

DISCUSSION:

Background

In 2015, the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) adopted an updated Airport Land Use Plan for Travis Air Force Base. This 2015 plan notes that the following types of land uses tend to attract birds and that these birds can be a hazard to aircraft operations: public parks, golf courses, water treatment plants, landfills, agriculture, rivers and creeks, estuarine/wildlife habitats, and open space. The plan recommends that all discretionary projects located within five miles of Travis AFB be required to consider the potential to attract birds to the area and the increased potential for aircraft bird strikes as part of the environmental review process for the project.

More recently, Travis Air Force Base, Solano County, and the cities of Fairfield, Suisun City, Vacaville, and Vallejo engaged in a collaborative planning effort to reduce or prevent encroachment issues associated with current and future missions at the base and growth in the local communities. The product of this collaborative planning effort was the Travis Air Force Base Sustainability Study, released in 2018. Like the ALUC's 2015 Plan, the 2018 Sustainability Study notes that the location of Travis AFB nears marshes, parks, golf courses, landfills, and agricultural operations creates potential bird-strike hazards. The 2018 Sustainability Study notes that the primary area of concern for bird-strike incidents to occur is within a five-mile radius around Travis AFB and recommends that local agencies, including the County, amend their general plans to encourage that land uses in the Travis flight operations area be designed not attract birds. A substantial portion of the area within a five-mile radius of Travis AFB is also within the Suisun Marsh.

Currently, the General Plan includes policies calling for habitat areas within the Suisun Marsh to be preserved and enhanced wherever possible, and for habitat areas that have become degraded to be restored or enhanced where feasible. These policies are also included in the County's Local Protection Program, which has been certified by BCDC. While these habitat restoration and enhancement policies are not inconsistent with the ALUC's 2015 Plan, the General Plan does not explicitly call for the bird strike potential of new habitat development projects or other bird-attractant projects to be evaluated as part of the County's discretionary land use permitting process for such projects.

Considering the recommendations made in the 2015 Travis Airport Land Use Plan and the conclusions expressed in the 2018 Travis Sustainability Study, Solano County proposes to update and amend its General Plan to do the following:

- Explicitly require that any proposals for new habitat restoration or enhancement projects, or other discretionary bird-attractant land uses, within a five-mile radius surrounding Travis AFB or an equivalent area around the Rio Vista Airport provide an analysis of potential bird-strike hazard as part of either the permit application or the environmental review.
- Explicitly recognize that projects and other bird-attractant land uses can have adverse impacts on the Travis AFB aircraft operations.
- Retain existing General Plan policies that generally encourage habitat restoration and enhancement project, both within the Suisun Marsh and elsewhere, as well as other land use projects and practices that may attract birds, but explicitly state as County land use development policy that the protection of the operations and mission of Travis AFB is of equal importance and must be considered during the discretionary review process for such projects.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

The proposed General Plan amendment application is consistent with the Solano County General Plan in that the various land uses authorized by the amendment are compatible with the objectives, policies, general land uses, and programs specified in the plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15308 Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment, of the California Environmental Quality Act. Section 15308 Class 8 consists of:

Actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. Construction activities and relaxation of standards allowing environmental degradation is not included in this exemption.

The General Plan update consists of adoption of policy recommendations made in the 2015 Travis Airport Land Use Plan and the conclusions expressed in the 2018 Travis Sustainability Study to mitigate bird flight hazards to Travis AFB and other county airports. Travis AFB is part of the existing environment, and this proposed amendment is intended to protect the base, therefore this exemption is appropriate.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

County Counsel assisted in development of the General Plan amendment application. The proposed amendments were found to be consistent with the Travis ALUCP by the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission on October 12, 2023.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:

Consistent with §28.112 and §28.04 of the Solano County Code, a public hearing notice was published in the Daily Republic at least 15 days prior to the public hearing (*Attachment C*).

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the discussion above, staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve General Plan Amendment Application G-23-4 to adopt policy recommendations made in the 2015 Travis Airport Land Use Plan and the conclusions expressed in the 2018 Travis Sustainability Study to mitigate bird flight hazards to Travis AFB and other county airports.

**SOLANO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. _____**

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING
APPROVAL OF GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. GP-23-04
TO THE SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

WHEREAS, the Solano County Planning Commission has considered proposed General Plan Amendment No. GP-23-04, which would amend the Solano County General Plan to require that new proposals for habitat restoration or enhancement projects near Travis AFB or other airports provide an analysis of potential bird-strike hazards; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the report of the Department of Resource Management and heard testimony relative to the project at the duly noticed public hearing held on October 19, 2023; and

WHEREAS, on projects involving a general plan amendment, the Planning Commission is an advisory agency to the Board of Supervisors and the Commission is required to render a written recommendation to the Board, giving its reasons for the recommendation; and

WHEREAS, this resolution, together with the staff reports prepared by the Department of Resource Management and the minutes of the Planning Commission's proceedings, constitute the Commission's written recommendation and report to the Board of Supervisors on the proposed General Plan Amendment; and

WHEREAS, after due consideration, the Planning Commission has made the following findings in regard to the proposed amendment:

1. The proposed amendment is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15308 and 15061(B)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines;
2. The proposed amendment would not cause the Solano County General Plan to be internally inconsistent;
3. The proposed amendment would be beneficial to the people of Solano County.

