



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** August 22, 2023

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Administration Division, Airport Department

**SUBJECT:** Airport Department Draft Response to City of Goleta Noise Action Plan Letter Request Dated January 17, 2023

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council consider Airport Department's draft response to City of Goleta's Noise Action Plan Letter dated January 17, 2023 for further revision and/or transmittal to the City of Goleta.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Santa Barbara Airport (SBA) has prepared a draft response to the City of Goleta Noise Action Plan request letter to City Council Dated January 17, 2023. Airport staff worked with City Council, the Airport Commission, and consultants to prepare the attached draft letter response for Council's review and consideration. Staff seeks input and direction on the attached draft letter. If approved, staff will transmit a response to the City of Goleta on behalf of City Council. Any projects that result from the response to the City of Goleta letter will be funded by a combination of Airport operating funds and federal funds from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### Background

In response to an increase in noise complaints from the public, the City of Goleta hosted a public workshop on December 7, 2022 to review Airport development projects and to provide information regarding aircraft noise. Santa Barbara Airport staff provided a presentation and responded to comments and questions from the Goleta City Council and the public at the workshop. Airport staff, City of Goleta Council, and the public explored several possible strategies to address noise concerns.

On January 17, 2023, the City of Goleta Council authorized Mayor Perotte to sign and transmit a letter to the Santa Barbara City Council regarding a request for a Santa Barbara Municipal Airport Aircraft Noise Action Plan (Action Plan). Prior to this, City of Goleta and

Airport staff were meeting over the preceding months to identify specific steps that can be taken to address noise impacts.

On March 14, 2023, Santa Barbara City Council authorized Airport staff to collaboratively work with the Santa Barbara Airport Commission to consider the Noise Action Plan Request Letter and prepare a response.

On April 15, 2023 the Airport Commission reviewed and considered a response prepared by Airport staff. Airport staff discussed the technical aviation subject matter of the thirteen separate requests in the January 17, 2023 letter, and received unanimous direction from the Airport Commission to proceed with the proposed response discussed at the meeting. The details of the proposed response are described below and attached in the response letter prepared by staff.

#### Draft Responses to Noise Items:

SBA staff and Airport Commission have determined that several of the proposed strategies by the City of Goleta Council align with the information and potential areas for improvement presented by SBA staff at the December 2022 public workshop. Staff recommends that an Airport Noise Working Group be formed to proactively address several of those items and others that may develop through that process. Bringing together key stakeholders including airlines, corporate aircraft operators, flight training institutions, air traffic control representatives, neighborhood advocates, City of Goleta, County of Santa Barbara, and SBA would create a collaborative platform that will allow for the development of practical and effective noise mitigation strategies. The specific items taken directly from the City of Goleta letter that the working group could address, and provide recommendations and guidance to airport staff are:

- 2) Prepare charted visual approach procedures to align aircraft on flight paths that mitigate noise exposure over residential communities. These procedures can also improve communications between pilots and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) to further encourage flight path compliance.
- 3) Incentivize airline compliance with noise abatement flight paths.
- 4) Encourage all four airlines serving the Airport to use a “proprietary” instrument approach procedure currently used by three of the four airlines.
- 5) Address noise issues and noise abatement compliance at the time SBA negotiates with new airlines and new routes by existing airlines.
- 6) Address business jet operations and chartered aircraft separately from commercial airlines through outreach to Fixed Base Operators (FBO) supporting these owners and operators. Create noise mitigation procedures specifically for charter aircraft and business and private jets by aligning with National Business

Aircraft Association (NBAA) Noise Abatement Program. Apply these procedures to east and west noise abatement corridors used for airline and general aviation operations.

8) Explore new outreach efforts to pilots to get them information on preferred approach and departure procedures and noise-mitigating measures.

