

From: [Steven Bennett](#)
To: [Ari Parker](#); [cityclerk](#)
Subject: Watsonville Airport Crosswind Runway (please keep it)
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 8:22:49 AM

Good morning Ari,

I'm writing to you this morning to support keeping the crosswind runway at the airport.

Our local airport being the only airport in the county should be persevered, protected, and promoted in nearly any way possible. Although the crosswind runway does not get used often, it's there when they need it, making the approach safer for everyone.

The removal, in my opinion, would be short sighted and a step towards getting rid of the airport all together. The airport is a vital service now and especially in times of crisis. This county would have been much worse off during the '89 earthquake without our airport and all of it's capacity.

Thank you for your service and your time,

Steven Bennett

District Leader
Primerica Financial Services
http://www.primerica.com/S_Bennett
CA Life Licence 0D34335

From: [Paco Estrada](#)
To: [City Council](#); [cityclerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment on item 12a - March 19th City Council Meeting
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 1:08:50 PM

Greetings Mayor Quiroz-Carter and members of the Watsonville City Council:

My name is Francisco Estrada, and I am a resident of District 4 (Kristal Salcido). I would like to offer my public comments on item 12a regarding the future of the municipal airport's short runway.

I am in favor of any proposed plan to close the short runway that will no longer be eligible for funding. I believe that the proposal is a fair compromise to this complex issue that will help balance a few needs and concerns, including (most importantly) adding much needed housing to our community. Although the proposed action does not guarantee that housing will be built and made affordable to residents looking to purchase a home in their own community, it will at least provide some flexibility and some opportunities to achieve some version of the American Dream for many.

Additionally, as is my understanding, the purpose of the airport was to serve the nation during World War II. War is something that should not be sanctified and the US government during that time took actions that were either unconstitutional or racially motivated to meet their wartime objectives. The community provided the land, its sons and daughters, it shamelessly deprived American citizens of rights and sent them to prison camps, but the war was eventually won. Watsonville did its duty, and although the airport served its purposes and many others since then, I do believe that it is time to return the land to the community and repurpose it for today's needs, not for the needs of 1941 or the privileged few.

We know that housing is the most fundamental and urgent matter that should be prioritized by our elected officials, especially in support of GenX, Millennial, and GenZ talent/families that continue to leave the community they love and feel abandoned by the upper classes and previous generations that have not fulfilled their end of the generational social contract (to leave the planet in a better state than how you found it). Affordable homes for families are needed, but middle and flexible housing options for young professionals and retiring seniors are most needed and missing to help in the health and development of an important sect of the overall population. I also think the view out in that 300-acre area is breathtaking, and adding commercial and park space can only enhance the quality of life for residents living nearby, as opposed to the status quo.

Although advocates for the airport will claim that the airport is an economic engine, it's really not. I love what Director Williams (I have the utmost respect for the Director) has done to promote the airport and his staff, but I don't think the constituents/clients of the airport have ever acted in good faith or in benefit of the greater community good. There are some local pilots that love aviation and I admire them for their passion, but if you take a good look at the composition of governing bodies advocating for the airport, you'll quickly see that they do not represent the 82% Latino community living in overcrowded conditions and that desperately needs housing, schools, parks, and commercial spaces. It's a shame that people cannot have the opportunity to purchase a home in their own community or even have the opportunity to fulfill Watsonville's biggest dream of having an In-N-Out. I'm not saying it will automatically happen, but it'll improve Watsonville's profile and it's off the highway, which I assume shouldn't impact an already busy traffic scene down on Freedom Blvd or Main Street since it's already off Highway 1. And with the apparent success of Measure N, a fully modernized Watsonville Community Hospital will be at the heart of this area and begin to play an integral role in supporting good community health.

The only thing I do ask the Council to do before setting forward on this path is to really think about things and cross all your t's and dot all your i's. Be transparent, timely, inclusive and honest. If you need and can table, consider if necessary. I appreciate and commend your efforts thus far, but regardless what you decide today, I still do believe that the City will face litigation for its decision. I'm basing this assumption on history, not my personal bias. So be bold, thoughtful, and empathetic.

Please consider the removal of the short runway as the first phase to the eventual closure of the municipal airport. I am grateful for its contributions to our community, but it has also been an obstacle and anchor with a net negative for this community. My email is already long and I didn't even get into addressing the environmental benefits or socio-economic factors, or how this publicly funded department contributes to the already ingrained inequity and racism of this City, but there are many many reasons to support the removal of the runaway (and airport in the future) and I honestly can go on and on. Even if it takes 20 years, it's the better option.

