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Staff Report for Resolutions Supporting Federal Aviation Administration Revisions to the Northern California Metroplex Procedures, and Requesting Congressional Support for House Resolution 3384, House Resolution 3965, House Resolution 5075, and Senate Bill 2761.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Certain flight operations and flight patterns from Oakland International Airport (OAK) and the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) have caused noise disturbances to San Leandro residents due to the City’s proximity to the airports. Staff recommends that the City Council approve a Resolution to encourage the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) adoption of recommended changes to recent flight patterns, as well as a Resolution asking San Leandro’s Congressional Representatives to support three House Resolutions and a Senate Bill that would implement new programs to address aviation impacts throughout the nation.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Airport flights from both OAK and SFO have been a concern in San Leandro for many years. San Leandro is a long-standing member of the Oakland Airport Community Noise Management Forum (Noise Forum), a group of elected and resident representatives of East Bay communities dedicated to finding solutions to noise and environmental impacts from aviation.

Recent changes to specific flight patterns have been implemented by the FAA in a program using new flight technologies to establish more direct flight routes intended to improve safety and efficiency and reduce fuel burn and carbon emissions. This program, known as Metroplex or NextGen, has been implemented in various regions of the nation. Unfortunately, the new flight patterns have resulted in increased aviation noise over parts of San Leandro, Berkeley, Oakland, and other communities.

The impacts from Metroplex came to light over a year ago and the Noise Forum focused its efforts on working with the FAA to address these impacts and find solutions. A special Metroplex Sub-Committee was established and Councilmember Lee and a part-time City staffer serve as members of the Sub-Committee. After several months of careful study and research, the Sub-Committee produced a lengthy set of specific proposals, as requested by the FAA, that should be studied and considered to provide relief to impacted communities.

The Noise Forum approved the Supplemental Proposals to Revising the Northern California Metroplex for Alameda County/Contra Costa County (Supplemental Proposals), a copy of which is attached to the Resolution. The Supplemental Proposals will be sent to the FAA along with a request that the Noise Forum be closely involved in the FAA's review and study. A summary of the Supplemental Proposals as they relate to San Leandro follows:

- Eliminate the new WNDSR TWO flight track (which runs along the east bay hills) and consider options to relocate this navigation route to another location that allows for geographically shorter flight paths and quiet, fuel efficient optimized descents into and out of OAK and SFO. Alternatives have been recommended.
- Add additional eastward flight tracks (to COSMC and HYPEE) and vector flight traffic (along TRUKN) to better echo and restore historical dispersal of SFO departing flights to reduce concentration of flights over San Leandro and other East Bay neighborhoods.

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution in support of the Supplemental Proposals.

Additionally, there are a number of House Resolutions (HR) before the House of Representatives, and a Senate Bill (SB) before the United States Senate that aim to address aviation concerns throughout the nation. These are:

- HR 3384 calls for reestablishing the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Noise Abatement and Control, also called the "Quiet Communities Act." The Office would, among other actions, carry out a national noise control program and carry out a study of airport noise.
- HR 3965, also called the "Community Accountability Act," would direct the Administrator of the FAA to improve the process for establishing and revising flight paths and procedures to limit the negative impacts on the human environment in the vicinity of airports.
- HR 5057, also called the "Airplane Impacts Mitigation Act," would require the Administrator of the FAA to commission a study of the health impacts of airplane flights on affected residents of certain metropolitan areas, including the San Francisco Bay Area.
- SB 2761, also called the "FAA Community Accountability Act," would require the Administrator of the FAA to take actions to limit the impacts on the human environment in the vicinity of affected airports resulting from the implementation of Metroplex. It would also require the Administrator of the FAA to appoint a FAA Community Ombudsman in each FAA region to liaise with affected communities regarding effects of aircraft noise, pollution and safety.

Staff recommends that the City Council also adopt a Resolution requesting support for these matters before Congress.

Applicable General Plan Policies

- §7-43 - Through its participation in the Noise Management Forum, San Leandro will work to reduce noise impacts associated with implementation of new flight pattern protocols at Bay Area airports. In 2016, several East Bay cities were experiencing impacts from the Metroplex air traffic control system, which has resulted in more concentrated air traffic patterns. San Leandro will work with Congressional representatives and others to bring FAA oversight and regulations up to date to address and to resolve increased noise impacts on the community.
- Goal EH - 9 Minimize the local impacts and hazards created by air traffic, ground operations, and all other aviation activities, particularly those associated with Oakland International Airport.
- Policy EH - 9.2 Mitigation of Airport Noise. Pursue mitigation of airport noise impacts to the fullest extent possible. Support and advocate for operational practices, changes to aircraft, new technologies, and physical improvements that would reduce the number of properties in San Leandro that are impacted by noise.
- Policy EH - 9.7 Legislative Changes to Improve Mitigation. Pursue legislative changes that provide San Leandro and other cities with greater leverage regarding the mitigation of noise impacts, air pollution impacts, and other off-site impacts resulting from aviation.
- Action EH - 9.7.B: Relocation of the Noise Impact Boundary. Support federal legislation that would relocate the Noise Impact Boundary from the 65 dB to the 55 dB CNEL contour. In the event this change is made, evaluate the need for additional measures that would reduce noise impacts to homes located in the 55 dB CNEL or louder range.

Attachment to Resolution Supporting Recommendations to the Federal Aviation Administration for Revisions to the Northern California Metroplex Procedures

- Supplemental Proposals to Revising the Northern California Metroplex for Alameda County/Contra Costa County

Attachment to Resolution Requesting Congressional Support for House Resolutions 3384, 3965, and 5075, and Senate Bill 2716

- House Resolution 3384
- House Resolution 3965
- House Resolution 5075
- Senate Bill 2761

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