

Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan
June 25, 2005 Public Meeting
Plus
Additional Written/Email/Voicemail Commentary

Public Comments

- ② Comment 1 - I want to plant a seed related to hangars. Consider using solar power to generate electricity. Would be a win-win situation where the number of hangars could increase and electricity could be generated at the same time.
- ② Comment 2 - Pleasant Hill Resident: Question the reason there were 350,000 aircraft operations in 1977 and 181,000 aircraft operations now – why the huge discrepancy in numbers?
Response: this is a time when General Aviation was very popular and prior to 911 events. Historically high, not out of the realm.
- ② Comment 3 – Pleasant Hill Resident. Appreciative of meeting and the signs posted near Diablo Valley College, but feel a greater effort needs to be put forth towards community outreach. Should publicize in the Contra Costa Times. Projections of operations drive everything. You are showing projections of a fifty percent increase in operations over the next fifty years. If you were to measure the last 20 years the same way it would show a measurable decrease for the next 20 years and the numbers might be different.
- ② Comment 4 – Pleasant Hill Resident. I have a fear of increase in noise. I also have a few ideas to address that:
 - Light Runway 32 at night so planes could fly out over the refineries
 - Santa Clara County purchased training planes (quieter) which they lease back to the Fixed Based Operator's (FBO's) at reasonable rates
 - Increase the activity of Very Light Jets (VLJ's) which are quieter, smaller, more economical and a good match with the business communityProjections are nice but would like to see you make the Airport work for us and not accept the projections as done, but consider scenarios that would provide a win/win for everyone.
- ② Comment 5 – Pleasant Hill Resident. Fearful of a 300 percent increase in business jets over the next 20 years. Concerned over the safety issues. Jets are dangerous and noise levels are high. Like to study the possibility of limiting and/or eliminating jets.
- ② Comment 6 – Pleasant Hill Resident. Noise is steadily increasing especially late at night and in the early morning. Noticed a significant increase in air traffic and noise over neighborhoods. After talking to the City of Pleasant Hill, I realize that we do not control our airspace.
- ② Comment 7 – Current Airport configuration is not business, Airport or community friendly. Need a viable terminal with appropriate access which will increase users. Need more hangars, there is a documented demand for hangars. The increased hangars will increase based aircraft and lead to an increase in frequency of flights. I know the neighbors do not want to hear this, but it goes with living near an airport. Promote the usage of VLJs which are the wave of the future. Demand for VLJ's is currently underestimated and the consultant is

encouraged to consider the use of VIL's more. Runway 19 could be realigned by 10 degrees north to a length of 6,000 feet – this would detour plane traffic to fly over industrial area.

- ④ Comment 8 – Pleasant Hill Resident. Increase in airplane activity over the Pleasant Hill/Diablo Valley College area greatly concerns me. Have the planes go over the bay. The Airport should be closed. Replace it with houses, this will become a better community then. Projected expansion of 32 percent over the next 20 years translates into 32 percent more activity. Are you, the Airport, willing to retrofit outlying homes – to the tune of \$50,000 per home? Would like closing the Airport to be considered and replace it with low-income housing. Would also like a study done on ecosystems and the impact of the Airport on area wildlife.
- ④ Comment 9 – Pleasant Hill Resident. The open space around the Airport supports a lot of wildlife. You can see red winged black birds, etc. I represent Land for Urban Wild, Inc. Consider wildlife and plants in Marsh Creek and the surrounding area.
- ④ Comment 10 – Pleasant Hill Resident. Notification of the public was terrible. I saw the signs but did not know about the meeting. Who is paying for the study, and what is the cost of it? I volunteer my home in Pleasant Hill for the noise study. Propeller aircraft do not impact me. There is an obvious increase in Airport operations and when I call the Airport I hear about DB something, but get no real answers. Specific areas in Pleasant Hill need to be studied for noise. I am concerned about safety issues: Sun Valley Mall crash, plane crashing near the elementary school, recent 680 crash. Involve community to help with development of plan – you need to listen to the affected community not just the businesses.

Response: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is providing a grant for the majority of the projects costs. The local grant match is provided by Caltrans and the Airport Enterprise Fund. No County General Fund money is being used.

- ④ Comment 11 – Noise impacts are overwhelming. I have lived here for 35 years and I respect the fact that the Airport has been here before I was. Why don't small planes have mufflers? If you close the Airport it would lead to an increase in housing and business parks. Need to weigh Airport benefits versus the problems the Airport creates in the community.
- ④ Comment 12 – Martinez Resident. Forty year resident, Airport was not as busy then. Have room for growth in the Byron area. Why not expand Byron? Petrochemical plant is located at the north end of the runway. Only few pay attention to the good neighbor policy. Airport needs to address noise impacts. Flight schools are not considerate of the neighbors and take the crosswind turn left over the homes to the railroad tracks.
- ④ Comment 13 – The area I live in, east of 680 and north of Highway 4, is not on the maps in this paper. Two years ago noise was not such a problem, but recently the touch and goes and training sound like buzz saws. The planes need to go further out and make turns further out (not cut short) to minimize impacts to the neighborhood. I know the pilots and the planes that violate the rules. This study cannot be conducted in isolation. Air travel safety needs to be a consideration, as well as planning for future disasters that might occur. FAA Does not care about the community.

