



Solano County
Airport Land Use Commission
675 Texas Street, Suite 5500
Fairfield, California 94533
www.solanocounty.com

Planning Services Division
Phone: (707) 784-6765 / Fax: (707) 784-4805

Stephen Vancil
Chairman

MEMORANDUM:

To: Solano County Airport Land Use Commission

From: Jim Leland, Principal Planner
Lee Axelrad, Deputy County Counsel

Subject: **ITEM 9B: Action Item:** Conduct a public hearing to consider a proposed Amendment to and amend the 2002 Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan ("TAFB LUCP") by establishing an Assault Landing Zone Training Area ("ALZTA") Overlay Zone by:

- (1) amending Figure 2A of the TAFB LUCP and related text to modify the mapped Area of Influence to include the entire proposed ALZTA Overlay Zone and to create and map the ALZTA Overlay Zone (Exhibit 1); and
- (2) amending Table 2A of the TAFB LUCP and related text to prohibit within the ALZTA Overlay Zone any structure with a height greater than 200 feet above ground level (Exhibit B).

Date: December 12, 2013

RECOMMENDATION

Staff's Recommendation is that the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission (Commission):

1. Conduct a public hearing to consider a proposed Amendment to and amend the 2002 Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan ("TAFB LUCP") by establishing an Assault Landing Zone Training Area ("ALZTA") Overlay Zone by:

- (1) amending Figure 2A of the TAFB LUCP and related text to modify the mapped Area of Influence to include the entire proposed ALZTA Overlay Zone and to create and map the ALZTA Overlay Zone, as depicted on Exhibit 1 (Proposed Amendment to Figure 2A); and
 - (2) amending Table 2A of the TAFB LUCP and related text to prohibit within the ALZTA Overlay Zone structures with a height greater than 200 feet above ground level, as described on Exhibit 2 (Proposed Amendment to Table 2A) (collectively, “the proposed Amendment”); and
2. At the conclusion of the public hearing, make the findings reflected in the Resolution, which is attached to and incorporated in this Staff Report (EXHIBIT 6); and
 3. Adopt a Resolution establishing the ALZTA Overlay Zone (EXHIBIT 6).

Staff recommends that the Commission take the above actions by form of a motion that “moves the Staff Recommendation.” The Staff Recommendation is referred to below as the proposed Amendment.

DISCUSSION

At the Regular Meeting of September 12, 2013, the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission received a presentation from Travis Air Force Base regarding the utilization of the newly constructed and dedicated Assault Landing Zone. The Base has identified a training area for the conduct of low level flight operations. This training area, generally located between the Base and Highway 12, permits low level tactical flight training by the Base. C-17’s will be engaged in combat arrival/departure simulations with a minimum elevation of 500 feet above ground level (A.G.L). In order for aircraft to be able to operate at altitudes close to 500 feet A.G.L., the flight training area would have to be obstruction-free. In order to not introduce new obstructions into this area, the maximum height of any structure would not be permitted to exceed 200 feet above ground level in height.

The Commission directed staff to return with options for updating the 2002 Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan (Travis Plan) with respect to the Assault Landing Zone Training Area.

At its November 14, 2013 Regular Meeting, the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission conducted a workshop on methods of amending the 2002 Travis Plan to establish land use policies to protect the Assault Landing Zone Training Area. The Commission directed staff utilize an “Overlay Zone” as the preferred means of amending the 2002 Travis Plan and directed staff to return with a proposed Amendment for consideration and potential adoption at the Regular Meeting of December 12, 2013.

Adoption of the proposed amendment is supported by a clear governmental purpose and need, namely, providing and preserving opportunities for military pilots to train and achieve proficiency in low altitude tactical approaches and departures. (See Exhibit 3 for

a complete discussion of the governmental purpose and need).

Additionally, adoption of the proposed Amendment is consistent with the 2009 Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) which was presented to the Commission in 2012. (See Exhibit 4 for a complete discussion of the consistency with the 2009 AICUZ).

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Staff has prepared two exhibits for the Commission which together comprise the proposed amendment.

Exhibit 1: Proposed Amendment to Figure 2A

Figure 2A has been revised to illustrate the location of the ALZ Training Area Overlay. In addition, Figure 2A proposes a modification of the boundary of the Airport Influence Area to include the full extent of the ALZ Training Area Overlay.

Exhibit 2: Proposed Amendment to Table 2A

Table 2A has been revised to include the ALZ Training Area Overlay and to designate a maximum structure height of 200 feet. Compatibility Zones remain intact as adopted in the 2002 Travis Plan.

Together, these two amendments accomplish the goal of protecting the ALZ Training Area in the simplest and most straightforward manner. The central issue is to prevent the introduction of new obstructions into this area which is accomplished by limiting the maximum height of new structures so as not to introduce obstructions that would prevent flight operations at 500 feet above ground level.

CEQA

Staff is recommending that the Commission find that the proposed Amendment is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the "commonsense exemption" found in Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines. (See Exhibit 5 for a complete discussion of the CEQA Exemption).

PROPOSED FINDINGS

Based on the analysis above, the staff is recommending that the Commission adopt the following findings:

1. Purpose and Need. A sound governmental purpose and need exists for the Commission's adoption of the proposed amendment. For the reasons described in Exhibit 3 and based upon the administrative record, a sound governmental purpose and need exists for the Commission's adoption of the proposed amendment.

2. AICUZ Consistency. The Commission’s adoption of the proposed amendment is consistent with the 2009 Travis Air Force Base Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (“AICUZ”) Study. Pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 21675, subdivision (b), an ALUC plan for any military airport “shall be consistent with the safety and noise standards in the [AICUZ] prepared for that military airport.” For the reasons described in Exhibit 4 and based upon the administrative record, the proposed amendment is consistent with the 2009 AICUZ.

3. CEQA Commonsense Exemption. The Commission’s adoption of the proposed amendment is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under the “commonsense” exemption described in the CEQA Guidelines. (*Guidelines for Implementation of Cal. Environmental Quality Act*, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, (“*CEQA Guidelines*”), § 15061, subd. (b)(3).) The commonsense exemption applies “[w]here it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment” (*Ibid.*) For the reasons described in Exhibit 5 and based upon the administrative record, the commonsense exemption applies.

RECOMMENDATION

As a result of the above analysis, Staff is recommending that the Commission adopt the proposed Amendment.

Attachments

- Exhibit 1: Proposed Amendment to Figure 2A
- Exhibit 2: Proposed Amendment to Table 2A
- Exhibit 3: Governmental Purpose and Need
- Exhibit 4: Consistency with the 2009 AICUZ
- Exhibit 5: CEQA Commonsense Exemption
- Exhibit 5a: Map of Existing Zoning in ALZTA Overlay Zone
- Exhibit 6: Resolution