



City of Santa Barbara
Airport Department

DATE: May 20, 2015
TO: Airport Commission
FROM: Hazel Johns, Airport Director
SUBJECT: Master Plan Update: Traffic Study

RECOMMENDATION:

That Airport Commission receive a presentation and comment on the status of the Draft Airport Master Plan with respect to long-term traffic analysis.

DISCUSSION:

Environmental Review

The Draft Santa Barbara Airport Master Plan (Master Plan) is proposed to provide guidance for the airport's overall development for the next 15-20 years. This development would include redevelopment of the north side of the airfield to consolidate general aviation operations.

The Draft Master Plan was released for public review and comment on June 19, 2014. The public were invited to comment on the plan and to comment on the scope of the proposed Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Comments generally pertained to water quality and biological resources.

Methodology

The Airport is in a unique setting; while it is in the City of Santa Barbara, the traffic demand it generates occurs largely in the City of Goleta. Recognizing this, the City of Santa Barbara Traffic Management Strategy applies a separate threshold for defining a significant traffic impact for the Airport:

A significant project-specific traffic impact would result of a project's net peak-hour traffic generation would increase the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio at an intersection to .77 or greater, or would increase the V/C ratio by .01 or more when an intersection is already operating at .77 or greater V/C ratio during peak hours.

The Airport also reviews traffic impacts using the *County of Santa Barbara Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual* as it was adopted by the City of Goleta for the purposes of environmental review in the City of Goleta. This increases the complexity of completing a traffic study, but it allows interested parties to compare traffic generation from projects in Goleta and at the Airport.

Traffic Study

A draft traffic study was prepared in September 2014. While the traffic study found that four Goleta intersections would exceed this threshold in the long-term (2032), it also found that these intersections will exceed these thresholds without implementation of the Airport Master Plan. Specifically the following intersections are anticipated to experience moderate-to-severe congestion in 2032:

- Los Carneros Road & US 101 Southbound Ramps
- Fairview Avenue & Calle Real
- US 101 Northbound Ramps & Fairview Avenue
- Fairview Avenue & US 101 Southbound Ramps

Goleta Review

Per the City Traffic Management Strategy, the traffic study was shared with City of Goleta staff for their review and comment. Goleta staff provided a comment letter voicing concerns about the timing of traffic counts and the traffic model used for baseline assumptions. Specifically traffic counts conducted in July 2014 occurred outside of the UC Santa Barbara academic calendar and may not reflect the traffic condition at other times of year. Goleta staff also made available a 2015 update of the Goleta Traffic Model and requested that it be used instead of the 2006 model.

Revised counts were completed in April 2015 and a revised traffic model run was completed in May. Airport staff anticipates a revised traffic study to be complete in June 2015.

Next Steps

With the additional time spent on revising the traffic study, the Airport Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report is expected to be available for public review and comment in July 2015. Following the completion of the public review process, Staff will complete response to comments, make revisions to the document, and prepare it for final review and approval by Planning Commission and City Council. Upon completion of environmental review, the Airport Master Plan will be submitted to City Council for adoption in Fall 2015.