

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: State of California
Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, California 95814

County Clerk
County of San Diego
County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 260
San Diego, California 92101

FROM: San Diego County Regional Airport Authority
Airport Land Use Commission
Post Office Box 82776
San Diego, California 92138-2776

PROJECT TITLE: San Diego International Airport (SDIA) Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)

PROJECT LOCATION: The Airport Influence Area (AIA) for the SDIA ALUCP is located within the vicinity of SDIA, which is 1.7 miles northwest of downtown San Diego. The AIA is depicted in Exhibit 1-1 of the SDIA ALUCP.

DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT: The San Diego County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) is mandated by the State Aeronautics Act to prepare an ALUCP for each public use and military airport within the county, including SDIA. The purpose of an ALUCP is to protect the operations of the airport and concurrently safeguard the welfare of inhabitants and the general public within the vicinity of the airport. The ALUCP accomplishes these objectives by establishing a geographic scope of application (the AIA) and criteria for the compatibility of specific land uses within the AIA. The compatibility standards are based upon sensitivity of land uses to airport noise exposure, minimizing risk in the event of aircraft accidents, protection of airspace from hazards and obstructions to flight and airport operations, and residential awareness of airport proximity to minimize annoyance.

The ALUCP compatibility standards must be integrated into the respective land use plans and regulations of the affected local agencies with land use jurisdiction, or local agencies may overrule all or portions of the ALUCP pursuant to the State Aeronautics Act. The ALUCP does not regulate airport operations, nor does it have any impact on existing land uses. The ALUCP applies only to land use plans and new projects proposed after adoption of the ALUCP. The beneficiaries of the project would be the implementing local agencies (primarily the city of San Diego) and the SDIA airport operator, as well as inhabitants and the general public who would occupy land uses near the airport.

The project replaces an existing ALUCP adopted by the ALUC in 2014, which the city of San Diego previously implemented through zoning of properties within the AIA. The ALUC prepared the updated ALUCP in accordance with the *California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook* published

by the California Department of Transportation’s Division of Aeronautics in order to account for changes to SDIA’s Airport Layout Plan (and specifically the Runway Protection Zones therein) and aviation activity forecasts. The updated ALUCP includes both substantive changes (such as those pertaining to the geographic mapping of the four compatibility factors) and clarifying, administrative changes (such as those pertaining to text refinements intended to facilitate plan implementation and improve stakeholder understanding).

NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT: San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA), acting in its capacity as the ALUC for San Diego County

NAME OF PERSON/AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: SDCRAA

EXEMPT STATUS: (*check one*)

- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
- Categorical Exemption: **§15061(b)(3)**
- Statutory Exemptions

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: As background, the city of San Diego previously incorporated the 2014 ALUCP’s compatibility policies and standards for noise, safety, airspace protection and overflight into its zoning code. As a result, the City’s existing regulations already impose development standards for purposes of advancing airport land use compatibility objectives. Notably, the updated ALUCP does not establish new definitions for what constitute noise-sensitive uses and does not establish new residential density and nonresidential intensity limits. Rather, the updated ALUCP is aligned with the 2014 ALUCP in these respects.

The primary effects of the project would be attributable to the incorporation of height limits necessary to protect the one-engine inoperative surface at SDIA, the shifting of some noise contours based on SDIA’s updated aviation activity forecast, the refinement of the Safety Zone 1 boundaries to reflect SDIA’s approved Airport Layout Plan, and the corresponding application of compatibility standards in those areas.

In order to assess the significance of those effects, a land use displacement analysis comparing the total amount of development potential under current city of San Diego zoning with the amount that could be supported under the updated ALUCP was prepared by a qualified aviation consultant. (See Ricondo Memorandum, titled “San Diego International Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Update – Development Displacement Analysis Results,” dated January 16, 2025.)

The displacement analysis determined that the proposed ALUCP could potentially displace: (i) 0.38 percent of the total number of dwelling units identified by the city of San Diego in its

Adequate Sites Inventory for 2021 through 2029, due to changes in the airspace area; (ii) 0.97 percent of all land zoned for certain noise-sensitive land uses in the Downtown Community Planning Area (CPA), due to changes in the noise contours; and, (iii) 3.2 percent of the commercial designated property in the NTC Precise Plan, 0.7 percent of IS-1-1-zoned land in the Midway-Pacific Highway CPA, and 2.8 percent of CCPD-MC-zoned land in the Downtown CPA, due to changes in the Safety Zone 1 boundaries. It also is noted that, due to the shift in the geographic location of the noise contours, some parts of the AIA will be subject to more permissive standards, providing new development opportunities for certain land uses that could offset any constraints of the project.

Any potential land use changes within the limited portion of the AIA where displacement may occur under the project are speculative, as is the potential for the project to limit future development in the first instance, since other constraints (e.g., environmental, legal, financial) may exist wholly apart from the project that limit theoretical development capacity. However, even if fractional capacities for development of certain properties were limited by the project, given the very small potential for displacement identified in the analysis summarized in the prior paragraph, there are suitably zoned sites with development potential located within San Diego (either within other noise contours or safety zones, or entirely outside of the limiting noise contours and safety zones) that could accommodate those fractional capacities of any potentially displaced development. As a result, the potential displacement of future land use development is not significant.

There also would be no potential displacement of existing land uses or populations in the largely built-out, urban environment surrounding SDIA elsewhere as a result of the project, as the State Aeronautics Act is clear that the ALUC does not have jurisdiction over existing land uses. Additionally, as an update to an existing ALUCP that was already implemented by the most affected local agency (the city of San Diego), the project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Therefore, it can be seen with certainty that the project would not have the potential to cause a significant impact on the environment. The updated ALUCP as a project is therefore exempt from CEQA.

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON: Ralph Redman; Program Manager, Planning, Noise & Environment; (619) 400-2464; ALUCPcomments@san.org

Signature: _____

Date: _____