



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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November 16, 2005

Mr. Mark McClardy
Manager, Airports Division
FAA Western-Pacific Region Headquarters
15000 Aviation Boulevard
Hawthorne, CA 90261

Dear Mr. McClardy:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of more than 407,000 members, over two-thirds of the nation's pilots. More than 50,000 of our members live in the state of California. On behalf of our membership, AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability and development of general aviation airports and their facilities as part of a national transportation system.

We have learned through our members and local news reports that the City of Bakersfield, the public sponsor of the Bakersfield Municipal Airport (L45), is planning to actively seek Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approval to close the airport. Additionally, the November 9, 2005 edition of the *Bakersfield Californian* carries the headline - "City to seek approval to close municipal airport" (copy enclosed). Initiatives such as this one, initiated by a public airport sponsor cause the general aviation community great concern.

With nearly 100 based aircraft and over 25,000 operations each year, Bakersfield Airport is a vital part of a statewide and national aviation system of general aviation airports. Clearly, the FAA recognizes the importance of this strategically located airport and has included it within the FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport system (NPIAS). As such, the airport has already been the recipient of over \$10 million in Airport Improvement Program funds (AIP) from the federal government. Projects funded with AIP grants include the purchase acquisition of land for development and approaches to the airport.

Since Bakersfield Airport is federally obligated through the AIP and associated grant obligations as codified by the U.S. Congress in U.S. Code Title 49 Section 47107, AOPA requests that the FAA decline any officially submitted request by the Bakersfield City Council or other city approved agent, to close the airport.

Thank you for your consideration of AOPA's views on this issue. If we can be of further assistance please contact our staff at 301-695-2200.

Sincerely,

Bill Dunn
Vice President
Airports

Enclosure



Of note: First article is OpEd about Oceanside airport decision written by man who has been anti- airport. Article two concerns Bakersfield, CA wishes to use airport land for other purposes, and finally...a TFR snags pilot over Richmond.

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<u>Oceanside nearing sensible decision on airport</u>	11/09/2005	The San Diego (CA) North County Times
<u>City to seek approval to close municipal airport</u>	11/09/2005	The Bakersfield Californian
<u>Presidential no-fly zone was violated</u>	11/09/2005	Richmond Times-Dispatch

Oceanside nearing sensible decision on airport

11/09/2005

The San Diego (CA) North County Times

Ron Stewart

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Oceanside is finally going to settle an age-old argument about the airport.

A land-use survey of the airport was approved by our City Council to help determine how to optimize the revenue potential of this property. This survey will determine how an optimal amount of revenue may be obtained to provide the funds necessary for the best in public safety, education and overall environment that we deserve.

The land-use survey is not being utilized to close the airport. Many have argued that the airport is an important city asset. They should wait for the study results to prove their argument. Those speaking out against the planned survey at the council meeting were more concerned about airport closure than about the purpose of the study. They projected an outcome of the survey before its completion. These same supporters of the airport have repeatedly touted the airport as a great potential asset to the city of Oceanside. They should encourage the use of the survey.

The city is not losing \$1 million a year of usable income, as is constantly and erroneously reported by the pilots association. Staff reports from three years ago say that the airport will require all of any income for over 15 years to pay back loans from the state and city. And all future income must stay with the airport. No money to the city except for a very tiny "franchise fee."

Airport supporters repeatedly comment about how the city will depreciate if the airport were to close. Tourists will not be attracted to the high-end resorts we're building downtown unless the city adds more public safety resources. Housing will not

depreciate if we continue to beautify our city. Support of other depreciating assets is not a solution.

Oceanside must continue to make decisions based on facts, not speculation. The survey will provide those facts so that the residents of Oceanside can make an educated, well-informed decision on the direction to take with this property. We must utilize these assets in an optimal way so that the majority of the citizens of Oceanside can benefit from sorely needed resources to support public safety, education and surroundings.

