

DRAFT MOTION ON “FLYING TAXIES”

Whereas,

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recently released its Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) or electric powered flying taxis Implementation Plan called “Innovate 28” where it will partner with “key locations” including the City of Los Angeles in an “all hands-on-deck approach” to put AAM in the skies by 2024-2025, scaling up operations by 2028. During the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, the FAA believes “air taxis will be in high demand”.

Yet the FAA and the AAM industry have not demonstrated an actual need for AAM beyond its limited role as an electric powered replacement for helicopters in emergency applications. Transporting a select few during and after the Olympics does not demonstrate need.

Lost in the flurry of this excitement over unproven aviation innovation is the human cost of aircraft impacts. Once the initial prototypes take flight and more are rolled out, the end result will be densely packed, rotor-driven aircraft flying at very low altitudes over residential areas, schools, parks, offices, and hospitals. Unfortunately, this development will negatively impact new and already impacted communities and further intensify the plight of individuals recently affected by the implementation of NextGen. At these very low altitudes, AAM will create additional adverse impacts to health, safety, privacy, security, and quality of life onto people on the ground, resulting in a minor benefit of travel time savings for the relatively few who use AAM, in exchange for the staggering negative impacts to the many.

Extensive independent research and resultant data are necessary in the near term, prior to implementation of this untested new modality. The objective of research is to thoroughly examine the potential adverse impacts of the addition of AAM to the already congested air space in Los Angeles, prior to rollout. This data will serve to guide the establishment of a Regulatory Framework for AAM, which is yet undefined. Research would include a thorough assessment of all potential adverse impacts to the public with an emphasis to people on the ground. It must also include extensive community input.

The FAA and City must not assume public benefit without crucial examination of the cumulative impacts. To do so would express a willingness to retrofit regulation and delay examination of safety and adverse impacts until after implementation.

Therefore,

The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council (SONC), whose residents are already heavily impacted by Burbank and Van Nuys Airports, recommends that a moratorium be placed on the implementation of AAM/Flying Taxies in Los Angeles until comprehensive in-depth studies and public input are completed so that the FAA jointly with the City of Los Angeles, and other local agencies can make well-informed decisions; assess risks and benefits; draft (but not yet enact) regulations, engage stakeholders; and establish a responsible framework to determine whether AAM should be integrated into the Los Angeles Metroplex airspace.