



**City of Santa Barbara**  
Airport Department

**DATE:** September 16, 2015  
**TO:** Airport Commission  
**FROM:** Hazel Johns, Airport Director  
**SUBJECT:** Airport Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Airport Commission hold a public hearing to take public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Santa Barbara Airport Master Plan

No action will be taken at this hearing on the environmental review or the Draft Master Plan.

**DISCUSSION:**

Background

The Federal Aviation Administration requires that airports maintain a master plan, which is generally updated every five to ten years and provide a framework of planned development improvements to meet aviation demand. Facility needs for the airfield, general aviation, cargo, and the airline terminal including vehicle parking, and aircraft parking are primary considerations when preparing development alternatives.

The Aviation Facilities Plan has guided development at the Santa Barbara Airport for the past 10 years. With the completion of the Airfield Safety Projects, Tidal Circulation Project, and the Airline Terminal Expansion, the Aviation Facilities Plan's vision has been built-out.

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The current Airport Master Plan effort began in October 2011 with the selection of a Master Plan Advisory Committee comprised of airport users, tenants, neighbors, government agencies, and interested parties. This Advisory Committee met six times to review and discuss working papers prepared by the Airport Department's consultant firm, Coffman Associates. The Airport held four public information workshops to allow other interested parties to review, comment, and ask questions about the proposed Airport Master Plan.

The Draft Airport Master Plan was completed in February 2014 and environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was initiated with an Initial Study and Environmental Scoping hearing in July 2014. Following a year of analysis and agency

consultation, the Draft Environmental Impact Report was made available for public review and comment on August 31, 2015.

### Notice of Availability/Notice of Environmental Hearings

The Notice of Availability/Notice of Environmental Hearings is attached as Exhibit A. Public notice was provided through a newspaper advertisement, mailed notice, and electronic notice via e-mail, social media, and [www.FlySBA.com](http://www.FlySBA.com). In addition to this hearing, a second environmental hearing will take place before the Planning Commission at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2015 in City Council Chambers at City Hall – 735 Anacapa Street.

The notice began a 45-day public comment period on the Draft EIR. Comments on the Draft EIR are requested to be received no later than Friday, October 16, 2015, at 4:30 p.m. at the City of Santa Barbara Planning Division, 630 Garden Street.

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Office Location:	630 Garden Street
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The Draft Master Plan (Exhibit B) and EIR (Exhibit C) are available at [SBA.airportstudy.com](http://SBA.airportstudy.com), the Planning Division office (630 Garden Street), the Airport Administration Building (601 Norman Firestone Road), the Central Library (40 E Anapamu Street), and the Goleta Branch Library (500 North Fairview Avenue).

### Project Description

The Santa Barbara Airport Master Plan (Master Plan) provides guidance for the Airport's overall development for the next 15-20 years, (i.e., 2015 to 2032). This development will be discussed by subarea within the Airport in subsequent subsections of this Project Description. The Master Plan relies on Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved forecasts of aviation activity at the Airport and provides development scenarios for the short term (2017), intermediate term (2022) and long term (2032). These development scenarios are not only reflective of the level of activity forecast to occur at the Airport, but are dependent on federal funding cycles and the availability of grant money for aviation projects.

The development proposed in the Master Plan (Exhibit A) consists of:

- Airfield Recommendations: Extension of Taxiway H to the west, parallel to the main instrument runway, restriping of existing paved areas, paving light lanes along taxiway edges, and relocating entrances and exits from the taxiway system to comply with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recommendations.
- North Landside Recommendations: Consolidation of general aviation operations to facilitate two Fixed Base Operator (FBO) lease areas on the northeast portion of the airfield to provide tenant and visiting private aircraft services and facilities, and support facility changes including the relocation of the Airport Maintenance Yard.
- Terminal Area Recommendations: Construction of a new Long Term Parking Lot south of the Airline Terminal to accommodate 1,315 new or relocated parking spaces,

expansion of the Airline Terminal, and relocation of the southside FBO.

The project description is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR.

### Alternatives Analysis

The primary objective of the Master Plan is to provide guidance for future development which will satisfy aviation demand at the Airport while protecting the environment. CEQA requires that EIRs consider feasible project alternatives, including the “no project” alternative. EIRs must also identify the environmentally superior alternative. These alternatives are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR.

#### *“No Project” Alternative*

This alternative considers keeping the Airport in its present condition. The Airport would not be able to meet forecasted demand, inhibiting contribution to economic growth of the region, such as the investment of private businesses in Airport facilities. The No Project Alternative would also result in significant environmental impacts to cultural resources and to hydrology as structures threatened by flooding would remain in hazardous locations.

#### *Environmentally Superior Alternative*

The Environmentally Superior Alternative is similar to the proposed Master Plan except that it would not construct the Taxiway H extension. This alternative avoids biological, hydrological, and land use impacts and reduces construction-related traffic impacts compared to the Master Plan project description. However, not all of the safety goals of the Master Plan are implemented, specifically the elimination of Taxiway Hot Spot #1 (i.e., where aircraft cross the main instrument runway when taxiing to/from the north side of the airfield). The lack of a full-length parallel taxiway north of the main instrument runway would continue to constrain safety and efficiency of aircraft movement.

