

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS – M.S.#40

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November 19, 2008

RIVERSIDE COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Ms. Cathy Bechtel
Riverside County Transportation Commission
4080 Lemon Street, Third Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Dear Ms. Bechtel:

Riverside County Transportation Commission's Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Mid County Parkway; SCH# 2004111103

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Division of Aeronautics (Division), reviewed the above-referenced document with respect to airport-related noise and safety impacts and regional aviation land use planning issues pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Division has technical expertise in the areas of airport operations safety, noise and airport land use compatibility. We are a funding agency for airport projects and we have permit authority for public-use and special-use airports and heliports.

Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Caltrans are proposing to construct the Mid County Parkway (MCP) to improve west-east transportation in western Riverside County between Interstate 15 and State Route 79. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Report, a portion of the project site is located in the vicinity of March Air Reserve Base (ARB).

The proposal must not result in hazards to flight, such as:

- Obstructions to the navigable airspace (i.e. Federal Aviation Regulations [FAR] Part 77 defined primary, approach and transitional surfaces) required for flight to, from, and around an airport
- Visual hazards associated with distracting lights, glare, and sources of smoke or dust from construction activities
- Electronic hazards that may interfere with aircraft instruments or radio communication

State Public Utilities Code Section 21659 prohibits structural hazards near airports. The proposal may require submission of a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460-1) to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in accordance FAR Part 77 "Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace." Form 7460-1 is available on-line at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/portal.jsp> and should be submitted electronically to the FAA as soon as possible.

The Caltrans Highway Design Manual, Topic 207 - Airway-Highway Clearances, provides guidance for objects such as overhead signs, light standards, construction equipment, moving vehicles and other structural issues associated with highway and over-crossing structures.

Ms. Cathy Bechtel
November 19, 2008
Page 2

The location and type of landscaping trees is also a potentially significant concern. Trees should be selected carefully so they do not become a hazard to aircraft around the airport. Selection of a species of tree that will not become a penetration to the FAR Part 77 imaginary surfaces is strongly recommended.

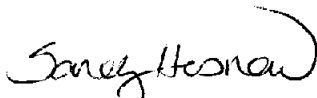
The proposal should be submitted to the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for a consistency determination. The proposal should also be coordinated with March ARB and March JPA to ensure that the proposal will be compatible with future as well as existing airport operations.

The protection of airports from incompatible land use encroachment is vital to California's economic future. March ARB is an economic asset that should be protected through effective airport land use compatibility planning and awareness. Although the need for compatible and safe land uses near airports is both a local and State issue, airport staff, airport land use commissions and airport land use compatibility plans are key to protecting an airport and the people residing and working in the vicinity of an airport. Consideration given to the issue of compatible land uses in the vicinity of an airport should help to relieve future conflicts between airports and their neighbors.

These comments reflect the areas of concern to the Division with respect to airport-related noise and safety impacts and regional airport land use planning issues. We advise you to contact our Caltrans District 8 office concerning surface transportation issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this proposal. If you have any questions, please call me at (916) 654-5314.

Sincerely,



SANDY HESNARD
Aviation Environmental Specialist

c: State Clearinghouse, March ARB, March JPA, Riverside County ALUC