

City Council Votes to Move Forward with Centered and Repainted 3500' Runway. Council Delays Runway Demolition Indefinitely.

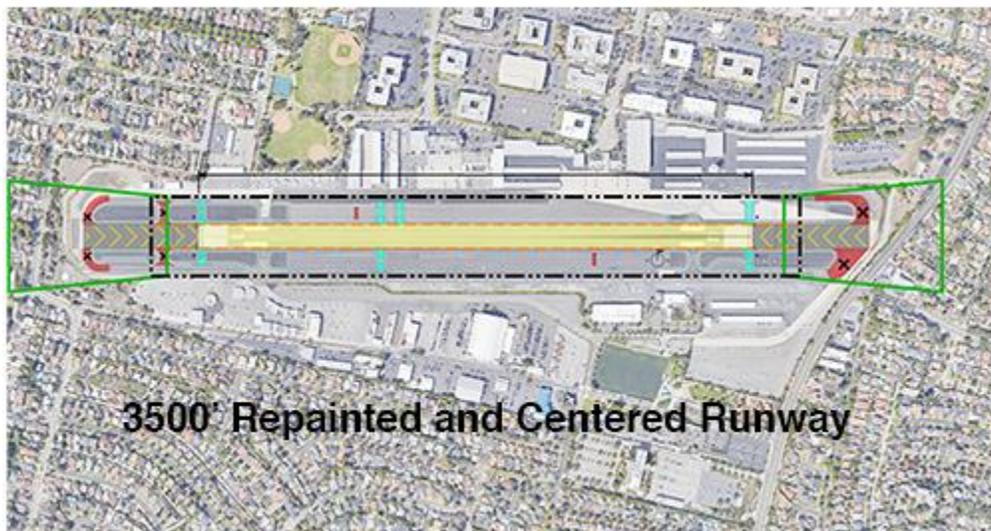


City Council Does Not Direct Staff to Demo 1500' Of Runway by Year End. Future Demolition Remains Uncertain.

At the May 24th Santa Monica City Council Meeting the council voted on the centered runway design and repainting of the runway to 3500'. This work is slated to be completed by the end of the Year. If completed, it will have taken 11 months to repaint the runway and taxiways and remove and move a few dozen runway, taxiway and navigation lights.

After the usual community input and little discussion, the council directed the staff to "look into options" regarding what to do with the 1500' of runway that the consent decree eliminated. It is baffling why this additional step is needed since it was already announced by the city manager on January 28th that 1500' of runway would be removed. This further study is yet another delay that favors aviation and puts further stress upon the surrounding community as to what will happen next and when. (see 3500' runway below)

Runway Designed and Approved by City Under Consent Decree



Want to know more? (see the following pages)

Regards,

Alan Levenson
NoJets

P.S. Please share with anyone you think may be interested. Thank you.

Fact and fiction are getting harder and harder to decipher these days. For those who care to understand some facts, please see the image of a 2393' runway below. This is what a FAA compliant runway would look like under the terms of the 1948 Instrument of Transfer (IOT), with the Western Parcel taken out of service. This is the runway that many airport activists were anticipating immediately after the end of the 1984 agreement in July 2015.



The Western Parcel, shown as the dirt strip on the left side, figured prominently as a negotiating chip in the noise and curfew restrictions at SMO back in 1984. Without the last 2000' of runway that lay in the Western Parcel, the airport was useless for jets and larger aircraft. The FAA allowed the community the curfew and noise restrictions in exchange for use of the Western Parcel which included the last 2000' of runway. The use of the Western Parcel was allowed for thirty years. [Note: This agreement in 1984 came shortly after the then city council voted to close the airport like just happened last year. History does repeat itself.]

Instead of holding this valuable piece of land, the Western Parcel, the city chose to give it up to aviation use in the Consent Decree, similar to what was done in 1984. This time some safety zones, which have been noticeably absent for decades, were added on both ends. With the runway and safety zones added together we still tie up 5000' of our land for aviation use. We still have homes in the Runway Protection Zones, something that as far as we can determine, is not found at any other FAA sanctioned airport in the USA. (If you can find an airport with homes in the Runway Protection Zone of any airport, please let us know. We could not.)

With control of the Western Parcel, which also figures prominently in the Consent Decree, the city could have shortened the runway to 2393' beginning July 2015. [Note: In 1949, the Federal Government released control of the Western Parcel from any encumbrances related to airport use.] The FAA knew this, so they falsely claimed our Grant Assurances were not over until 2023, not 2014, as our contract with them clearly stated. That false claim was to be resolved in court this year until the Consent Decree eliminated that court case. We were extremely likely to win since the contracts were clear, in writing, signed, supported by law, and FAA regulations. Additionally, we were backed in court filings by a group of over 100 airports nationwide supporting us in our lawsuit. We had the FAA over a barrel and they knew it, yet the city secretly folded. Even in the small chance we lost, then we could have shortened the runway to 2393' in 2023.

While the city claims the 3500' runway will reduce jet operations by 44%, this is speculation with assumptions, including the assumption that the fleet mix will not change. According to common sense and statements by pilots, the fleet mix will change and that is already being planned. Currently there are plenty of jets and turboprops that can easily utilize a 3500' runway. There is only one jet we know of that can easily utilize a 2393' runway: the very small and brand-new Cirrus personal jet. Cirrus has an office at the airport.

Why did the FAA agree to the Consent Decree? ... Answer: They are not stupid and they know the rules backwards and forwards. They also know the law. They knew the city would almost certainly win in court and then they would lose the Western Parcel to aviation use and end up with a tiny landing strip that would be virtually useless for the jet and turboprop operations. The FAA also knew they could lose another pending case in court with us this year that would allow the city to close the airport. Michael Huerta, Director of the FAA, actually explained this to an aviation reporter. He further stated with a smile to the reporter, "You guys have twelve years to figure it out."

Why did the city agree to the consent decree? ... Answer: Maybe, just maybe, there were more important people to please than the loosely organized and easily divided residents of Santa Monica, West LA, and Venice who are negatively affected by the airport. Maybe the city thought the talk of reduced airport traffic and the possibility of a closure in twelve long years would calm down and fool enough people to pull off their secret and quickly certified plan. Maybe the city is in no hurry to close the airport.

One can spin a tail and interpret actions in a number of ways, but facts do not lie:

1. Without the Western Parcel, the airport would be too short for jets and turboprops.
2. Jet operations are up since the 1984 agreement ended.
3. Planes are flying lower over homes, schools and parks since the Metroplex.
4. New studies show noise and pollution harm living things.
5. Planes and jets are turning north past Lincoln Boulevard and sooner, and flying over homes that did not experience as much airplane noise as before.
6. The giving up of the Western Parcel to aviation results in a longer, more useful runway that can support jets and turboprops.

Was the FAA and City's secret and closed door negotiated Consent Decree intended to close the airport and reduce airport impacts on the community, or keep an airport open for at least twelve more years? ... We'll see.

In the meantime, unless something changes, get used to the everyday noise and pollution and keep your fingers crossed that a jet does not go down anywhere but on the runway.



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