed the Commission indicating their opposition to the proposed project and requesting that the Commission reconsider the finding of consistency issued for this project in July of 2008. One of the speakers, Mr. Troy Childs of Frenchvalleyconcernedcitizens.com, provided an extensive packet of information in support of his request that the Commission reverse or otherwise reconsider its decision of July, 2008. The Commission asked staff to review the issue as to whether there were any errors or omissions in the application that would warrant the Commission taking further action and to report back to the Commission in August.

Staff has reviewed the information provided to the Commission at its past July meeting as well as copies of California Energy Commission records regarding the Eastshore Energy Center, a larger (14-stack) plant that had been proposed for a location near Hayward Airport in Alameda County (provided by the courtesy of the California Pilots Association) and an FAA study of the effects of thermal plumes on air navigation.

The California Energy Commission records and FAA study indicate that there is "cause for pause" in reviewing proposals for power plants within Airport Influence Areas; however, as is often the case, the results are subject to differing interpretations, depending on the conclusions that the observer wishes to advance. The FAA study, for example, found that no aircraft accidents had been attributed to thermal plumes from industry or power plants, and, therefore, deemed the risk level to be "acceptable without restriction, limitation, or further mitigation." However, the same study recommended as a further precaution that pilots avoid overflight of facilities producing such plumes at elevations less than 1,000 feet above the tops of the stacks.

At this time, staff does not have sufficient evidence to recommend further action regarding the Commission's finding of consistency as to this project.

In addition to correspondence from the applicant team in support of the consistency determination and correspondence from Troy Childs in support of reconsidering that decision and scheduling a new public hearing, staff has received 45 e-mails from members of the public during the period May 18-August 4 (at 5:45 PM) expressing opposition to the proposed power plant. (“-y” indicates that writer identified self as a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student.) These e-mails are from the following:

May and June

Harry and Marianne Batista  
Sandra Turner  
Emma Stevens (-y)  
Alexandria Paget (-y)  
Kennedy Fairman (-y)  
Veronica Gonzalez (-y)  
Alexis Guardiola (-y)  
Nicholas Hite (-y)  
Ahmad Fayezi Baiyasi (-y)  
Kelsea Merchant (-y)  
Kalyn Wilson (-y)  
Calvin Reboya (-y)  
Priscilla Ruiz (-y)  
Jeff Brown (-y)  
Alex and Lisa Lizola  
Emmy Boorkman (-y)  
Jimmy Williams (-y)  
Kolby Wickman (-y)  
Yvette Martinez (-y)  
Imran Habib (-y)  
Marcus Pripps (-y)  
Malcolm and Acela Johnson (-y)  
Sergio Ruiz (-y)  
Jessika Garcia (-y)  
Monica Nevitt

July and August

Ian Phillips  
Michele Hines  
Clinton Faltermayer  
Janice Neer  
Sarah and Andrew Baker  
JC Rep [gregschacher]  
Appraisal Connection [jcvSOR]  
Vanessa R. Fenske  
Steve and Barbara Brincat  
Anissa Vincent  
Shannon Hobbs  
Lionel Hines  
Jin Cho  
Alissa Barrera  
Sheyanne Marsh