#### *Alternatives Considered, but Dismissed*

Alternatives considered but eliminated include the demolition of Hangars 248, 249, 267, 309, and 317, which were deemed historically significant, and the construction of improved security fencing along Mesa Road where biological considerations were found to be significant.

### Impact Analysis

The Draft EIR evaluates the environmental effects that may result from development proposed in the Draft Master Plan over the next 10-20 years. The Draft EIR categorized environmental effects into four impact significance levels:

- Class I, Significant Environmental Impact: A significant impact to the environment that remains significant even after mitigation measures are applied;
- Class II, Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation: A potentially significant impact that can be avoided or reduced to an less than significant level with mitigation;
- Class III, Less than Significant Impact; and
- Class IV, Beneficial Impact.

The Draft EIR identified one Class I impact and 15 Class II impacts with 14 mitigation measures. Each of these is summarized below. The complete analysis can be found in Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR.

#### *Air Quality - Potentially Significant Impact*

Impact AQ-2: Short term (Demolition or Construction Impact). Construction would result in emissions of pollutants due to grading, fumes, and vehicle exhaust. Diesel- and gasoline-powered construction equipment emits particulate matter and other pollutants. Emissions exceeding 25 tons of any pollutant except carbon monoxide (CO) in a 12-month period constitutes a significant impact under the City's CEQA thresholds.

This impact is less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

AQ/mm-1: All construction/demolition projects shall be required to estimate the project's combined emissions from construction equipment to ensure the project would not exceed 25 tons of any pollutant except carbon monoxide (CO) in a 12-month period. Standard equipment exhaust mitigation measures recommended by the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) shall be used as appropriate.

#### *Biological Resources - Potentially Significant Impacts*

Impact BIO-1: Loss of jurisdictional wetlands and indirect impact to Goleta Slough. The proposed extension of Taxiway H would impact approximately 12.4 acres (not including 1.14 acres of existing pavement). While heavily managed to accommodate airport operations, portions of this area may seasonally function as wetlands. Therefore the Taxiway project could result in the removal of wetlands in the Goleta Slough.

Impact BIO-2: Cumulative impact to Goleta Slough. Other projects proposed in the Master Plan could contribute to a cumulative loss of wetland habitat. Though projects have been sited to avoid impacts to the Goleta Slough, some projects could encroach upon habitat buffer areas.

These impacts are less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

BIO/mm-1: A Programmatic Wetland Restoration Plan (PWRP) is intended to provide a framework for future project-specific Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plans (NMMPs) to provide impacts to wetland habitat and established buffers. The PWRP shall be consistent with Airport operation and management policies including the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan and federal, state, and local biological resource protections. Restoration under the PWRP would occur on Airport property and at a minimum 2:1 (impact to restoration) ratio.

BIO/mm-2: All applicable policies in the Local Coastal Plan shall be complied with, including maintaining a 100 foot natural-condition buffer around all wetlands and creeks.

#### *Cultural Resources - Potentially Significant Impacts*

Impact CR-1: Long-term relocation of Bldgs. 248 & 249 out of floodway. The General Western Aero Hangars (Buildings 248 and 249) appear to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, and listing as a Santa Barbara City Landmark. Leaving these hangars in the San Pedro Creek floodway would lead to neglect of property that causes deterioration. Relocating the hangars would result in the

removal of property from their historic location; both could result in significant impacts to this historic resource.

Impact CR-3: Future project could be located within a moderate sensitivity zone for cultural resources. The City has adopted sensitivity zones based on information available about archaeological resources that may be present at the Airport. While development generally avoids these sensitivity zones, some development is proposed in an area identified as "Moderate" in the Master Environmental Assessment.

These impacts are less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

CR/mm-1: The Airport will mothball and stabilize the General Western Aero Hangars and prepare a management plan to include nomination for the National Register of Historic Places and relocate the hangars out of the floodway following Secretary of Interior standards for restoration.

CR/mm-2: Evaluate projects based on the screening process established in the City's Master Archaeological Resources Assessment (MARA). Consult with Native Americans through the Native American Heritage Commission on projects that may affect archaeological resources.

CR/mm-3: Apply standard condition of approval regarding unanticipated archaeological resources.

#### *Geology, Soils, and Hazardous Materials - Potentially Significant Impacts*

Impact G/HAZ-1: Risks due to seismic activity. The Airport is located in a seismically-active area. Future development could be adversely affected by seismic activity.

Impact G/HAZ-2: Risks due to adverse soil conditions. There are potentially compressible soils associated with the Goleta Slough at the Airport. There is also potential for expansive soils. Future development could be adversely affected by soil conditions.