Thank you for your considering my thoughts on the matter and I hope to see you at the meeting. Good luck determining your decision.

Best,
Francisco Estrada

The future of runway 09/27

1. Analysis and summary

- a. Deactivation of runway 09/27 would allow for a maximum of 711 housing units, of which 345 units in Buena Vista are highly unlikely to be realized due to potential annexation process, infrastructure challenges, likely opposition by Friends of Buena Vista.
- b. Net benefit of deactivating runway 09/27 appears to be a potential for a maximum of 366 housing units near Freedom Blvd., however at a cost of \$1.5M for the city.
- c. The benefit appears to be quite small given the cost.
- d. Planning issues due to Airport Safety Zones may be reduced in future planned update to Caltrans Airport Land Use Planning Handbook (See *CASP 2020*: "Regulatory updates to balance land use and housing issues with airport viability").
- e. Caltrans is aware that old Handbook causes issues statewide. Caltrans has indicated willingness to work with city.
- f. In summary, expenditure of \$1.5M for deactivation of runway appears premature, given that safety zone definition and interpretation may change. \$1.5M could likely be spent in a better way for the community (e.g., on *low-income housing*).

2. Recommendations

- a. Based on above, I recommend to **not take action** to deactivate runway 09/27.
- b. Instead, I **suggest** that planners and airport stakeholders (group of CDD, WAAC, Airport Management) are directed to work together with Caltrans to **identify the best solution in transparent and balanced way**. This should include a potential extension of runway 02/20. A common report should be prepared and provided to City Council.
- c. Until solution is found, I suggest to either a) postpone a decision on runway 09/27 or b) proceed with approved plan of shortening by 870 feet. In either way, the full pavement of 09/27 should stay in place for emergencies.

Thomas Dienwiebel
Member of Watsonville Airport Advisory Committee

The future of runway 09/27

Brief summary of options

1. Shortening of runway 09/27 by 870 feet

- Already in Airport Master Plan. Approved by FAA, Caltrans. Fastest path forward.
- Opens up substantial part of Freedom Blvd. area by moving safety zones.
- Cost for reconfiguration is paid for by Airport Enterprise Fund – **no cost to city.**

2. Shortening of runway 09/27 by 1590 feet

- Time for realization: approx. 24 months
- Allows for additional development near the Freedom Boulevard/Green Valley intersection.
- Cost for reconfiguration: estimated at \$500,000, paid by Airport Enterprise Fund – **no cost to city.**

3. Deactivation of runway 09/27

- Time for realization: at least 4 years
- Additional potential housing units, compared with shortening by 1590 feet:

North Freedom:	230 - 366
Buena Vista:	290 - 345
Total:	520 - 711

- Cost: estimated **\$1,500,000 – payable by city** (per FAA rules, cannot be paid by Airport Enterprise Fund)

Thomas Dienwiebel
Member of Watsonville Airport Advisory Committee
March 19, 2024 – Personal opinion

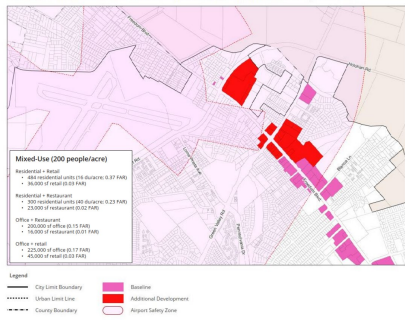
From: [City Council](#)
To: [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Vanessa Quiroz](#); [Maria Orozco](#); [Kristal Salcido](#); [Casey Clark](#); [Jimmy Dutra](#); [Ari Parker](#); [cityclerk](#)
Subject: FW: Observations on the Planning Dept's Presentation
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 9:27:04 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

From: Ryan <ramizzan@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 9:26:05 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: City Council <citycouncil@watsonville.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Observations on the Planning Dept's Presentation

I wanted to bring to your attention some observations. If this gets to you, maybe you could bring these questions up to the planning dept?

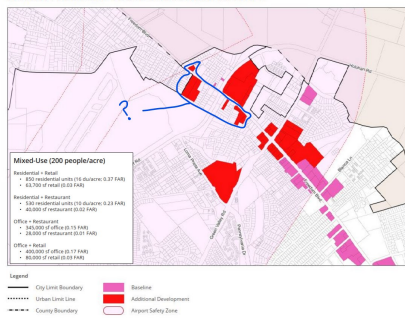
The presentation is claiming that eliminating the crosswind runway would open up from 17,000 to potentially 210,000sq.ft of retail space, or 0.5 to 'potentially' 4.5 acres.

