



STAFF REPORT

City Council

Meeting Date:

7/19/2016

Staff Report Number:

16-131-CC

Consent Calendar:

Adopt a resolution requesting action from the Federal Aviation Administration to reduce aircraft noise in Menlo Park

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached resolution, which calls for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to take steps to reduce aircraft noise over Menlo Park.

Policy Issues

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Background

Residents from Menlo Park and the Peninsula area are currently subjected to aircraft noise caused by aircraft traveling to and from three major airports and several smaller airfields in the area. The FAA is currently implementing the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen), a multibillion dollar modernization program that seeks to make the country's airspace safer and more efficient. This would primarily be accomplished by switching from ground-based radar systems to satellite-based navigation and aircraft tracking. NextGen is targeted for full implementation by 2025 and involves redesigning many of the flight paths near major metropolitan areas, including the San Francisco Bay area. Over the last year, the FAA has been shifting to its newly designed flight paths, and in the process, has subjected Menlo Park and Peninsula area residents to increased aircraft noise.

On April 4, 2016, U.S. Representatives Anna G. Eshoo, Sam Farr and Jackie Speier announced the formation of a Select Committee on South Bay Arrivals. The Select Committee is comprised of 12 local elected officials from San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and Santa Cruz County. The purpose of the Select Committee is to develop regional solutions to address aircraft noise.

Councilmember Peter Ohtaki represents Menlo Park on the San Francisco Airport/Community Roundtable (SFO Roundtable) and was appointed by Representative Jackie Speier as an Alternate on the Select Committee.

Analysis

Recognizing that Menlo Park residents have been negatively affected by increased aircraft noise caused by the implementation of the FAA's NextGen program, the City of Menlo Park is seeking regional solutions to this problem.

Below are some of the issues that have been identified and recommended actions.

1. Mid-Peninsula flight route

An increased number of flights using the BDEGA or Point Reyes West route over the Peninsula has shifted more flights over noise-sensitive residential areas (Attachment A).

Recommendation: Request that the FAA reduce the arrivals into San Francisco International (SFO) using the BDEGA or Point Reyes West route over the Peninsula and instead utilize the BDEGA East route over the San Francisco Bay. If the BDEGA/Point Reyes West route must be utilized, that airplanes be required to fly at a higher altitude over the mid-Peninsula before beginning their U-turn over Palo Alto.

2. Flight altitudes

The FAA previously agreed with Representative Eshoo in 2000 that the minimum altitude over the MENLO waypoint be 5,000 feet under visual flight rules (clear weather). Under NextGen, the altitude over the MENLO waypoint is 4,000 feet regardless of weather conditions in order to adhere to an optimized profile descent of 2.85 degrees. The average altitude over the MENLO waypoint has therefore decreased from 4,928 feet during September 2010 to 4,452 feet in September 2015.

Recommendation: Request that the FAA increase the minimum altitude over the MENLO waypoint during visual flight conditions, as previously agreed to with Representative Eshoo.

3. Flight frequency/concentration

Several SFO arrival routes converge over the MENLO waypoint resulting in a steady increase from approximately 3,900 airplanes in September 2010 to nearly 5,000 in September 2015.

Recommendation: Request that the FAA disperse arrivals by utilizing other waypoints in addition to MENLO, preferably over the San Francisco Bay and away from residential areas as much as possible.

The attached resolution (Attachment B) includes these recommendations and expresses opposition to any route modifications that would have the effect of concentrating additional flights over Menlo Park. In particular, any route modification that might add additional aircraft to a route that approaches the MENLO waypoint would have a substantial noise impact on Menlo Park.

