



**PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS
HOLLY J. MITCHELL
LINDSEY P. HORVATH
JANICE HAHN
KATHRYN BARGER

Correspondence Received

The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:				
Agenda #	Relate To	Position	Name	Comments
29.		Oppose	Alex Gertsen	<p>The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the National Air Transportation Association (NATA), the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) and Vertical Aviation International (VAI) are deeply concerned about the efforts to close Whiteman Airport (WHP) despite the County being federally obligated to keep the airport open in perpetuity. We respectfully submit these comments in response to Agenda Item #29, urging you not to proceed with the study.</p> <p>We understand that on April 9, 2024, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion which directed the Chief Executive Office (“CEO”) to start a “reimagining” process for WHP. We also understand that the Board now plans to allocate \$1.9 million for a consultant study. We strongly urge the Board to reconsider that plan, based on the information provided in this letter.</p> <p>One of the assumptions underlying this plan, including the CEO’s proposed scope of work dated June 13, 2024, appears to be that the obligations associated with Airport Improvement Program (“AIP”) grants that Los Angeles County has accepted from the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) to fund improvements at WHP expire in 2040, and that thereafter the airport could be closed at the discretion of the Board. That assumption is incorrect for several reasons.</p> <p>Most notably, we have confirmed that Los Angeles County previously accepted an AIP grant to fund the addition of real property to WHP. Although the obligations associated with AIP grants typically have a 20-year duration, if the federal funds are used to acquire real property, the obligations are perpetual – and apply to the entire airport, not just the parcel acquired. See, e.g., the FAA’s Airport Compliance Manual, Order 5190.6B, § 4.3(a).</p> <p>Los Angeles County has a perpetual obligation to operate WHP as an airport, and the proposed study would serve no purpose – but would constitute a blatant waste of airport and/or taxpayer funds. Moreover, to the extent that the study would consider scenarios that the FAA has made clear are not legally allowed, the use of airport funds potentially would constitute a violation of the airport’s existing federal obligations, and could result in sanctions such as the suspension of all AIP grants for Los Angeles County airports.</p>
			Brenda R Rhodes	<p>There is no need to spend money on a project that shouldn’t be in the works in the 1st place. Whiteman Airport brings in millions of dollars and is vital to the smooth running of the transportation system in the Valley. Disaster relief is so important in our high fire danger communities. Positive youth programs are a must and the airport sponsors some of the best in Southern Calif. Closure of Whiteman would be a diaster.</p>



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29.		Oppose	Bruce E Allport	<p>As a Los Angeles County resident, I strongly urge the board to not support the proposed study to “repurpose” Whiteman Airport or any other effort to close it.</p> <p>Yes, I’m a pilot flying out of Whiteman and I support the airport with fuel purchases, payment of hangar rent, volunteer teaching of high schoolers in the Aviation Explorers program and support of the Experimental Aircraft Association’s Young Eagles program which gives free airplane rides to local youngsters every month.</p> <p>I’m not a selfish person thinking only of the benefit to Whiteman pilots. The airport is an essential component of the national air transportation system, and therefore should be considered in that context, as well as the context of the local community.</p> <p>Would you consider closing Van Nuys airport? Hollywood Burbank airport? LAX? Whiteman is the foundation of that hierarchy, where the next generation of professional pilots are now learning to fly.</p> <p>Best Regards, Bruce Allport</p>



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29.		Oppose	David L Kolstad	<p>I would like to oppose the study of Whiteman closure on the basis that the proposal misuses two of the three funds with which I am familiar.</p> <p>1. DPW Aviation Economic Funds are intended for operations of the county airports beyond what is provided by the FAA—maintenance, operations, and improvements, not figuring out how to end aviation activities at the airports. I don't know what the law might say, but it would be immoral to take that money to study the impacts of closure.</p> <p>2. The District Social Program Agreement funds are designed to give a supervisor flexibility to meet direct and immediate needs that arise within a community. They are never spent in a block as large as \$475,000 with no direct and relatively immediate impact on the local community.</p> <p>3. The wording of the overall proposal seems to imply that providing "affordable housing" and "maximizing county assets" are more important than how the airport is used. As part of the national airspace system we have an obligation to our country as a whole to respect the uses to which the airport is put, such as pilot training, emergency access, charity operations, and supporting the commercial activities already there that need an airport to be able to function.</p> <p>4. Whiteman already generates more revenues for county airport operations than any 2 of the other four county airports. Without those financial contributions closure of Whiteman would lead eventually to closures for those airports as well if one accepts the logic of "other purposes" for airports as being more important than their contributions to aviation.</p> <p>Signed, David L Kolstad</p>
			Fred Sholy	