NORTH FREEDOM: SHORTEN CROSSWIND RUNWAY BY 1,590 FT.



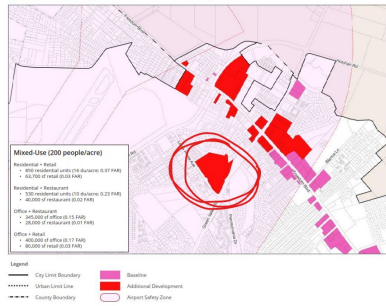
...which is basically this area in blue. The vast majority of the potential acreage is a single property in the upper left, Monument Lumber.

NORTH FREEDOM: CLOSE CROSSWIND RUNWAY



Shortening or eliminating the crosswind runway does not open this area circled below to development, as this slide suggests. It is already developed: Home Depot and its parking lot.

NORTH FREEDOM: CLOSE CROSSWIND RUNWAY



Moving the Threshold to 1580 feet places the turning zone directly over the new housing development in progress.



Notice that the 860 foot option still allows for most of the development the City is looking for. The blue area is zone 4 and allows for restaurants, retail, industrial and low density housing. e.g. K Mart could be redeveloped into mixed use as it's not under zone 4. Over half of the 4 acre parcel could be developed into residential with the 860 option.



There is also the possibility that infill at up to average density/intensity of comparable surrounding uses within these safety zones could be acceptable under CalTrans, in which case the City would be able to do 95% of what they wanted with the 860 foot option, but the City and the WPA must have the extra time to come to a settlement to the 2.5 year old lawsuit and finish working out these specific details that will go into the General Plan. Accepting a 1580 foot shortening prematurely would overly compromise safety and usability outlined in our letter, burden the City with unnecessary costs and unknowns while providing minimal or possibly inconsequential additional housing and business opportunities.

Closing the runway would only open up 0.5 to potentially 4.5 acres of additional commercial space, and potentially 500-700 additional residential units.

Thank you so much for your time.

-Ryan Ramirez
President
WPA - 408-832-0048

From: [City Council](#)
To: [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Vanessa Quiroz](#); [Maria Orozco](#); [Kristal Salcido](#); [Casey Clark](#); [Jimmy Dutra](#); [Ari Parker](#); [cityclerk](#)
Subject: FW: Aircraft of Historical Significance Exemption – Property Tax – California State Board of Equalization
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 9:46:32 AM

From: Lowell Hurst <lhurst@baymoon.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 9:45:58 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: City Council <citycouncil@watsonville.gov>; Rene Mendez <rene.mendez@watsonville.gov>
Cc: Marissa Duran <marissa.duran@watsonville.gov>
Subject: Aircraft of Historical Significance Exemption – Property Tax – California State Board of Equalization

Here's one reason the hundreds of expensive planes based at the airport only generate \$51,000 in property tax for the City. A large number of them are deemed historic and receive a tax exemption.

https://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/ahs_exemption.htm

LOWELL HURST
[WATSONVILLE, CA 95076](#)
Cell [831-334-5774](#)

From: [City Council](#)
To: [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Vanessa Quiroz](#); [Maria Orozco](#); [Kristal Salcido](#); [Casey Clark](#); [Jimmy Dutra](#); [Ari Parker](#); [cityclerk](#)
Subject: FW: Who uses the City airport?
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 11:28:49 AM

From: Lowell Hurst <lhurst@baymoon.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 11:28:28 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: City Council <citycouncil@watsonville.gov>
Subject: Who uses the City airport?

Dear Council,

This is an answer you should know and care about as decision makers for the residents of the City of Watsonville. Users from out of north Monterey County, Santa Cruz, Capitola, Aptos, La Selva and even Corralitos, may not understand or feel the unique pressures on our City in regards to housing, job creation, infrastructure operations, land use planning, public safety, tax and revenue generation.

No fault of their own, but they might not experience overcrowded neighborhoods, low wage jobs, lack of education, and the unique socioeconomic and linguistic cultural subsets that City residents live with daily. And thus, those who live outside our incorporated municipality may have a different perspective in meeting the needs, hopes, and challenges of our residents.

Let's remember who really lives in our city, who votes in our 7 districts, and the true needs of those you directly represent.

Thank for your work.

LOWELL HURST
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