

1. Motion to Support Council File 22-1127: Van Nuys Airport Specific Plan/Zoning **WITH MODIFICATIONS TO THE MOTION**

PLANNING & LAND USE MANAGEMENT

MOTION

Van Nuys Airport is one of the busiest general aviation airports in the United States. It houses news helicopters, medical transport, and is a critical base of operations for several City Departments including LAPD, LAFD, and LADWP. The airport generates over \$2 billion in economic impact for the San Fernando Valley and supports over 10,000 jobs. Yet, with any facility of this size, there are impacts on the community immediately surrounding the airport. This includes noise, air pollution, and soot and exhaust being blown into nearby homes.

While much of the airport operations is controlled by the Federal Aviation Commission, the City of Los Angeles does have some tools at its disposal in terms of land use. The Van Nuys Airport Plan establishes land use zones for the airport and the land surrounding it. However, this plan was adopted in 2006 and will soon be out of date. A new specific plan is needed for Van Nuys Airport to plan for its future and mitigate impacts to the surrounding community.

I **THEREFORE MOVE** that the Department of City Planning in consultation with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) create a Specific Plan for Van Nuys Airport to replace the Van Nuys Airport Plan and zoning ordinance 177.327. This plan should:

- Look at mitigating noise and other impacts from the airport on the surrounding area; including a barrier between the airport and nearby homes, additional hangar space, tree planting, and setbacks;
- Establish a community benefit program for the surrounding area;
- Explore how land covered by the plan can continue to be an economic generator by luring new commercial activity.
- Have extensive engagement with airport stakeholders and local residents;

I **FURTHER MOVE** for LAWA and the City Attorney to report back on what the city can and cannot do in terms of regulating activity at Van Nuys Airport.

Presented By: 
NURY MARTINEZ
Councilmember, 6th District

Seconded By: 


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SEP 28 2022

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THE ABOVE MOTION WITH THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. **ADD** Van Nuys Airport (VNY) to host a community informational session on the current state of operations at the airport and future strategy for growth, expansion, air-traffic at the airport at a location in the Valley. This session must be communicated to SONC and widely advertised to all residents in impacted areas in the Valley to ensure fair notice. Impacted areas include but are not limited to: SHERMAN OAKS, Van Nuys, Chatsworth Reservoir area, Canoga Park, Northridge, Sherwood Forest, Winnetka, Reseda, Lake Balboa, Valley Glen, North Hollywood, Valley Village, Studio City, Bel Air/Beverly Crest, Encino, Tarzana, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Woodland Hills, West Hills, and Bell Canyon.
2. **ADD** Van Nuys Airport management solicit community input to update the 2006 Master Plan and present the findings to the impacted communities, including all Sherman Oaks residents in advance to solicit feedback and modify the strategy to accommodate reasonable community requests. Furthermore, all meetings held by the airport sponsor, BOAC, or city council on discussion of the Master Plan must be public either by means of live virtual meetings, or in-person meetings hosted at a central Valley local. The public shall have commitment of 100% access to all conversations surrounding this Master Plan.
3. As part of the above #2, develop a VNY Containment Plan that considers regulating private and charter jet activity.

4. **DELETE** the mention of ‘additional hangar space’ at VNY. [Building additional hangar space is NOT what the community wants given it will increase air-traffic capacity. Hangar space should be capped at existing space and alternative uses that benefit the existing communities for the surrounding real estate should be subject to public RFP. Alternative uses may include community recreational open space, affordable housing, public/private sport facilities, technology park, entertainment film stages, and many other opportunities to support urgent and high-priority needs that meet the majority of the surrounding population. Rezoning opportunities for these purposes can be explored where applicable.]
5. While the motion states that the plan “explore how land covered by the plan can continue to be an economic generator by luring new commercial activity’, it should be **MODIFIED** to require that commercial activities do not increase the aviation burden on the surrounding communities, including but not limited to activities that do not increase flight operations, noise or pollution for residents.
6. **ADD** that the community does not support any expansion of Helicopter or any other air-traffic at VNY, including Helinet operations and its current footprint at VNY. The City of Los Angeles is expected to protect its citizens constitutional right of “pursuit of happiness” in their homes and on their property. **NO CONTRACTS** should exceed 5-year terms.
7. **SPECIFY** Building a tall and aesthetically pleasing noise barrier walls like freeway sound walls between the airport and homes in the immediate vicinity of the VNY airport.
8. **SPECIFY** Increase the setback of jets by 200ft.
9. **SPECIFY** Establish a tree planting and environmental protection program for flora and fauna. Areas to consider (among many) include the immediate vicinity of the airport, the Sepulveda Basin, VNY/Sherman Oaks Recreation Park and those areas also significantly impacted by the vastly expanded footprint of VNY air-traffic, including Tree People and the Santa Monica Mountains MRCA. Community Programs should consider hosting school children in impacted neighborhoods and include VNY sponsored trips to Tree People and other educational programs targeted towards preservation of green space.
10. **ADD** New protocols and mandates should be set in how LAWA notifies impacted stakeholders. Such protocols could include submitting all aviation aircraft related proposal for leaseholds for consideration 90 days before any contract is placed on BOAC’s agenda for potential action. Notification list to be defined but should include Neighborhood Councils, HOAs, Aviation Ad-Hocs and the like. LAWA could also establish a “mailing list” where residents may sign up, via email address, to receive these types notifications 90 days prior to contract proposals being added to BOAC’s agenda for consideration and vote.

