

# FAA tells Santa Monica it is required to continue operating airport

General Aviation News Staff | August 30, 2016

**Aviation International News** is reporting that the FAA has reacted to the city of Santa Monica's plan to close Santa Monica Airport (SMO) in 2018.

In a letter sent to Mayor Tony Vazquez, FAA director of airport compliance and management analysis Kevin Willis reminded the mayor that under a recent Part 16 decision, "the city is required to continue to operate the airport for public use on reasonable terms and without unjust discrimination."

At a city council meeting last week, members voted unanimously to close the airport by July 1, 2018, along with several moves that appear to be designed to discourage pilots from using the airport, including: Applying to the FAA to remove 2,000 feet from the existing 4,973-foot runway, rigorously enforcing the noise ordinance, changing hangar leases to permits, eliminating leaded fuel sales and enhancing airport security.

In a recent move, the city has asked tiedown tenants to sign a new lease that includes a 24-hour cancellation clause. Airport tenants have been limited to 30-day leases.

Read the full story [here](#).

5 Comments as of 9/3/2016 at 0700pdt.. copied on the following pages

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<http://generalaviationnews.com/2016/08/30/faa-tells-santa-monica-it-is-required-to-continue-operating-airport/>  
(Highlights, footnotes and minor edits may have been added, but only to add clarification)

## Comments

Jeff Aryan says

August 31, 2016 at 4:50 pm

Santa Monica Airport is a great place to go more often except for the City Hall's shenanigan's such charging a landing fee that can only be paid for by credit card and only thru the mail. Well, I don't use a credit card, I pay cash. The city government does not need to know my address.

Besides, how much time and effort are they putting into this. Or are they hiring a outside company with only profits in mind and who knows how they obtain and distribute your personal information.

The place is being run by bunch of No-Good Self Serving Knuckleheads with More Money than Brains. So much for public service and trust. They are not serving the public, but only themselves. Remember the city of Bell fiasco? City of Beaumont? It really makes you wonder where elected officials and their subordinates come up with this garbage.

Like someone else stated. No city, county or any other quasi- public official nor there families and friends should be allowed to do anything within the city nor should they be allowed to live there. How about that for fairness.

Reply

Walt B says

August 31, 2016 at 9:36 am

As I was reading this piece I also concluded, **let's get this over by seizing the airport through eminent domain** for the public good. The government has done this before with less justification.

Reply

Aviation Economics 101 says

August 31, 2016 at 6:54 am

OK, you guys hate aviation so much, here's what we'll do. Effective immediately, every city politician, representative or functionary – without exception – and their families – is banned from all commercial or private flights to or from anywhere, for any reason, for life. No Medivac helicopters will operate within city limits. No UPS or FedEx second day or next day air deliveries will be made to any Santa Monica zip code. No Priority Mail service will be provided in Santa Monica. The new motto will be “If it goes by air, it can't get there.”

The City of Santa Monica will henceforth be declared an aviation “dead zone” and nothing that so much as touches any aviation service anywhere will be allowed in or out of the city. This quarantine will be enforced by the TSA, and the city will pay all the expenses incurred plus a 20% administrative fee plus such penalties as are deemed appropriate, in their sole judgement, by the FAA. Any items which have been transported by air to neighboring areas and are being “smuggled” into Santa Monica in an attempt to evade this quarantine will be seized and destroyed. The smugglers will face federal felony charges and will be held indefinitely without bail.

The City of Santa Monica must repay every cent – with interest computed at 29.9%, compounded annually – that the FAA has \*ever\* put into the airport, plus imputed administration fees and “soft” costs all the way back to five years before the airport became operational. This accounting will be done by the FAA and cannot be appealed. These funds must be paid by certified check drawn on a US bank within three calendar days of the closure of the airport, and in the event of default by the city, all assets of the city, buildings, vehicles, parks, land, etc. will be immediately seized by the FAA and auctioned off to the highest bidder. (Any persons associated with the Santa Monica city government are not eligible to bid.) In the event that the proceeds of the auction are insufficient to repay the FAA, all personal assets of all elected and appointed officials shall be seized and auctioned as well. This will include (but not limited to) their homes, vehicles, bank accounts, 401Ks, pensions, and Social Security payments.

Until the above amounts are paid in full, and for a period of five years thereafter, all Federal licenses and certificates issued to anyone connected to the Santa Monica political structure will be permanently revoked. This will include security clearances, any EPA permits and certifications, FCC radio licenses, federal banking licenses, firearms permits of any kind, import/export licenses, and so forth. After a period of ten years has elapsed, the holders of such licenses and permits may re-apply for them as though they are new applicants. Nothing will be automatically reinstated. No acting city politician will be allowed to hold or apply for any federal permit or license of any kind.

Since the airport is closed, the land will be available for other uses. One quarter of the land will be used for a nuclear waste storage and reprocessing facility, one quarter of the land will be used as an open-air pig farm, one quarter of the land shall be used for the new North Korean embassy and compound (they will provide their own security, chargeable to the city), and the last quarter will be used as a minimum security prison for the violently criminally insane. No property or ad valorem taxes will be due or paid to the city on any of the above referenced real property, nor will any permits or licenses be required, and inspections by the city will not be allowed.

Complaints regarding the above will be disregarded, remember that we are showing you the same consideration and the same respect for your civil, legal and property rights that you have already shown the aviation businesses and aircraft owners based at the Santa Monica airport.

Plan B: Do the math and you will discover that an active, operating airport is a HUGE economic asset to any city. Airports attract businesses, which hire people, who buy homes, and they pay (lots of) property taxes on those homes. Closing the airport is like closing the interstate highway – it achieves nothing but a guarantee of long-term economic stagnation and decline.

Close the airport and you will lose many current businesses and almost every future business considering your area. Losing businesses means losing jobs, losing jobs means anyone who can will move out, property values and your tax receipts will decline, urban decay will set in, crime will rise . . . you simply cannot afford to chase away businesses – these are the economic drivers of your tax base, which pays for police and fire protection and your salaries. Be absolutely assured there are PLENTY of other communities in California and throughout the rest of the country who would be simply overjoyed to have these businesses and these jobs you will be driving off. Many of them have economic development departments who are specifically paid to poach your businesses, and by closing your airport, you are handing them your best economic activities on a silver platter.

Choose carefully, grasshopper . . . you haven't so far.

Reply

Thomas B says

August 31, 2016 at 4:32 am

If the FAA – or some branch of the Federal government – does not retake ownership of the airport, it will close. **The Feds could take it through eminent domain**, or they could very likely retake ownership under the terms of the original agreement with the city.

No-one is talking about this.

Reply

Pat B says

August 31, 2016 at 11:43 am

SMO is critical regional infrastructure for emergency services. When the Northridge Quake needed emergency response, SMO was the location. It should be allowed to remain operative. I grow annoyed at the city council and local media in their agitation for closure since the replacement will not be a park, but will be a densely developed mixed-use area of apartments, movie theaters, restaurants and high rise offices, and the traffic and air pollution will be greater than anyone imagines.

Studies for ElToro Airport showed that airports are good neighbors. Despite erroneous claims from SMO area residents, airports are mainly open space and have little noise and air pollution (relative to their size and mixed use development).

I read resident's use of a traffic noise study so I read the study, and it actually showed that the west side of the perimeter road had a very low air pollution count while the east side had a high air pollution count, showing that the air is not damaged by aircraft but by the vehicle traffic that uses the perimeter road. The 'lying with statistics' practice by anti-airport folk is leading others to be anti-airport, so an HONEST debate would be helpful.

Reply