



**City of Santa Barbara**  
Airport Department

**DATE:** October 21, 2015

**TO:** Airport Commission

**FROM:** Hazel Johns, Airport Director

**SUBJECT:** Runway Protection Zone Impact Analysis for the Proposed James Fowler Road Extension

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Airport Commission receive a presentation and comment on a Memorandum of Understanding between the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta to conduct a Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) Impact Analysis for the proposed James Fowler Road extension.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City of Goleta proposes to construct a roundabout at the intersection of James Fowler Road, Fairview Avenue, and Placencia Street and to extend James Fowler Road through Santa Barbara Airport property to the southern end of Kellogg Avenue. The Airport property is designated as Runway Protection Zone (RPZ), the most important safety area under the approach to a runway. The purpose of the RPZ is to protect lives and property on the ground in the area where off-airfield accidents are most likely to occur.

Airport staff believes this project is incompatible with the use of the RPZ and the policies that govern it. The purpose of the proposed RPZ Impact Analysis is to demonstrate what safety risk the project would present in order to inform future decisions about the project.

Background

The City of Santa Barbara previously supported the proposed use of Airport property to construct an extension of James Fowler Road to a new intersection on State Route 217 as this would improve Airline Terminal access and benefit the Old Town Goleta. In 2003 opposition from UC Santa Barbara led to the removal of the intersection on State Route 217 in the project description.

In 2011 a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) showed the proposed alignment of the roadway avoiding the Central Portion of the RPZ. However, the Goleta City Council certified the EIR adopting one of the alternatives that avoided condemnation of the South

Kellogg Recycling Facility in Goleta. This alternative required more Airport property, including property in the Central Portion of the RPZ.

In 2012 the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) revised the Airport Design Advisory Circular (AC 150/5300-13A) to define more stringently the land uses that should be avoided in RPZs. The FAA is not a land use authority and it does not approve or deny any development. However it does require consultation for land uses proposed in the RPZ, including roadways.

In the interest of continuing support of the City of Goleta's project, the Airport submitted the roadway design for FAA review in August 2013. In April 2014 the FAA responded that neither roadway configuration proposed met RPZ standards.

### Road Extension Purpose

The availability of alternate routing would provide some traffic circulation improvements. However a recent traffic study demonstrated that no more than 5% of airport-bound traffic would use either Ekwil or Fowler extensions.

While the project would improve travel between the Airline Terminal and Old Town Goleta, the principal benefit of the project is to increase development potential in the southern portion of Old Town Goleta. This area includes property in the RPZ that is not under City ownership and also includes private property below the main instrument runway approach.

### Memorandum of Understanding for Risk Analysis

The purpose of the RPZ is to protect lives and property on the ground in the area nearest a runway end where accidents are most likely to occur. According to CalTrans Aeronautics Division, 60% of departure accidents and 40% of arrival accidents occur within 2000 feet of the edge of a runway.

Generally the FAA seeks to put RPZ land in Airport control as a resolution of these safety risks. An airport proposing to introduce new land uses in an RPZ of an existing runway is very rare. Additionally the need to rezone the proposed road site from Airport Approach and Operation Zone (A-A-O) to a zone that permits public roads would conflict with FAA Order 5190.6B and Grant Assurance 21 which compels the City to take all appropriate actions to zone and control compatible land use.

Staff does not support the James Fowler Road Extension as currently proposed by the City of Goleta. Exposing new populations to safety risk, however small, should be avoided where feasible. The City of Goleta requested that the Airport conduct an RPZ Impact Assessment at Goleta's expense so that this risk can be quantified and safety enhancements can be explored. A Memorandum of Understanding was created between the two cities to establish the framework for this assessment.