- Comment 14 – What is needed? You cannot look at any one thing in isolation. Jets are safer. We need to plan for emergencies and the Airports role in emergencies.
- Comment 15 – If the Airport leaves there will be an increase in car traffic. We need to reduce the noise. Ideas to reduce the noise impacts: 1) reduce operational hours, 2) close the Airport at 10 p.m., 3) at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) there are strict fines for crossing El Segundo and lots of signage warning pilots the fines collected for non-compliance are given to the affected cities, 4) enforce non-compliance of directional take-offs. Noise will always be an issue. VLJs (small jets) are not affordable to lots of individuals and corporations.
- Comment 16 – Noise is an issue. In answer to the question about mufflers on airplanes, tuned exhaust systems get rid of popping noise. Reduce prop speed by asking the pilots nicely through posted signage (i.e. “Little bit of tip speed makes a big difference with noise”). Consider additional hangars – professional and responsible pilots want these. Consider pollution in the study – especially cancer causing pollution from taxiing on runways. Mainly impacts Concord because of wind pattern. Consider planting plants that absorb hydrocarbons – a greenbelt on the eastern side of the Airport to mitigate pollution and absorb noise, without attracting birds.
- Comment 17 – The use of forecasting is unprofessional bordering on shameful. If the trend is down hill for operations why do your forecasts go up? Just because the area has a greater population does not mean we will have more planes. I believe that noise is much better and if people are concerned about noise they should feel open to meeting with Airport staff.
- Comment 18 – User of Buchanan Field for 35 years. In 1977 there were 350,000 operations per year, 10-15 planes flying all day long. This community is too quiet and people need to realize that there are some things we can do for noise and some things we can't. If you live in the traffic pattern there will be noise. The community is urged to attend the Aviation Advisory Committee meetings which are the third Thursday of each month at the Airport offices on Sally Ride Drive. The information for these meetings is posted on the County website.
- Comment 19 – During the Loma Prieta earthquake, planes flying out of Buchanan Field provided Watsonville with emergency supplies. Remember what airplanes mean to America. Search and rescue missions are staged from this Airport, cadet orientation provided, homeland security duties are fulfilled. Consider the concept of an airshow in the plan.
- Comment 20 – I support the Airport and its associated open space as opposed to 1,000 cars/homes. Consider safety: ensure planes are maintained properly to minimize accidents. Growing concern over the use of the airplanes to expose public to disasters. Consider what the Airport can do to ensure security in the area and avoid any inappropriate use of planes.
- Comment 21 – All possibilities need to be studied including moving the Airport closer to the bay – perhaps the Tessoro refinery area.
- Comment 22 – The noise from motorcycles is louder than the noise from aircraft. In 1977 there was three times as much noise. More noise from the freeway. Noise has gone down a lot and there is a perception that property values are being adversely impacted. Noise complaints have more to do with perceived devaluation of property than real noise and safety.

- ② Comment 23 – Shortcomings of the Airport need to be balanced with economic and social advantages of the Airport.
- ② Comment 24 – Even if the Airport closes, general aviation will not go away. Need stricter noise abatement procedures, no “touch and go” landings.
- ② Comment 25 – (written letter from a Martinez resident) Noise is not a problem. I have no sympathy for people who live near an airport and complain about noise. The idea of turning the Airport into a vast housing complex is totally without merit. If the current supervisor wants a housing complex, they have the Naval Weapons Center for that purpose. For several years, PSA provided four flights per day from Buchanan Field Airport to LAX, this was the ultimate in convenience and an all-encompassing effort to reestablish this service needs to be made. We don’t want air service to Oakland International Airport (OAK) or San Francisco International Airport (SFO) ... we can drive there. The air service will not be successful if it is competing with auto. We want service to an airport that has many connection flights such as LAX or Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX). This is the highest and best use of Buchanan Field and commercial airline service should be your number one priority. It appears that opinions from new property owners are given greater weight than those of Airport users and potential users. This needs to be reversed.
- ② Comment 26 – (written letter from a Concord resident) Noise is a problem from helicopters and low flying aircraft especially police helicopters from 10:00 pm to 2:00 am, helicopters going to and from the Concord Pavillion, pleasure plane pilots circling areas for hours, and illegal dangerous stunts and air maneuvers. I favor no growth for the Concord Airport and no large jets landing except for Santa, fly-in shows and special antique planes. Please do not allow large horse powered engines or dangerous home built to fly nearby.