RESOLVED, that the Solano County Planning Commission recommends to the Solano County Board of Supervisors that General Plan Amendment No. GP-23-04 be approved.

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission directs the Department of Resource Management to make any necessary grammatical corrections and formatting changes to the to the proposed amendment document, to ensure all documents presented to the

Board of Supervisors are internally consistent and reflect the direction given by the Commission at its public hearing.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at the regular meeting of the Solano County Planning Commission on October 19, 2023 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners _____

NOES: Commissioners _____

ABSTAIN: Commissioners _____

ABSENT: Commissioners _____

By: _____

Kay Fulfs Cayler, Chairperson
Solano County Planning Commission

Attest:

By: _____
Terry Schmidtbauer, Secretary

General Plan Amendments to address new Habitat

Chapter 2

Pages LU-23 - 24, Table LU-5

Overlays	
TRA Travis Reserve Area	Protects the land within the overlay for continued agriculture, grazing, and associated non-avian habitat uses until a military or airport use is proposed. No residential uses will be permitted. Provides for future expansion of Travis Air Force Base and support facilities for the base. If the status of the base changes, the construction of nonmilitary airport and support uses may be permitted.

Chapter 4

Page RS-11

Policies

RS.P-1: Protect and enhance the County's natural habitats and diverse plant and animal communities, particularly occurrences of special-status species, wetlands, sensitive natural communities, and habitat connections. Actions to enhance or restore habitat areas should not cause adverse impacts to airports, including Travis Air Force Base.

Page RS-12

Implementation Programs

Regulations

RS.I-1: Establish ~~a resource mitigation overlay district~~ provisions within the zoning ordinance to site, ~~and permit, and regulate~~ mitigation banks. The ordinance should include incentives to focus mitigation banks within the Resource Conservation Overlay areas.

Prior to establishing a new mitigation bank that would enhance or restore habitat rather than simply preserve existing habitat and that would be located within five miles of an airport operations area, and prior to the enlargement of such a mitigation bank, the project proponent shall prepare a wildlife hazard analysis evaluating the potential for the project to cause hazardous wildlife movement into or across the approach and departure airspace of the airport. All reasonably feasible mitigation measures, including measures to minimize wildlife movements that may pose hazards to aircraft in flight, should be incorporated into the project.

Related Policies: RS.P-1, RS.P-3

Agency/Department: Department of Resource Management

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: By 20112024



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING (Planning Commission)

NOTICE IS GIVEN that the Solano County Planning Commission will hold PUBLIC HEARINGS to consider:

- 1) A General Plan Amendment (G-23-03) to (1) amend the development and utility provision policies for properties within a designated Municipal Service Area (MSA) pending annexation, and (2) make various non-substantive updates; and
- 2) A General Plan Amendment (G-23-04) to require that new proposals for habitat restoration or enhancement projects near Travis AFB or other airports provide an analysis of potential bird-strike hazards.

The projects have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15308 and 15061(B)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines. (Project Planner: Allan Calder, 707-784-6765)

The hearings will be held on **Thursday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, County Administration Center, 1st Floor, 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, California.

The County of Solano does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. If you wish to participate in this meeting and you will require assistance in order to do so, please contact the Department of Resource Management at 707-784-6765 at least 24 hours in advance of the event to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

In-Person: You may attend the public hearing at the time and location listed above and provide comments during the public speaking period. Phone: You may provide comments verbally from your phone by dialing **1-415-655-0001** and entering **Access Code 2632 666 6680**. Once entered in the meeting, you will be able to hear the meeting and will be called upon to speak during the public speaking period. Email/Mail: Written comments can be emailed to PlanningCommission@SolanoCounty.com or mailed to Resource Management, Planning Commission, 675 Texas Street, Suite 5500, Fairfield, CA 94533 and must be received by 10:00 a.m. the day of the meeting. Copies of written comments received will be provided to the Planning Commission and will become a part of the official record but will not be read aloud at the meeting.

Staff reports and associated materials will be available to the public approximately one week prior to the meeting at www.solanocounty.com under Departments; Resource Management; Boards, Commissions & Special Districts; Solano County Planning Commission.

If you challenge the proposed considerations in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Daily Republic – Display Ad one time in NEWS Section – Sunday, October 8, 2023

Vacaville Reporter – legal ad/one time – Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Vallejo Times Herald – legal ad/one time – Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Benicia Herald – in-column legal ad/one time – Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Dixon Tribune – line ad/one time – Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Rio Vista Beacon– legal ad/one time –Wednesday, October 11, 2023