(Refer background commentary on following page regarding Community Impacts)

BACKGROUND COMMENTARY TO COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Historically Van Nuys Airport (VNY) was primarily utilized for general aviation enthusiasts and generally welcomed within with limited community opposition due to negligible impact on surrounding neighborhoods.

Today, VNY is unrecognizable relative to its original footprint – it has morphed over the last 5 – 10 years to such an extent that its adverse impacts on the community are now felt by thousands of residents up to 10 miles away. Resident complaints about aircraft traffic, noise and pollution have increased a thousand-fold from a trickle of residents in the immediate vicinity to thousands of complaints per month. Its impacts have encroached on new communities, not previously impacted by the airport operations. Communities that are increasingly sensitive to climate change, many of whom live in a very high fire hazard zone, and are subject to the pollution from not just VNY but also BUR Airport and other air traffic.

Airport management has seized every opportunity to transform this small general aviation airport into an international commercial enterprise on a size and scale as to rival any public company in the region. It has multiplied its hangar space to ~700,000's Sq.ft, built many Terminal FBO Westcoast maintenance facilities for Gulfstream jets. It serves multiple charter jet vendors and hosts Boeing 737's and MD-87's with 150+ seat passenger jets. International Customs Services were introduced for the ultra-wealthy seeking to avoid LAX on-ground delays and demand from the billionaire 1% for private jet travel have contributed to a sky-rocketing and unfettered increase in traffic volume and land-use expansion. Additionally, millions of FAA funds (from taxpaying residents) have been utilized to shore up runways to support yet larger and heavier jets; increased traffic volume and VNY is now planning even more development with Helinet's expansion that will further encroach on a land-locked community with nowhere for the pollution, noise and impacts to escape but into the surrounding communities.

While millions of dollars are exchanging hands with ever lucrative business operations for a privileged few and preferred vendors at VNY, the community demands for a Plan update, additional traffic mitigation and input continues to be ignored and consultation on critical airport operation growth impacting their quality of life is grossly deficient.

When the FAA changed flight paths impacting VNY during SoCal Metroplex – Nextgen - that had a significant impact on the Sherman Oaks community (and many others) the Airport did not even host a community presentation in the Valley to inform or solicit our feedback. Instead, instantly overnight and continuing today, thousands of residents in Sherman Oaks who were not previously impacted by VNY air traffic in any noticeable way are now inundated with rumbling, whistling low-altitude jets that resonate for miles. Low flying Helicopters cut through neighborhoods, failing to abide by regulated paths in the immediate vicinity of the airport and create an unlivable situation with homes shaking and windows audibly vibrating under the impacts of low-altitude helicopters at all hours of the day.

The community also was not consulted in advance about the hangar expansions, the FBOs and maintenance facilities, the Customs Facilities and they sure didn't sign up to have Boeing 737's rattling their homes. Jets idling at the airport due to excessive traffic have created an untenable situation for local residents all the while leaded gas has continued to be used and is polluting our environment. Lead was banned from cars over 30 years ago.

Sherman Oaks residents demand mitigation and protection from the adverse impacts of the VNY Airport operations on their health, their homes and their quality of life. We ask that action be taken now to course correct and reign in the explosive growth in Van Nuys Airport operations of the last few years to restore and ensure a safe and secure future for our families.

2. **Motion to Support** Council File 22-1125: Van Nuys Airport/Scheduled Charter Flight Operations Increase/Part 380 Regulations

MOTION **TRADE, TRAVEL AND TOURISM**

Since the pandemic, general aviation airports have seen a surge in charter flights as individuals have been willing to pay a premium to reserve a single seat aboard a chartered flight instead of flying a commercial airline. This relatively new business model, known as charter by the seat, has increased significantly at airports across the nation, including Van Nuys Airport. This trend has been supported by technological advances, such as smart phone applications, that can post schedules of charter flights and match passengers with available aircraft. As a result, passengers can access various websites to book individual seats on flights to various destinations. This practice, while approved under the Part 380 regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, has raised concerns regarding increased operations and associated impacts to the surrounding community.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles World Airports and the City Attorney's office report back on actions the City can take to address the increase of scheduled charter operations at Van Nuys Airport, including an analysis of the current regulations regarding this practice and recommendations to work with legislative partners to address concerns raised by the community.

PRESENTED BY:


NURY MARTINEZ
Councilwoman, 6th District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THE MOTION AND SPECIFICALLY SEEKS THE FOLLOWING:

1. A cap or limit on the number of Charter Operators and volume of traffic to be operated in any given day, week and month.
2. Implement incentives for Charter Operators to operate between the hours of 10am – 5pm and to avoid noise sensitive areas (e.g., Sherman Oaks) and low altitudes to limit the adverse impact on surrounding communities.
3. Cap/limit the number of large jets, including Boeing 737's, MD-87 and other jets capable of holding 25 or more seats per aircraft (if not currently configured, but able to be configured due to size). Request VNY Airport exercise any legal authority to prohibit large jets (B737's or equivalent) from landing and being stored on VNY property.
4. Prohibit the sale of individual seats on charter aircraft at VNY. Selling a seat on a scheduled flight is considered a commercial airline activity and should not occur at a general aviation airport such as VNY.
5. Review legal options for VNY to impose on FBOs or otherwise, fuel taxes and/or landing fees for non-emergency services air traffic to generate a special purpose fund to be utilized solely for the mitigation of noise, pollution and other adverse impacts on the surrounding communities and enhancing the societal environmental impacts.