

RESOLUTION NUMBER _____ (CCS)

(City Council Series)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA FINDING THAT THE
REDUCTION OF THE OPERATIONAL LENGTH OF THE SANTA MONICA
AIRPORT'S RUNWAY IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT UNDER CEQA

WHEREAS, over the years, voluminous written and oral evidence has been presented to this City Council regarding the origins, history and ownership of the Santa Monica Municipal Airport ("Airport"), and the serious adverse environmental, health and safety harms and risks that the Airport's existing operations impose on residents of City of Santa Monica ("City") and adjacent cities, and the non-compliance of the existing airport with all safety and design provisions of federal law and regulations; and

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2017, the United District Court for the Central District of California entered an Order approving a Settlement Agreement/Consent Decree ("Consent Decree") between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the City to resolve longstanding disputes pertaining to the design and operation of the Airport; and

WHEREAS, the District Court concluded that the Consent Decree "is fair, reasonable and adequate to all concerned"; and

WHEREAS, the Consent Decree provides that, subject to City's compliance with applicable environmental requirements, the City will operate a runway of 3,500 feet in length at the Airport until December 31, 2028; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of the Consent Decree, on March 16, 2017, the City entered into a Feasibility Professional Services Agreement with AECOM Technical Services, Inc. (AECOM), which engaged AECOM to study shortening the Airport's runway to 3,500 feet, as provided for by the Consent Decree, including by studying the technical feasibility and potential environmental impacts of runway design concepts; and

WHEREAS, the City and AECOM, after discussing a range of design concepts with the FAA Airport District Office, eliminated from further study two design concepts that would shift a runway of reduced operational length west of the existing runway's center ("westerly-aligned options"), because, among other reasons, those options would provide the least reduction of noise, air quality and safety impacts, including impacts on residential areas surrounding the Airport; and

WHEREAS, the City and AECOM, with FAA input, further studied two design concepts, namely, Option A that would shift a runway of reduced operational length east of the existing runway's center ("easterly-aligned option") and Option B that would locate a runway of reduced operational length in the same place as the existing runway's center ("center-aligned option"); and

WHEREAS, the City and AECOM determined that both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options would increase compliance with federal design and safety standards, including by providing FAA-compliant Runway Safety Areas of at least 300

feet on both runway ends and ensuring the Runway Object Free Area is located entirely on airport property; and

WHEREAS, the City and AECOM determined that both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options would reduce the environmental impacts of existing Airport operations, including by reducing impacts to noise, air quality, health and safety; and

WHEREAS, on April 25, 2017, the City and AECOM held a community and stakeholder meeting including approximately 100 attendees, where the easterly-aligned and center-aligned options were presented and public comments were received; and

WHEREAS, on May 2, 2017, the City and AECOM presented the easterly-aligned and center-aligned options to the Airport Commission at a public meeting, and received comments from the Airport Commission and the public; and

WHEREAS, a study by Coffman Associates determined that reducing the runway's length to 3,500 feet as provided for by the Consent Decree would reduce use of the Airport by larger aircraft and consequently reduce the number of flights at the Airport; and

WHEREAS, a study by AECOM concluded that operations under both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options would result in a reduction of Community Noise Equivalent Level contours, meaning that noise impacts on residential areas and other aspects of the environment around the Airport would be reduced.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES, FINDS, AND DETERMINES AS FOLLOWS

SECTION 1. Both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options for reducing the runway's operational length would comply with and implement the Consent Decree, by replacing the Airport's existing 4,973-foot runway with a runway having an operational length of 3,500 feet.

SECTION 2. The Airport's existing runway does not fully comply with federal design and safety standards.

SECTION 3. Both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options would increase compliance with federal design and safety standards, including by providing FAA-compliant Runway Safety Areas of at least 300 feet on both runway ends and ensuring the Runway Object Free Area is located entirely on airport property.

SECTION 4. Reducing the operational length of the Airport's runway to 3,500 feet will reduce the adverse environmental, health and safety harms and risks that current Airport operations impose on residents of City and the adjacent cities, including by reducing jet traffic, noise impacts and air emissions.

SECTION 5. Both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options would result in a reduction of Community Noise Equivalent Level contours, meaning that noise impacts on residential areas and other aspects of the environment around the Airport would be reduced.

SECTION 6. As supported by the Coffman Associates study, due to heavier, louder jets no longer using the runway, both the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned

options would result in fewer overall exceedances of Single Even Noise Levels in residential neighborhoods.

SECTION 7. The City and AECOM properly focused on the easterly-aligned and the center-aligned options, because both of them would reduce detrimental impacts to noise exposure, air quality and safety more than the possible westerly-aligned options would.

SECTION 8. The center-aligned and easterly-aligned options would reduce the impact of aircraft exhaust and fumes on surrounding residential neighborhoods, because the changes in aircraft number, types, and approach and departure procedure would result in aircraft reaching the recommended default mixing layer of 3,000 feet sooner than under existing conditions, reducing the amount of vertically mixing pollutants on surrounding neighborhoods.

SECTION 9. Neither the easterly-aligned option nor the center-aligned option would reduce roadway capacity needed to respond to natural disasters or other events, or cause an increase in emissions from aircraft or automobiles.

SECTION 10. Neither the easterly-aligned option nor the center-aligned option would impact any historic resources.

SECTION 11. Neither the easterly-aligned option nor the center-aligned option would require the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, or otherwise detrimentally impact water quality.

SECTION 12. Neither the easterly-aligned option nor the center-aligned option would negatively impact any other environmental factor listed in Appendix G to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines; therefore, the project qualifies for consideration for categorical exemption.

SECTION 13. The proposal to shorten the Airport's runway in accordance with the easterly-aligned or the center-aligned options is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guideline section 15061(b)(3) because shortening the runway will benefit the environment and it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that shortening the runway may have a significant effect on the environment, including on traffic, air quality, greenhouse-gas emissions, safety or any other aspects of the environment.

SECTION 14. The proposal to shorten the Airport's runway in accordance with the easterly-aligned or the center-aligned options is also categorically exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guideline section 15302 because the 3,500-foot runway will be located on the same site as the existing runway and will have substantially the same purpose as and no greater capacity than the existing runway.

SECTION 15. The proposal to shorten the Airport's runway in accordance with the easterly-aligned or the center-aligned options is also categorically exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guideline section 15308 because shortening the runway will protect the environment, including by increasing safety and reducing impacts to noise levels and air quality.


SECTION 16. The City has complied fully with CEQA, and has done so at the earliest practicable time in determining a reduction in the operational length of the Airport's runway.

SECTION 17. The City Clerk is authorized and directed to attest to the adoption of these resolutions, and thereafter they shall be in full force and effect.

SECTION 18. The officials and staff of the City are authorized, empowered and directed to take all such actions as may be appropriate or necessary to carry into effect the policies and actions expressed in these resolutions.

SECTION 19. The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution, and thenceforth and thereafter the same shall be in full force and effect.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



JOSEPH LAWRENCE
Interim City Attorney