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Mr. Joe Neves, Chairperson
Lemoore Joint Land Use Study Policy Committee
Kings County Association of Governments
339 W. D St. Suite B
Lemoore, CA 93245

Chairperson Neves:

The City of Lemoore is pleased to provide comments related to the March 22, 2011 Draft Joint Land Use Study.

The City has been a willing partner in the preparation of the Study, and looks forward to continued participation in the process. At this time, the City believes that the Study has fully examined the myriad of issues impacting land use decisions of the County of Kings, County of Fresno and City of Lemoore in the areas that surround Naval Air Station Lemoore. The City is appreciative of the 19 specific recommendations that are included in the Study for Lemoore, and believe that these recommendations are in concert with Lemoore's 2030 General Plan, adopted in 2008.

Since the area west of Highway 41 in Lemoore has become an important matter considered in the Study, we find it necessary to include some additional background information that we would request be included in the Final JLUS document.

In June 1997, the City of Lemoore annexed approximately 1,432 acres of land located west of State Highway 41, south of the present Industry Way alignment, to a point located between the 21st Ave. and 22nd Ave. alignment, with the Iona Ave. alignment serving as a southern border. The annexation action was approved only after the "Final Environmental Impact Report for the College Park at West Hills Development, General Plan Amendment, Sphere of Influence Amendment, Annexation and Amendment No. Two to the Redevelopment Plan for the Lemoore Redevelopment Project" (referred hereafter as the Final EIR) was prepared. The Executive Summary of the Final EIR defined the major City goals related to this annexation to include: "1) achievement of long-term economic growth of the community in a diverse and efficient manner, 2) achievement of a balanced community providing for needs of all the segments of the City, 3) achievement and maintenance of a sound economic base providing diversified employment opportunities, 4) blight remediation, 5) achievement of General Plan goals and objectives particularly as they relate to jobs/housing balance and other needs of the Lemoore Naval Air Station". The primary issue driving the annexation at the time was the 110 acre donation of land

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for West Hills College at Lemoore Community College Campus, located in the middle of the annexed area, which was complemented by a variety of land uses around the proposed Campus.

As shown on Page 34 of the Final EIR, the United States Department of Navy was notified during the Notice of Preparation, and two representatives attended the EIR Scoping Meeting held November 5, 1996, but no comments were received from the Navy prior to the document preparation. According to the Final EIR Appendix H – Noise Analysis page 11, the published noise contours in place from the air station at the time showed this entire annexation area was located about three miles outside of the 60 dB CNEL noise contour, and therefore it was determined that aircraft noise in the annexed area was anticipated at being less than 50 dB CNEL. The Final EIR determined that these noise exposure levels “do not represent a significant impact”.

In reviewing all of the written comments received during the 1997 EIR process, no written comments were received from NASL on the proposed annexation or land uses. Only one comment received on the EIR document (located in Appendix 8.G.6 of the Final EIR) was on the topic of encroachment; it came from the Kings County Planning Agency requesting that the project’s potential of “encroachment on Lemoore NAS” be addressed. The Final EIR includes the City’s response (listed in Appendix 9.G.6 of the Final EIR) which stated that the annexation area was within the City’s secondary Sphere of Influence, is located more than 4 miles from the nearest Accident Potential Zone and no development should expand west of the westerly boundary of the proposed annexation site. The document further stated that “officials at LNAS did not respond to the Draft EIR and, therefore, the City can only assume that the LNAS is in agreement with the Master Development Plan as proposed”.

Beginning in 2006, the City undertook a comprehensive update to the Lemoore General Plan. During the process, NASL personnel participated on the General Plan Steering Committee. As a result, the 2030 General Plan, as adopted by the Lemoore City Council on May 6, 2008, made the following changes for areas west of Highway 41:

1. Reduced future residential development density from an estimated 15,000 persons (1997 annexation land uses) to 10,000 persons (2008 General Plan land uses), over a larger area.
2. Modeled anticipated future noise contours independently based on input provided by the Navy to delineate those areas with greater than 60 dB CNEL. The 2008 contour map in the 2030 General Plan shows much of the area to be in greater than 65 dB CNEL noise contours.
3. Contains policy SN-I-46 which requires stringent noise mitigation policy framework for residential areas with aircraft noise exposure greater than “normally acceptable” (greater than 65 dB CNEL noise contour areas) to mitigate noise through recorded noise disclosures, avigation easements, a buyer beware program, as well as noise insulation construction requirements into the building design to achieve interior noise level reduction of 40 dB in all habitable areas and 45 dB in all bedrooms.
4. Pulled the westerly City Urban Growth Boundary away from NASL approximately ½ mile to the 21st Ave. alignment (which removed approximately 150 acres from future development).

5. Contains policy SN-I-47 to “coordinate with NAS Lemoore to incorporate their Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) study into future updates to the City Zoning Ordinance and General Plan to the extent consistent with the City’s compatibility standards and noise level reduction requirements.

As you can see, the issue of compatible growth around NASL has been very important for the City of Lemoore for the past many years. We believe that the 2030 General Plan contains numerous policies to help protect NASL from encroachment, and further believe the Draft JLUS contains recommendations that will help achieve protection from incompatible land uses.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Naval Air Station Lemoore Joint Land Use Study.

Sincerely,

Willard J. Rodarmel
Mayor