

## California Department of Transportation

DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS - M.S. #40  
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September 9, 2024

Julie Newton  
Environmental Coordinator  
Sacramento County  
827 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 225  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Electronically Sent < [newtonj@saccounty.gov](mailto:newtonj@saccounty.gov) >

### **Re: SCH # 2013092021 - West Jackson Highway Master Plan**

Dear Ms. Newton:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Division of Aeronautics (Division), has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the West Jackson Highway Master Plan (Project). The Division of Aeronautics collaborates with cities, counties, and Airport Land Use Commissions (ALUC) to ensure compliance with the State Aeronautics Act (California Public Utilities Code Section 21001 et seq.). We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the EIR review process.

Sacramento County is proposing a master plan, titled the West Jackson Highway Master Plan (WJHMP), encompassing approximately 5,913 acres. The proposed Project is located along State Route 16, Jackson Highway, in generally the geographic center of Sacramento County. The WJHMP provides for 16,484 residential dwelling units; 988 acres of commercial, employment and industrial land; 2,101 acres of parks and open space; and six elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school, and will require amendments to the Sacramento County General Plan. The plan area is located on the southern boundary of Mather Airport.

### **Compliance with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)**

Pursuant to the State Aeronautics Act, California Public Utilities Code Section 21676(b) mandates that local agencies refer proposed amendments to general or specific plans within airport land use commission boundaries to the commission for review. If the commission deems

the proposed action inconsistent with its plan, the referring agency will be notified. Any development within safety zones or airport influence areas must comply with the safety criteria and restrictions outlined in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan(s).

The Project site lies entirely within the Airport Influence Area of Mather Airport, with portions of the Project site located within Safety Zone 2 (Inner Approach/Departure Zone), Safety Zone 3 (Inner Turning Zone), Safety Zone 4 (Outer Approach/Departure Zone), and Safety Zone 6 (Traffic Pattern Zone). Therefore, it must adhere to the safety criteria and restrictions outlined in the 2022 Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (ALUCP), adopted by the ALUC pursuant to the PUC, Section 21674.

The ALUCP is crucial for minimizing noise nuisance and safety hazards around airports while promoting orderly development. The ALUC is responsible for assessing potential risks to aircraft, airspace users, and people on the ground near the airport.

### **Noise Compatibility**

A portion of the plan area falls within the Mather Airport 60-65 decibel (dB) community noise equivalent level (CNEL) noise contour lines demonstrated in the ALUCP. Development within this area must adhere to the noise criteria and use restrictions outlined in the plan. Due to its proximity to the airport, the Project site may be subject to aircraft overflights and subsequent aircraft-related noise impacts.

### **Noise Sensitive Land Uses and Considerations**

The project may encompass noise-sensitive land uses as defined by the Public Utilities Code Section 21669.5(3). This includes residential developments such as single-family and multi-family dwellings. Additionally, Section 21669.5(4) defines a "noise-sensitive project" as new construction or reconstruction for planned noise-sensitive land use within an airport's Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) of 65 decibels (dB) or higher.

While California Code of Regulations (CCR: Title 21 CCR, §5006) defines 65 dB CNEL as the "acceptable level" for residents near airports, the Caltrans Aeronautics California Land Use Planning Handbook (Handbook) advises against using this standard for new noise-sensitive development. To mitigate the impact of aircraft noise, any new residential development within the airport's 65 dB CNEL contour should be designed and constructed to ensure that interior noise levels in all habitable rooms do not exceed 45 dB CNEL. Communities should explore establishing a lower CNEL threshold for new residential development around the airport (Handbook, PG 4-7). To prevent this project from expanding the airport's Noise Impact Area (NIA), each residential unit should grant the airport proprietor an avigation easement, permitting aircraft noise over the property. However, while these construction measures and

the easement address interior noise, they will not reduce exterior aircraft noise levels, and future residents may still experience annoyance from aircraft noise in the surrounding area.

By implementing these recommendations, the project can minimize noise impacts on future residents and ensure responsible development near the airport.

### **Other Airport Hazards**

California Public Utilities Code Section 21659 prohibits structural hazards near airports. Structures should not be at a height that will result in penetration of the airport imaginary surfaces. In accordance with Federal Aviation Regulation, Part 77 "Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace" a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460-1) may be required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). For further information or a copy of Form 7460-1, please refer to the FAA website <https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/portal.jsp>.

We recommend further review of potential compatibility concerns related to airport obstructions and hazards to flight, such as:

- **Wildlife attractants:** Project elements (e.g., open waste disposal areas) that could attract wildlife, posing a hazard to aircraft.
- **Lighting:** Improper lighting design or excessive light intensity could interfere with night-time airport operations and can cause safety hazards to pilots.
- **Glare:** Reflective surfaces (e.g., extensive use of solar panels) could create glare that disrupts pilots' visibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. If you have any questions, please contact me by email at [tiffany.martinez@dot.ca.gov](mailto:tiffany.martinez@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Tiffany Martinez  
Associate Transportation Planner  
Division of Aeronautics

Ms. Julie Newton, Environmental Coordinator  
September 9, 2024  
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