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REPORT NO. R 16 - 0 1 3 2

APR 20 2016

REPORT RE:

**ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT (LAX) SPECIFIC PLAN (LAX NORTHSIDE SUB-AREA)**

The Honorable City Council
of the City of Los Angeles
Room 395, City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Council File No. CF 13-0285-S3
CPC File No. 2014-437-SP

Honorable Members:

This Office has prepared and now transmits for your consideration the enclosed draft ordinance, approved as to form and legality, which amends the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Specific Plan and, in particular, provisions relating to the LAX Northside Sub-Area.

Background and Summary of Ordinance Provisions

Planning for LAX and vicinity is governed by a number of policy documents, including the following:

- A. The LAX Specific Plan, a component of the Land Use Element of the General Plan;
- B. The LAX Specific Plan, an ordinance covering all airport-owned properties in the LAX Plan area;

- C. Other General Plan elements, including the Transportation Element (Mobility Plan 2035), Noise Element, and the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan, which serves as the Land Use Element for most of the non-airport-owned properties to the north and east of LAX; and
- D. The LAX Master Plan, a broad policy document outlining the conceptual strategic planning framework for future improvements at LAX.

The LAX Specific Plan (Specific Plan) was initially adopted in December 2004 and is implemented by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), the City department that operates and controls LAX and is responsible for airport planning. The Specific Plan implements the objectives of the LAX Plan through zoning and development standards. The Specific Plan includes land use provisions and regulations for three sub-areas: Airport Airside, Airport Landside and LAX Northside.

The proposed ordinance amends provisions of the Specific Plan regulating development in the LAX Northside Sub-Area. The LAX Northside Sub-Area is generally bounded by Sepulveda Westway and Sepulveda Boulevard to the east, LAX to the south, Pershing Drive to the west and 91st Street, Manchester Avenue and 88th Street to the north. The sub-area is identified on the Specific Plan Map as the LAX-N Zone.

The proposed ordinance amends the Specific Plan as follows:

A. New LAX Northside Design Guidelines and Standards.

The proposed ordinance deletes the LAX Northside Design Plan and Development Guidelines (1989 Guidelines), which are currently Exhibit A to the Specific Plan. The 1989 Guidelines contained development guidelines for the Northside Sub-Area and envisioned two major development areas: the Westchester Center and the Business Park. The reason for deleting the 1989 Guidelines from the Specific Plan is because the 1989 Guidelines deal almost exclusively with issues within the jurisdiction of BOAC and the FAA and therefore do not belong in a planning document, such as the Specific Plan. To replace the 1989 Guidelines, BOAC has promulgated a new set of guidelines and standards, the LAX Northside Design Guidelines and Standards (Northside Guidelines). A copy of the Northside Guidelines is enclosed with this report. BOAC, subject to FAA review, will retain control over the Northside Guidelines.

B. Administrative Clearance from the Executive Director of LAWA.

The proposed ordinance amends the Specific Plan to require an administrative clearance for development projects in the LAX Northside Sub-Area from the Executive Director of LAWA. Under this administrative clearance, the LAX Northside Sub-Area is subject to the LAX Plan Compliance Procedure already established in Section 7 of the Specific Plan. The LAX Plan Compliance Procedure uniformly applies to the entire

Specific Plan area. Prior to an approval by the Executive Director, the Director of Planning will review the Project for compliance with the Site Development Standards in a new subsection G of Section 11 in the proposed Specific Plan.

C. Prohibited Uses.

The existing Specific Plan does not expressively prohibit certain land uses. The proposed amendment to the Specific Plan expressly prohibits the following land uses: residential or dwelling units of any kind; K-12 education; individual retail stores over 100,000 gross square feet; auto dealerships; parking as a primary use, except in the Airport Support or Mixed Use sub-zones; and hazardous materials testing.

D. Reduction in Total Floor Area Limitation.

Development within the Northside Sub-Area is currently limited through trip generation and not floor area. Based on the maximum a.m. and p.m. peak hour thresholds, the allowable floor area roughly equates to 4,500,000 square feet. The proposed ordinance amends the Specific Plan to restrict development to a total of 2,320,000 square feet, and includes a new vehicle trip cap. Each district is restricted to the following floor area limitations:

Campus District (Areas 1-3):	1,075,000 square feet
Center District (Areas 11-12):	645,000 square feet
Airport Support District (Areas 4-10):	600,000 square feet

E. Creation of a Transfer and Equivalency Program to Allow Transfers of Floor Area and Land Uses.

The proposed ordinance adds a Transfer and Equivalency Program to the Specific Plan. This program allows the transfer of floor area or the exchange of land uses between areas within the same district. While the Northside Guidelines envision certain densities and uses within each area, the Transfer and Equivalency Program provides the flexibility to respond to market conditions. Each district is subject to a total maximum square footage, which is consistent with the Land Use Equivalency Matrix of the Northside Guidelines. Requests for Transfer or Equivalency Exchange shall be indicated at the time of application for project approval.

F. Reduction of Vehicle Trip Cap.

The proposed ordinance reduces the LAX Northside Sub-Area vehicle trip cap from 3,922 project-related trips in the a.m. peak hour to 2,009, and 4,421 project-related trips in the p.m. peak hour to 2,542. Section 12 of the Specific Plan requires the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and LAWA to jointly conduct traffic counts to determine the traffic impacts of projects within the LAX Specific Plan

boundaries. The conclusions of these counts must be incorporated into a traffic generation report, which is subject to approval by the LADOT General Manager and annually submitted to the Board of Airport Commissioners, City Council and the Department of City Planning.

G. Mitigation Monitoring Program.

The proposed ordinance adds a reference in the Specific Plan to the LAX Northside Plan Update Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), which has been adopted by BOAC and the City Council with respect to development within the LAX Northside Sub-Area.

Further details on the proposed Amended LAX Specific Plan and the related plans and documents are set forth in the Department of City Planning's report prepared for the City Planning Commission.

Charter Findings

Pursuant to Charter Section 559, the Planning Commission approved the draft ordinance and recommended that the City Council adopt it. Pursuant to Charter Section 632, the Board of Airport Commissioners approved the draft ordinance and recommended that the City Council adopt it. If the City Council chooses to adopt this ordinance, it may comply with the provisions of Charter Section 558 by either adopting the findings prepared by the Director of Planning attached to the file or by making its own findings.

CEQA Findings

Planning and LAWA staff are recommending that the City may approve the amended specific plan under an addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the LAX Northside Plan Update was certified by the Board of Airport Commissioners (BOAC) through Resolution No. 25654 on March 12, 2015.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City Council may approve a project with an addendum when the City Council does both of the following: (1) reviews the previously prepared EIR along and the addendum; and (2) finds, in its independent judgment, that based on the entire administrative record there are no substantial changes to the project or to the circumstances under which the project will be undertaken, and no new information that was not available at the time the EIR was certified, that would require major revisions to the EIR. Under CEQA Guideline Section 15162, major revisions to the EIR would be required when the changed project, changed circumstances, or new information would result in a new significant effect not identified in the EIR or a substantial increase in the severity of a significant effect previously identified in the EIR.

Council Rule 38 Referral

Copies of the draft ordinances were sent, pursuant to Council Rule 38, to the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Public Works with a request that any comments be presented directly to the City Council at the time this matter is considered.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Deputy City Attorney Kenneth Fong at (213) 978-8235. He or another member of this Office will be present when you consider this matter to answer any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,

MICHAEL N. FEUER, City Attorney

By 
DAVID MICHAELSON
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DM:KTF:ns
Transmittal