Many families have made an investment in this city and expect positive returns. We want to invite friends and family to our city and see their envy because we live in one of the greatest coastal communities. We want to be able to educate our children so they can live up to their potential and be able to gain employment that will allow them to continue to live here.

None of this will happen if we do not continue to capitalize on opportunities that will provide the necessary revenues.

We should all view this land-use survey with an open mind. This is not being done to close the airport. It's being done to determine its ultimate capability to improve our quality of life in Oceanside, a city with great potential.

Ron Stewart is president of Citizens for a Better Oceanside, a group that was known as Oceanside Citizens Against the Airport until 2003.

City to seek approval to close municipal airport

11/09/2005

The Bakersfield Californian
JAMES BURGER

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Chances are the answer will be "no." But it looks like Bakersfield City Council members are still going to ask the Federal Aviation Administration if they can close Bakersfield Municipal Airport.

Three of the seven council members voted in committee Monday to send a formal packet of information to the FAA asking for closure of the airport. The full council will vote on the idea Nov. 30.

"We've been advised we'll probably have a negative answer to this," said Vice Mayor Mike Maggard.

The FAA just doesn't close airports. So why even ask to close one? asked George Sturges Jr., who owns a hanger and rents a second at the municipal airport on South Union Avenue.

Maggard said the council hopes to get an answer from the FAA one more time and then move on.

But Councilwoman Irma Carson still hopes for more than a negative answer from the federal agency that helped the city buy the airport in 1985. She thinks selling the ground to developers for a mixed-used residential and shopping project would bring jobs and redevelopment to southeast Bakersfield. "It's really an area that wants things the other parts of the city have," she said. "We just want to do what's right for the city of Bakersfield."

Joe Campen, an airpark user who opposes its closure, said homes and "quickie-mart" jobs aren't what the people of the southeast need. If the city really thinks converting the airpark is the right plan, "they ought to open up these areas for industry and get some jobs for people who live in the area."

Sturges said the city knew it was taking on the obligation to run an airport for decades every time it took a grant of FAA money to improve the airport.

The last time that happened, said City Manager Alan Tandy, was two months ago. Sturges said the city is going to get a bad reputation if it tries to squirm out of the airport deal with the FAA. "They send the message that the city of Bakersfield cannot be

trusted - that a deal is not a deal," Sturges said.

People get out of deals with the federal government all the time, Carson countered.

Developers have begun to plan homes and other building along Cottonwood Road to the east of the airport and city staffers have limited where they can build because of the flight footprint of the airport. Carson said several developers have shown interest in purchasing the more than 200 acres of airport property.

Presidential no-fly zone was violated

11/09/2005

Richmond Times-Dispatch

PETER BACQUE

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A pilot flew into the presidential no-fly zone around Richmond International Airport Monday, federal officials said yesterday. "The pilot was interviewed and was released," said Secret Service spokesman Tom Mazur. "The matter will be referred to the FAA for any administrative proceedings." Neither the Secret Service nor the Federal Aviation Administration released further details.

The incursion appeared to be inadvertent, one source familiar with the incident said.

The FAA temporarily restricted flying in an area for almost 35 miles around the airport and extending up to 18,000 feet altitude Monday evening while President Bush was here to campaign for Republican gubernatorial candidate Jerry W. Kilgore. The restrictions required pilots in the affected zone to have filed flight plans and to be in radio communication with air traffic control. Certain types of operations, such as flight training and skydiving, also were prohibited.

"It's fairly common whenever the president travels that [general aviation] pilots aren't aware [of the restrictions] and fly in there", a Transportation Security Administration official said of the restricted airspace.

Chesterfield County dispatchers received dozens of calls around 7:30 p.m. reporting sightings of low-flying planes, flares in the sky and rattling houses. The dispatchers determined that low-flying jets guarding Air Force One were setting off flares to clear the airspace.

During presidential temporary flight restrictions, the Air Force's North America Air Defense Command has developed interception procedures using flares to warn pilots they are within restricted areas. Pilots who violate flight restrictions can be fined and have their licenses suspended or revoked.

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