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29.		Oppose	James A Miller	<p>As the Chair of Friends of Whiteman I represent over 400 tenants, businesses and users of Whiteman Airport. We strongly oppose this motion to study the closure and repurposing of Whiteman Airport to low income housing. This motion is based on FRADULENT BEHAVIOR by Supervisor Horvath. Supervisor Horvath repeatedly states that no decision to close the airport has been made, yet she has unilaterally directed the Department of Public Works to no accept any money from the FAA for airport maintenance or improvement to prevent grant assurances. She has also stated that no County funds will be used to maintain the airport pending its closure. She has accepted a flawed recommendation from a Community Advisory Committee which consisted of only members from the Pacoima community opposed to the airport and not representative of the Community of Pacoima and containing no residents from the areas served by the airport outside of Pacoima. Public comments were over 3 to 1 in favor of the airport remaining open. Supervisor Horvath has rejected the information provided to her showing the airport does not pose a health hazard to the local communities (three State conducted studies over five years) and has expressed a desire to have additional studies trying to find one which provides her desired result. The report supporting the motion clearly states IT IS THE POSITION OF THE COUNTY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE CLOSURE OF THE AIRPORT AND CONVERTING IT TO LOW INCOME HOUSING, while continuing to maintaining a statement that no decision has been made. It can not be both ways. The use of Aviation Enterprise Funds is a MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS which are dedicated to maintaining and improving all five of the County owned airports. The other funds being WASTED on this frivolous study are denying Supervisory District 3 of needed services. This motion risks the loss of any additional funding from the FAA for development and repair of any of the five airports.</p> <p>Again I strongly urge a vote against this motion to prevent the waste, fraud and mismanagement of public moneys that all five supervisors have taken an oath to protect.</p>



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29.		Oppose	Matthew Stone	<p>As a matter of wise decision-making, fiscal responsibility and, especially, respect for Angelenos' public wishes, the Board of Supervisors must REJECT this study proposed under Item 29.</p> <p>Whiteman Airport is a County-owned public asset which provides access to transportation, education and serves as a base of operations for numerous emergency responders. Angelenos have staunchly supported keeping Whiteman open and showed their dedication to this goal in the County-led advisory committee meetings.</p> <p>While Item 29's preface notes that committee's closure recommendation, the document does not mention that the advisory committee by its charter lacked legal standing to suggest closure; thus, its bid to advise that move was illegitimate. Furthermore, that move defied the public's desire to keep the airport open, as overwhelming public comments submitted at the time proved.</p> <p>Due to its current grant obligations, Whiteman Airport is not legally permitted to close for many, many years. Evidence exists that other legal obligations are also in force, which could require Whiteman to remain a public airport operating for an even longer time--perhaps even forever.</p> <p>The public disinterest in closure and this reality that closure is not on the table in the near term, if ever, means spending the proposed \$1.3 million dollars is an enormous waste of Angelenos' resources and tax dollars.</p> <p>In an attached document, I have detailed a standing federal offer to LA County which offers improvements for Whiteman at a 90-95% discount (as compared to LA County's current plan for such work) and the economic benefits that are generated by that work without the spending of 1.3 million dollars of Angelenos' tax dollars. Federal authorities are offering real work, real results and real economic benefits...it's not just an expensive study.</p> <p>Wasting \$1.3 million is no way to pursue "economic opportunities" nor is destroying an asset a way to advance Angelenos' interests.</p> <p>Rejecting item 29 and instead accept the offered federal assistance; that is best avenue to cater to Angelenos' wants and to serve Los Angeles' needs.</p>
			PENNY ALDERSON	<p>More proof of the value of GA airports and the help they provide in times of need. What will you do when it is you or a loved one trapped without food, water, shelter, and no way to get help?</p>