Public Notice

Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

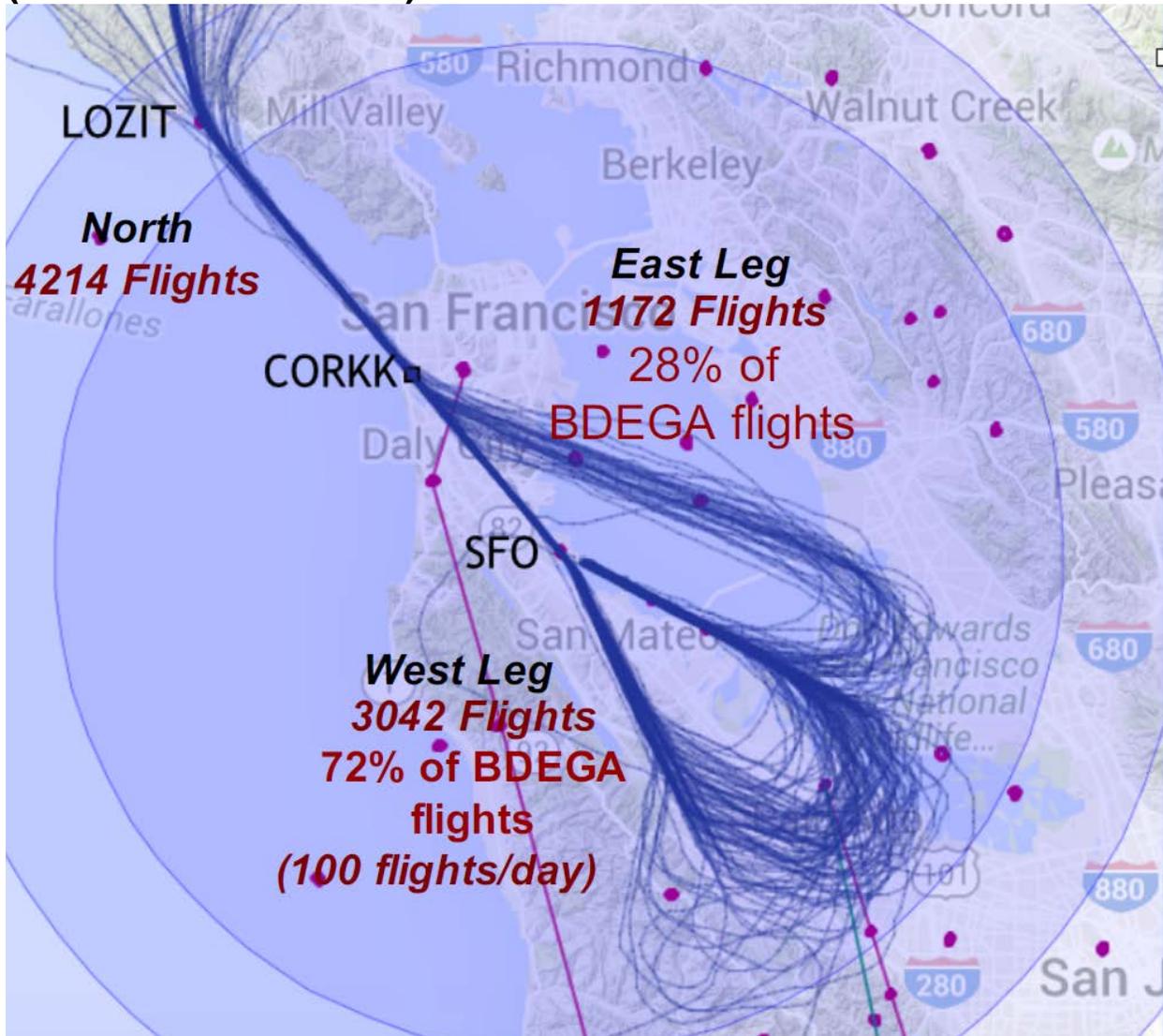
Attachments

- A. SFO Northern Arrivals Approach (BDEGA STAR Route) map
- B. Resolution

Report prepared by:

Clay J. Curtin, Assistant to the City Manager

SFO Northern Arrivals Approach (BDEGA STAR Route)



- Submitted to FAA for consideration on 10/9/2016.
- Traffic on west leg (over populated areas) significantly increased and on east leg (over the bay) significantly decreased recently.
- **Not addressed in FAA initiatives.**

Source: Californians for Quiet Skies (Portola Valley)

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RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK REQUESTING ACTION FROM THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION TO REDUCE AIRCRAFT NOISE IN THE CITY OF MENLO PARK

WHEREAS, the City of Menlo Park desires to maintain a pleasant quality of life for our residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Menlo Park will cooperate with all local, State and National agencies and provide its best efforts toward minimizing aircraft noise; and

WHEREAS, the City participates in the San Francisco Airport/Community Roundtable (SFO Roundtable) in an effort to reduce the impacts of commercial flights over the city of Menlo Park; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representatives Anna Eshoo, San Farr and Jackie Speier have formed a Select Committee on South Bay Arrivals to develop regional solutions to address aircraft noise; and

WHEREAS, the City Council seeks to have its position on aircraft noise articulated to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Select Committee and the SFO Roundtable.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Menlo Park City Council as follows:

1. Menlo Park residents have been negatively affected by increased aircraft noise caused by the implementation of the FAA's Next Generation Air Transportation system (NextGen) in 2015.
2. The City Council supports regional cooperation in addressing aircraft noise, and supports the efforts of the Select Committee and the SFO Roundtable to seek out and implement these solutions.
3. The City Council requests that the FAA reduce the arrivals into San Francisco International (SFO) using the BDEGA or Point Reyes West route over the Peninsula and instead utilize the BDEGA East route over the San Francisco Bay.
4. If the BDEGA/Point Reyes West route must be utilized, that airplanes be required to fly at a higher altitude over the mid-Peninsula before beginning their U-turn over Palo Alto.
5. The FAA previously agreed with Representative Eshoo in 2000 that the minimum altitude over the MENLO waypoint be 5,000 feet under visual flight rules (VFR). Under NextGen, the altitude over the MENLO waypoint is 4,000 feet regardless of

weather conditions in order to adhere to an Optimized Profile Descent (OPD) of 2.85 degrees. The average altitude over the MENLO waypoint has therefore decreased from 4,928 feet during September 2010 to 4,452 feet in September 2015.

6. The City Council requests that the FAA increase the minimum altitude over the MENLO waypoint during visual flight conditions, as previously agreed with Representative Eshoo.
7. Several SFO arrival routes converge over the MENLO waypoint resulting in a steady increase from approximately 3,900 airplanes in September 2010 to nearly 5,000 in September 2015.
8. The City Council requests that the FAA disperse arrivals by utilizing other waypoints in addition to MENLO, preferably over the San Francisco Bay.
9. The City is vehemently opposed to any modifications to routes that would have the effect of concentrating additional flights over Menlo Park. In particular, any modification of routes which add additional aircraft to a route that approaches the MENLO waypoint would have a substantial noise impact on Menlo Park.
10. After the Select Committee on South Bay Arrivals completes its work, the FAA must put in place a continuous mechanism for gaining feedback from mid-Peninsula communities affected or potentially affected by changes in aircraft routes and procedures.

I, Pamela Aguilar, City Clerk of the City of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing City Council resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting of said City Council on the nineteenth day of July, 2016, by the following votes:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Official Seal of said City on this nineteenth day of July, 2016.

Pamela Aguilar, CMC
City Clerk