

October 30, 2024

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Honorable Committee Members:

Subject: Council File 23-1338

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) is pleased to submit this report in response to the motion on Council File 23-1338 that requests information related to the community engagement strategies employed by LAWA in its work on a Vision Study for Van Nuys Airport (VNY).

Vision Study Overview

The current VNY Airport Plan (Plan) was adopted by the Los Angeles City Council in 2006 as a 20-year plan to guide land use development at the airport. As the intended life of the 2006 plan draws to a close, LAWA started work on what is needed for the creation of an Airport Specific Plan, or similar planning tool. To this end, LAWA initiated the Vision Study (Study) process in 2022.

The VNY Airport Vision Study process has allowed LAWA to receive input from community stakeholders, review current uses and potential future uses, and will allow LAWA to provide City Planning with land use information to inform a future Specific Plan. The Study allows for thoughtful incorporation of new technology that further embraces sustainability, enhances airport facilities, strengthens VNY as a regional jobs base, and increases access and diversity in aviation.

As part of the Study, LAWA engaged with surrounding communities, stakeholders, and technical experts with the goal of creating a comprehensive land use vision for continued operations of VNY as a general aviation airport. Public engagement with the Study began in early 2023, and over the course of about 10 months, LAWA staff met with a cross section of community stakeholders to hear feedback, to improve compatibility between the airport and community, to improve community understanding of what the Study is, and to create an environment where the Study could be finalized and submitted to City Planning.

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John Ackerman
Chief Executive Officer



Community Outreach – Phase I

During the initial phases of the Study, LAWA conducted a Virtual Open House for the public on February 23, 2023, and made presentations to the VNY Citizens Advisory Council (CAC), the Van Nuys Airport Association, the Valley Industry and Commerce Association, and the Valley Economic Alliance. These presentations included introductory information about current plans and development regulations in place for VNY, goals and objectives for the Study, the scope of the study to be undertaken by LAWA and its consultants, upcoming community outreach efforts, and opportunities to submit comments on the project webpage (iflyvny.com), at open house events and through surveys. LAWA also launched a project webpage at the outset of the Study and posted information throughout the effort about the Airport Plan, community plans, zoning, surveys, survey results, meeting notices, presentations, and conceptual alternatives for consideration.

Based on stakeholder feedback from the introductory briefings, as well as the results of data gathered and technical investigations by the consultant team, LAWA developed three alternative land use scenarios that were presented to the public in two open house events in April 2023, an In-Person Open House held at the Airtel Hotel on April 19th and a Virtual Open House event on April 22nd. LAWA distributed questionnaires and comment cards to obtain additional stakeholder feedback at the open houses. Hundreds of comments were received and documented by LAWA.

To ensure the widest reach possible, LAWA recorded the presentation in English and Spanish and posted the videos on the Vision Study webpage for those who were not able attend a session.

The VNY CAC designated an Ad Hoc Committee for the Vision Study. LAWA's planning team met with the Ad Hoc Committee seven times to receive input and answer questions related to the Study, and provided project briefings to the full CAC three times since 2023.

Community Outreach – Phase II

LAWA executive leadership met with Councilmember Padilla in late July 2023, at which time the Councilmember requested that LAWA conduct a series of smaller neighborhood and stakeholder meetings to improve community understanding of and input to the Study.

LAWA immediately acted to implement the Councilmember's recommendations, bringing on a consultant to assist with the outreach, scheduling and coordination of meetings. These smaller "focus group" meetings occurred between October 2023 through January 2024. During each session, LAWA shared project information, as well as summaries of feedback from outreach efforts. Overall, LAWA offered meetings to 37

organizations, all of which were shared with the Council Office. Twenty of those groups accepted the offer for a briefing/meeting (one canceled), and over the course of four months LAWA held detailed discussions with nearly 70 individuals, described in more detail below. In general, these meetings were productive, raising awareness of the Vision Study, hearing about community ideas and concerns, and proved very helpful in LAWA gaining additional information toward completion of the Study.

During each small and large group meeting, and on the website, participants were encouraged to provide feedback and share the ideas on land use at VNY, and an email address was shared to receive feedback. In all, LAWA received at least 650 emails with feedback related to the Vision Study.

Small Group Community Meeting Detail

LAWA’s staff and consultants offered meetings on the Vision Study to 39 organizations in the vicinity of VNY. LAWA received feedback on a variety of issues, both within and outside the scope of the Study. Topics discussed included airport observation areas, a Public Works-owned parcel adjacent to Home Depot, opportunities for buffer zones/spaces, consolidation of aviation land uses in the planning documents, walkways/trails/connection nodes, airport sustainability initiatives, public benefit/community space, and airport-community partnerships.

Meetings Scheduled/Held

Group	Date (2023)	Participants
Gault Elementary School	October 25	3
Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council representatives	October 31	3
Encino Neighborhood Council representatives	November 1	3
Cohasset Elementary School	November 13	2
Hope the Mission	November 17	1
Stagg Street Elementary	November 27	3
Valley Industry and Commerce Association	December 4	2
BizFed	December 5	2
Valley Economic Alliance	December 7	1
California State University, Northridge	December 12	11
Los Angeles Valley College	December 12	1
North Valley Occupational Center	December 12	3
Valley Flyers	December 13	3
Fume Fighters	December 14	3 (plus CD6)
North Valley YMCA	December 15	2
Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council	December 16	5
Jewish Family Services	December 19	1
Chrysalis	December 20	2

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council Airport Committee	Jan. 24, 2024	
Scheduled, Canceled by Participant		
Valley Relics Museum	December 1	

In addition, meetings were offered to additional groups listed below that were not scheduled because the group declined or did not respond to the offer:

- Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council
- ICON INC
- Van Nuys Neighborhood Council
- Bassett Street Elementary School
- Panorama City Chamber of Commerce
- Ranchito Elementary School Parents Center
- Casa Esperanza
- Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art
- Parthenia Academy of Arts and Technology
- Pet Orphans of Southern CA
- Van Nuys Neighborhood Watch
- North Hills West Neighborhood Council
- North Hills East Neighborhood Council
- Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council
- LA Economic Development Corporation
- Northeast Valley Health Corporation
- Greater SFV Chambers of Commerce

Vision Study Status

A goal had originally been set for the Vision Study project to identify a “preferred” land use arrangement for the airport and share that information with the Department of City Planning for use during the community plan updates. In this vein, during the initial stages of the project, LAWA presented several alternatives for arranging land uses and modernizing property at VNY. However, based on feedback received from stakeholders, the information shared with City Planning will describe potential land use changes and ideas for modernizing parcels at VNY and summarize the advantages, disadvantages and public feedback for each. LAWA anticipates sharing this work with City Planning at an appropriate time after they commence work on the Specific Plan.

LAWA has been working with City Planning to determine resource needs, including staffing, and to establish a mutually agreeable scope-of-work and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to complete a Specific Plan for VNY. LAWA is committed to working closely with City Planning throughout this process and providing the necessary resources to complete the Specific Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our team's robust work surrounding the VNY Vision Study, including the community outreach efforts. Please reach out should you have any questions regarding this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ackerman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Ackerman
Chief Executive Officer