

2003 Press Releases

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LAEDC Offers Improvements to Mayor's LAX Master Plan: Supports Most Elements, But Re-Orders Priorities as Key to Economic Success

The Assessment also identifies the importance of LAX to the region. "LAX as part of a regional airport system is the most important economic engine the region has," said LAEDC Chief Economist Jack Kyser.

Los Angeles, CA – Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and its Critical Infrastructure Council recommend the Los Angeles Airport (LAX) Master Plan reorder priorities to meet growing needs for travel and commerce.

"A regional airport system is important," said President/CEO Lee Harrington of the LAEDC. "And use of an expanded system of remote fly-away check-in locations can help encourage growth of other airports like Ontario. But modernization of the LAX as our primary international airport is needed today, particularly modernization of the aging Bradley Terminal."

The LAEDC believes Southern California needs to plan for other airports like Ontario, San Bernardino, March, Palmdale and George to capture the tripling of air cargo expected by 2020. "Every million tons of air cargo equate to some 50,000 jobs in the region and we don't want to forfeit that benefit to Phoenix or Las Vegas," explained Harrington.

The LAEDC Critical Infrastructure Council is comprised of experts in planning, transportation, airport and airline operations, engineering, safety and security, economics and business. It is recommending a re-ordering of priorities and a more practical alternative to the Manchester Square element to improve the timing and economics of the project.

The assessment also identifies the importance of LAX to the region. "LAX, as part of a regional airport system, is the most important economic engine the region has," said LAEDC Chief Economist Jack Kyser, LAEDC.

The LAEDC's Critical Infrastructure Council Assessment recommends support of the following elements of Alternative D now:

- South Runway complex separation to improve aircraft safety and enable use by new, large Group VI aircraft through the addition of a central parallel taxiway.
- Creation of a comprehensive system of remote passenger and baggage check-in "Fly Away" locations throughout the region based on customer demand including dedicated fast bus systems providing direct access to the airline terminals at all regional airports.
- Development of a consolidated rental car facility.
- Modernization of the Bradley International Terminal now, including gates to accommodate the foreign carriers needs for the Group VI aircraft, using a new passenger concourse and an additional aircraft gate area on its existing west face.
- Installation and use of state-of-the art detection and surveillance technology to monitor entry of vehicles into the central terminal areas.

Additionally, the LAEDC's Critical Infrastructure Council concluded that three elements to Alternative D required further review:

- The Manchester Square Ground Transportation Center remote check-in facility concept;
- Widening of the north runway complex; and
- Elimination of terminals 1, 2, and 3.

“Our concern with Manchester Square is it will not be available for seven to nine years due to acquisition issues,” said Viggo Butler, Chairman of the Council and retired COO of Lockheed World Air Terminals. “And its remoteness from LAX and its proximity to the 405 Freeway raised more issues than answers.” The LAEDC offers a possible alternative location for the Manchester Square remote ground transportation concept- use of the Lot C area due to its availability now and proximity to the central terminal area.

“Lot C also enables LAX to more logically stage its development of the various components of Alternative D rather than having to undertake a risky and more costly project at Manchester Square”, added Gin Wong, FAIA, a member of the Council and Executive Architect and Planner for the 1984 LAX Modernization Project. “A Lot C check-in option was long considered to be the next ground access modernization feature at LAX”, Wong pointed out.

“The Lot C alternative also enables continued access from all highways and roads in the area and with the addition of planned improvements from the 405 along Arbor Vitae Street long included in both the City’s General Plan and the State Transportation Improvement Plan, congestion in the area and the potential for stack-ups on the 405 Freeway is minimized,” echoed David Grannis, member of the Council and a 20-year transportation expert.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and City of Los Angeles will prepare written responses to all comments spoken at the public hearings, as well as to comments submitted in writing on the joint Draft EIS/EIR and the Supplement to the Draft EIS/EIR. All comments and responses will be included in the Final EIS/EIR that will be considered by decision-makers prior to any action on the LAX Master Plan.

LAEDC’s assessment and testimony will end a total 120-day public comment period for the Supplement to the Draft EIS/EIR that began July 9, 2003. More than 1,275 people attended the 12 public hearings held throughout the Southern California region during this period. More than 1,386 comments have been submitted thus far on the environmental, economic and social effects of the development of the Enhanced Safety and Security LAX Master Plan.

All comments to federal and local officials on the proposed LAX Master Plan and Supplement to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (SDEIS/EIR) must be received by 5:00 PM, Pacific Standard Time Friday, November 7, 2003. Comments received after this date will not be processed.

“We appreciate the Mayor making modernization of LAX a priority of his administration. The LAEDC recommendations offer the opportunity to safeguard and modernize LAX and create real construction jobs now. We can’t wait until 2012 to improve access and use for visitors and business travelers. The world will pass us by,” said Butler.

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All LAEDC Study results are posted at: www.laedc.org under special reports and at www.Mayocommunications.com

The LAEDC is a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to attract, retain and expand business and jobs in the region. It provides economic and industry forecasts as well as strategic consulting in trade, infrastructure, logistic and land use. The LAEDC Business Assistance Program works one-on-one with businesses throughout the county. Visit www.laedc.org .

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