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29.		Oppose	PENNY R ALDERSON	Waste of tax payers money. The airport needs to remain open as a safety and infrastructure resource for the valley community. The youth programs are invaluable in keeping our youth off drugs and on a career path to prosperity. Shutting down the small businesses and women owned businesses on this airport to open different businesses makes no sense. The airport has responded to the communities needs and the neighborhood councils all support the airport.
			Ron A Berinstein	<p>Dear Chair Horvath and the Board of Supervisors:</p> <p>We understand that on April 9, 2024, the Board adopted a motion which directed the Chief Executive Office (“CEO”) to start a “reimagining” process for Whiteman Airport (“WHP”). We also understand that the Board plans in the immediate future to allocate \$1+ million for a consultant study. We strongly urge the Board to reconsider those plans, based on the information provided in this letter.</p> <p>One of the assumptions underlying this plan, including the CEO’s proposed scope of work dated June 13, 2024, appears to be that the obligations associated with Airport Improvement Program (“AIP”) grants that Los Angeles County has accepted from the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) to fund improvements at WHP expire in 2040, and that thereafter the airport could be closed at the discretion of the Board. That assumption is incorrect for several reasons.</p> <p>Most notably, we have confirmed that Los Angeles County previously accepted an AIP grant to fund the addition of real property to WHP. Although the obligations associated with AIP grants typically have a 20-year duration, if the federal funds are used to acquire real property, the obligations are perpetual – and apply to the entire airport, not just the parcel acquired. (For your reference, there is a January 26, 2007 letter from the FAA to the City of Oceanside, addressing a similar scenario.) See also the FAA’s Airport Compliance Manual, Order 5190.6B, § 4.3(a).</p> <p>In particular, in 1999, Los Angeles County acquired the properties at 12642 and 12648 Osborne Street. Although separated from the main airport property by a public street, they were specifically acquired “for use as an airport safety buffer zone” and are shown on the FAA-approved Airport Layout Plan for WHP to be within the boundaries of the airport. Moreover, a letter from the Director of Public Works to the Board of Supervisors, dated December 16, 1998 (also attached), specified that the FAA would provide 90% of the funding for the acquisition.</p> <p>Accordingly, Los Angeles County has a perpetual obligation to operate WHP as an airport, and the proposed study would serve no purpose – but would constitute a blatant waste of airport and/or taxpayer funds. Moreover, to the</p>

			<p>extent that the study would consider scenarios that the FAA has made clear are not legally allowed, the use of airport funds potentially would constitute a violation of the airport's existing federal obligations, and could result in sanctions such as the suspension of all AIP grants for Los Angeles County airports.</p> <p>We certainly can be available to discuss these issues further, but in the meantime, reiterate that the current misconceived process should not proceed and certainly not be funded, and further suggest that the County confirm the above propositions with its retained aviation counsel (Kaplan Kirsch LLP).</p>
		TOMIK HOSEPIAN	<p>As an employee and a current pilot in training, I strongly oppose the closure of Whiteman airport. The airport is home to many businesses, schools, and programs that people rely on for both training and employment and closing the airport will just make the already horrendous job market worse. You talk about combating homelessness and improving the economy and yet here you are trying to make people lose their jobs and future careers. I ask you, if we the thousands of workers reliant on the airport lose our jobs, will you give us another one with the same benefits and opportunities? Will you pay for our flight training? will you help the thousands of pilots and enthusiast that call this airport home become airline pilots? Closure of the airport will take away our opportunity to seek a better life. Los Angeles has many empty and vacant areas that can be reused and there is no sense in trying to shut down one of the most important and busy airports in the country. Everyone hates and is opposed to lead being used in aviation fuel. Instead of closing the airport we must look for a better type of fuel for the aircraft than outright banning people and their source of income. Please do not close down the airport that the community relies on.</p>
		Item Total	11
Grand Total			11