SBA staff and Airport Commission have determined that many of the remaining proposed strategies by the City of Goleta Council could have a significant impact on other neighboring communities, local businesses, and the general traveling public. These items should be a considered carefully, thoroughly evaluating each of them and allowing for adequate public comment and transparency. SBA staff and Airport Commission recommend that these items be addressed through an official Airport Noise Compatibility Planning Study to update the previous 2004 study that no longer reflects the current operations and aircraft fleet mix at the Santa Barbara Airport. The specific items taken directly from the City of Goleta letter to be evaluated through an FAA approved planning study are:

1) Reinstate the Runways 7 and 25 voluntary flight procedure for visual and instrument flights over the Ellwood-Devereux Open Space and More Mesa area. The community desire is to include all operations within these corridors to the maximum extent possible.

7) Analyze and report on departure procedure use, which departure and arrival procedures are “quietest”, and whether those are being used most often (if not, why). Explore solutions for reducing noise impacts especially during early morning and late evening hours.

9) Explore the potential benefits and costs of a voluntary aircraft noise curfew, understanding the trade-off that airlines and passengers would likely lose some flight connections.

10) Analyze and report on the fleet mix at the Airport, the number of older, louder aircraft still landing and departing, and hours of operation. Develop strategies to discourage older, louder aircraft use, especially during early morning and late evening hours.

13) Develop “fly quiet” flight procedures for takeoff and arrival for all operations to mitigate noise impacts to residential areas around the Airport.

SBA staff and Airport Commission have determined that two remaining items from the City of Goleta letter do not fall directly under the scope of the updated noise study or the Noise Working Group. These items address aircraft emissions and the governance of the Airport, specifically the makeup of the Airport Commission. Aircraft emission are beyond the purview of our City Council's powers and responsibilities, Staff recommends continued research and implementation of environmentally friendly practices as

appropriate for the specific operation of the Santa Barbara Airport as they relate to aircraft emissions, fuels, and other technological advances. Staff also recommends notifying the City of Goleta and the County of Santa Barbara when positions on the Airport Commission become vacant, and encourage Goleta and unincorporated county residents to submit applications to serve on the Santa Barbara Airport Commission with an understanding that geographical diversity will be considered as a factor while making appointments to the Airport Commission. The specific items taken directly from the City of Goleta letter stated above are:

11) Gather and report data on aircraft particulate emissions.

12) Advise on an amendment to the Santa Barbara Airport Commission Charter to give the City of Goleta a permanent seat and voice in Airport decisions directly impacting the City. Include informal consideration of City of Goleta nominations for Commission representatives from the City of Goleta or County of Santa Barbara.

SBA Staff is committed to building trust and transparency in the operation of the Santa Barbara Airport with the understanding that the airport serves the entire region, and the impacts from these operations have an affect the surrounding communities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Santa Barbara County residents.

#### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

Staff considered each item in the letter after direction from Airport Commission on April 26, 2023. While staff can address some issues in the letter, a separate Part 150 Noise Study will cost approximately \$1,200,000 and could be partially funded by the FAA if programmed in the Airport Capital Improvement Program for Federal Fiscal Year 2024. The portion of the proposed Part 150 Noise Study not funded by the FAA would be funded by the Airport operating budget. Additional items would be supported by currently unprogrammed staff time.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:**

The Santa Barbara General Plan focuses on a stated mission statement of “Living Within Our Resources” and stresses sustainability for development (City of Santa Barbara 2011). Also, a guiding principle of the 2017 Airport Master Plan (AMP) and the MPU is to support sustainable design of airport facilities and the wise use of resources. The response to the Noise Action letter from the City of Goleta would be consistent with both the General Plan and the AMP.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Any projects that result from the response to the Noise Action Plan request will be subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. If federally funded, any projects that result from the response will be subject to the National Environmental Protection Act.

**ATTACHMENTS:** 1. City of Goleta Letter to City of Santa Barbara Council Dated January 17, 2023 Re: Santa Barbara Airport – Aircraft Noise Action Plan

2. Draft City of Santa Barbara Response Letter to City of Goleta Pre-Dated August 23, 2023

**PREPARED BY:** Sara Iza, Airport Land Development Manager

**SUBMITTED BY:** Christopher Hastert, Airport Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office