

April 29, 2013

Council President Herb Wesson Jr.  
200 North Spring Street, Room 430  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: Specific Plan Amendment Study

Dear Council President Wesson:

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), an organization dedicated to promoting job growth, economic expansion, and preserving the overall global competitiveness of Los Angeles County, we urge the City Council of Los Angeles to certify the Specific Plan Amendment Study (SPAS) environmental impact report (EIR) and pursue the alternative that provides for a modern and functional 21<sup>st</sup> Century airport with a North Airfield that can conveniently and safely accommodate the forecasted increase in air cargo and passenger traffic expected in the coming years with the expanded rollout and increased prevalence of bigger and larger Group VI aircraft, reclaim some of LAX's market share lost to other Western U.S. airports, and boost overall customer satisfaction at LAX, which has hit a real low point during recent years.

Under the leadership of Gina Marie Lindsey and her team at Los Angeles World Airports, LAX has certainly come a long way, including the ongoing \$4.1 billion capital improvement program there. However, the airport's current North Airfield configuration remains a significant impediment to our region's collective goal of having a safe, clean, efficient and world-class airport – one that reflects and can accommodate the future needs of our world-class city, county and region in 10, 25 and 50 years.

Quite literally, the North Airfield was designed to accommodate piston-engine aircraft of the 1960s, and was certainly not planned for the Group VI – Airbus A380 and Boeing 747-8 – in use today and projected to increase markedly in the future. While the airspace in and around LAX is being revised to accommodate all the latest navigation technologies, and while we continue to build and modernize LAX's terminals with new contact gates to house and support Group VI aircraft, for nearly 20 years we have ignored and failed to act on the advice of aviation planning and safety experts to convert these same efficiency gains to LAX's ground infrastructure by increasing separation between the runways and building a centerline taxiway to accommodate the new, quieter and cleaner aircraft that are also longer and wider than most of the planes in today's fleet.

As I'm sure you are aware, when a large airplane departs from or arrives on the North Airfield, virtually the entire airfield has to be temporarily shut down. What's more, the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Transportation Safety Board, airport planners from around the nation and the Air Line Pilots Association all agree that something must be done to make LAX more operationally efficient, safer and reduce the chance for runway incursions, which quite simply means two or more airplanes occupying the same runway for any amount of time at any distance. Such inaction is wholly unacceptable at any airport where safety is the top concern, especially at one of the world's busiest airports serving more than 60 million annual passengers and a Southern California catchment area of about 20 million people.

Los Angeles County became a global leader with the world's 21<sup>st</sup> largest economy due in large part to its great foresight and leadership in building the world's most advanced physical infrastructure systems. From developing the aqueducts that deliver us clean water and the world's most advanced transportation and highway system to constructing the nation's busiest port complex and the world's leading origin-and-destination airport, it is

imperative that we not only maintain our infrastructure leadership position, but that we also strive in a globally competitive environment to enhance our infrastructure capacity to deliver people, goods, energy, water and information even more quickly, safely and cleanly.

One critical component to this is to prepare LAX and its runways for current and future air passenger and cargo demands, and in particular ensure that LAX has a North Airfield configured in a way that can achieve this objective. Failure to do so will demonstrably degrade passenger experience with operational delays, increase the health risks experienced by residents in abutting communities due to increased noxious emissions spewed from idling planes and reduce safety at LAX and in neighboring communities with a higher chance of runway incursions and crashes.

For all of the above reasons, the LAEDC urges the City Council to quickly move forward on the certification of the SPAS EIR and ultimately pursue the SPAS alternative that provides for a safe, operationally superior and 21<sup>st</sup> Century North Airfield. We can no longer keep the status quo, and we must not delay in making these necessary improvements.

Sincerely,



William C. Allen

cc: Los Angeles City Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa  
Members of the Los Angeles City Council  
Gina Marie Lindsey, Executive Director, Los Angeles World Airports