

# LAX Plan Nearing Liftoff?

■ Council approves consensus plan for major LAX rebuild, but obstacles may be placed in its way.

Dec. 7, the City Council approved Mayor Jim Hahn's controversial plan to rebuild Los Angeles International Airport. But expected lawsuits by other governments and neighborhood groups could challenge the plan's ultimate and complete implementation. The final version of the plan was developed by consensus with the Council.

Mayor Jim Hahn applauded the City Council for voting to move forward with the plan to modernize LAX. Mayor Hahn was joined by members of the business, labor, environmental and residential communities today at City Hall to celebrate final override of a County land-use com-

ground transportation center located east of the current passenger terminal area; northern runway improvements; demolishing Terminals 1, 2, 3 and the north end of the Tom Bradley International Terminal; and construction of a new western terminal.

"The long-awaited modernization of L.A.'s international air gateway is finally at hand," said LAWA Executive Director Kim Day. "Upon receiving final federal approval early next year [2005], we will be ready to embark on a full decade of construction projects and community mitigation measures that will benefit all LAX stakeholders and the Southern California economy."

Approval of the Consensus Plan also enables the City to move forward with an historic agreement between the City of Los Angeles, LAWA and the LAX Coalition for Economic, Environmental and Educational Justice, which includes more than 20 community groups, envi-



ronmental organizations, school districts and labor unions.

mission opposed to the plan, the final certification of the LAX Master Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and the adoption of the Consensus Plan.

Today the City of Los Angeles demonstrated a shared commitment to creating a safer, more secure airport," the mayor said. "My primary interest in improving the airport is to increase the security of LAX's employees, travelers and infrastructure. This plan will enhance the safety of the millions of passengers who move through the airport every year."

As a result of the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Mayor Hahn directed Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to develop a new alternative to airport modernization that focused on safety and security, which resulted in the LAX Master Plan Alternative D, the Enhanced Safety and Security Alternative.

The Consensus Plan, developed by Mayor Hahn and City Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski, is a process for airport modernization that would allow LAWA to move forward on elements of the LAX Master Plan Alternative D that enjoy the support of many stakeholders. These elements include realignment of the south-side airfield, a new consolidated rental car facility, a new intermodal transportation center that links to regional transit, an automated people mover, and an expansion of the FlyAway program.

The City Council today indicated that they were ready to begin the process of modernizing LAX to both meet the needs of the aviation industry and balance the concerns of the surrounding communities," said Councilmember Miscikowski. "The LAX Master Plan will provide for the safety, security and convenience to the traveling public. Meanwhile, the Master Plan, the Stakeholder Liaison and the new Community Benefits Agreement will allow local communities to have a real voice in mitigating the impacts of daily flight operations."

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At more than \$500 million, the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) represents the largest and most comprehensive CBA ever negotiated.

"Last year I directed LAWA staff and my own staff to work with the coalition to negotiate an agreement that would provide environmental, economic and educational benefits to the most impacted communities surrounding the airport," said Mayor Hahn. "This Community Benefits Agreement is a national model for airport development and serves to enhance the quality of life for those living around the airport. In the spirit of cooperation and trust, together we have developed a comprehensive plan of which we can all be proud."

Some of those benefits include:

- Increased funding for the soundproofing of homes and all affected schools;
- Retrofitting diesel construction vehicles and other diesel vehicles operating on the tarmac to curb dangerous air pollutants by up to 90 percent;
- Electrifying airplane gates to eliminate pollution from jet engine idling;
- Studying the health impacts of airport operations on surrounding communities and making those studies public on the LAWA Website;
- \$15 million in job training funds for airport and aviation-related jobs;
- Creating a local hiring program to give priority to local residents, low-income and special needs individuals for new LAX jobs; and
- Enhanced opportunities for local, minority and women-owned businesses in the modernization of LAX.

The last comprehensive update of LAX was completed in 1956, and the last major upgrades to terminals and airport roads were completed before the 1984 Olympics.

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