

May 19, 2017

By FedEx and Electronic Mail

Mr. Ted Winterer
Mayor
City of Santa Monica
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, CA 90401
ted.winterer@smgov.net

RE: Santa Monica Airport

Dear Mayor Winterer:

I write on behalf of the National Business Aviation Association (“NBAA”). NBAA represents over 11,000 member companies which own and operate over 11,000 general aviation aircraft to facilitate the conduct of their businesses or which are otherwise involved with business aviation. NBAA’s members include numerous tenants and users of the Santa Monica Municipal Airport (“SMO” or “Airport”), who along with NBAA itself continue to be strongly interested in the Airport’s future accessibility and viability.

We understand that at its May 23, 2017 meeting the City Council will consider proposals for reducing the length of the runway at SMO, based upon a minimalistic consultant study first made public on April 25, 2017 and a related report by the Director of Public Works dated April 24, 2017, along with the subsequent recommendations made by the Airport Commission at its May 2, 2017 meeting.

The study, report, and recommendations all are premised on the validity of a January 28, 2017 settlement agreement between the City of Santa Monica and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which purported to authorize the City to reduce the length of the SMO runway to 3,500 feet. However, the FAA exceeded its authority by entering into that agreement, and as a consequence any actions taken by the City in reliance on that agreement would be impermissible. NBAA and other parties have filed a petition in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit which challenges the validity of the agreement, and on May 4, 2017 the court confirmed that the case will be heard by a panel of its judges. NBAA respectfully requests that the City Council defer any action on the SMO runway proposals until the validity of their legal foundation has been determined by the courts.

Additionally, even if the City Council proceeds to consider the runway proposals, NBAA notes that little explanation of them has been provided, which does not enable the members of the Council – or the public – to intelligently analyze their consequences. For example, the study asserts that both proposals would reduce the noise experienced by airport neighbors. However, when the City previously considered the consequences of the reduction of the runway length available at SMO (for example, in the attached report dated September 23, 1985), the City concluded that doing so not only would have no cognizable benefits, but potentially could result in increased noise. That, in turn, could require federal and state environmental studies. In this case, no study of the noise – or other – consequences of the runway proposals has been provided. Thus, legal issues aside, NBAA also respectfully suggests that the

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Council's public responsibilities require it to have acquired a far more comprehensive record before making any decision.

Sincerely,



Steven J. Brown
Chief Operating Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

- Report on Test of Displaced Threshold - 09 23 85.pdf

CC:

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