Impact G/HAZ-4: Risks involving exposure to soil or groundwater contamination. Extensive remediation has been completed at the Airport and there are no known soil or groundwater contamination sites at the Airport. However there still remains the possibility of exposure of tenants, occupants, or construction workers to unremediated contaminated soils or groundwater as a result of Master Plan implementation.

These impacts are less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

G/HAZ/mm-1: Construction of load-bearing structures shall be subject to recommendations from geotechnical investigations specific to the project. Minor projects (e.g. fences and storage tanks) would not be subject to this measure.

G/HAZ/mm-2: A Construction Contingency Plan shall be developed to address methods of control for potential migration of any discovered contamination as well as on-site safety practices including soils monitoring, fencing, and coordination with County Environmental Health Services. This plan will be incorporated into Erosion and Polluted Runoff Control Plans.

G/HAZ/mm-3: If contamination is discovered, a project-specific remediation plan shall be prepared and implemented.

### *Water Quality and Hydrology - Potentially Significant Impact*

Impact HYD-2: Potential flooding hazards associated with sea level rise. New development is proposed to be constructed outside of the floodway and several structures in the floodway are proposed for demolition or relocation. However the Airport will experience increased flooding attributable to climate change and sea level rise over the useful life of projects proposed in the Airport Master Plan.

This impact is less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

HYD/mm-1: Project-specific tidal inundation and flooding analyses shall consider projected future changes from sea level rise, relying on the best available science to ensure, to the maximum extent feasible, that new development is located outside of areas subject to flooding during the anticipated life of the project (generally 75 years).

HYD/mm-2: The Airport shall raise new or reconstructed buildings above base flood elevations as well as apply thicker pavement lifts during regular intervals on airport movement area (runways/taxiways/apron) to reduce the potential for flooding.

### *Land Use and Planning - Potentially Significant Impact*

Impact LU-3: Compatibility with the Airport's Local Coastal Plan. While much of the Master Plan would not conflict with policies identified in the Local Coastal Plan (LCP) the Taxiway H project would result in inconsistencies with policies related to the protection of resources in the Goleta Slough.

Impact LU-4: Consistency with the City's General Plan and the Goleta Slough Reserve Zone (G-S-R). While much of the Master Plan would not conflict with policies identified in the General Plan or Title 29 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code, the Taxiway H project would result in inconsistencies with policies related to the Goleta Slough Reserve Zone.

These impacts are less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

LU/mm-1: A detailed project-specific impact analysis and mitigation program for the Taxiway H extension project and associated analysis of the project's consistency with the G-S-R zone and relevant coastal policies shall be conducted during the permit review process.

LU/mm-2: A consistency review of the Taxiway H extension project with the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan (2015) shall be conducted during the permit review process.

### *Public Services and Public Utilities - Potentially Significant Impact*

Impact SW-2: Short term (Demolition and/or Construction) Impact. Given the amount of demolition and construction proposed in the Master Plan, including the demolition of several large buildings, it is possible that future projects could generate more than 350 tons of construction or demolition debris.

This impact is less than significant with the following mitigation incorporated.

SW/mm-1: Master Plan projects must reduce, reuse, and recycle demolition and construction waste consistent with State and City diversion goals.

*Transportation and Circulation - Significant Impact*

Impact T-3: Cumulative project impacts to traffic and circulation in the long term (South Fairview Avenue/Hollister Avenue). Implementation of the Master Plan would result in one intersection (South Fairview Avenue/Calle Real) functioning at level of service (LOS) E during the PM peak hour and three intersections (South Fairview Avenue/US 101 Southbound Ramps, South Fairview Avenue/Hollister Avenue, and Kellogg Avenue/Hollister Avenue) functioning at LOS D during the PM peak hour. Master Plan implementation would result in no additional trips through South Fairview Avenue/Calle Real but an additional 24 PM peak hour trips through South Fairview Avenue/US 101 Southbound Ramps, 36 PM peak hour trips through South Fairview Avenue/Hollister Avenue, and 15 PM peak hour trips through Kellogg Avenue/Hollister Avenue. These trip contributions exceed significance thresholds for cumulative traffic impacts as established by the City of Goleta and the City of Santa Barbara.

No feasible mitigation measure has been identified. If the City of Goleta implements the La Patera Lane overpass identified in the Goleta General Plan, the Airport will contribute a fair-share contribution to construction.

Environmental Review Process – Next Steps

Following the 45-day Draft EIR public review period, Staff will prepare responses to comments received, refine the EIR analysis as necessary, and proceed with preparation of a Final EIR. The Final EIR, including written responses to public comments, will be submitted to City Council for certification and consideration prior to taking action on the Santa Barbara Airport Master Plan.

Exhibits:

- A. Notice of Availability/Notice of Environmental Hearings for the Santa Barbara Airport Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report
- B. Santa Barbara Airport Master Plan ([sba.airportstudy.com/master-plan/](http://sba.airportstudy.com/master-plan/))
- C. Draft Environmental Impact Report ([www.santabarbaraca.gov/eir](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/eir))