

August 19, 2024

All Members of the Van Nuys Citizens Advisory Council (CAC)

Re: May 7, 2024, VNY CAC Economic Policy Motion

Dear Members of the Van Nuys Citizens Advisory Council (CAC),

LAX
Van Nuys
City of Los Angeles

Karen Bass
Mayor

**Board of Airport
Commissioners**

Karim Webb
President

Matthew M. Johnson
Vice President

Vanessa Aramayo
Courtney La Bau
Victor Narro
Nicholas P. Roxborough
Valeria C. Velasco

John Ackerman
Chief Executive Officer

Thank you for your dedication to advancing conversations regarding Van Nuys Airport (VNY) and the surrounding community. You are the body appointed by the Mayor, City Council, and Board of Airport Commissioners to represent the community on issues related to VNY and your service to your communities is admirable. The CAC is an important avenue for LAWA to gain insight and information from our community stakeholders and work together to explore ways in which VNY and our neighbors collectively benefit and succeed. LAWA is listening.

LAWA staff reviewed the VNY CAC Economic Policy Motion from May 7, 2024, and are pleased to provide a response to your requests. While we are not able to do 100% of what is being requested in this motion, we have identified several items that we can begin work on immediately. Additionally, there are other items that will require more time for implementation or review, but we agree regarding these matters.

Here is a summary of our efforts and responses to your requests.

1. **Offer Gami unleaded G100UL in tanks for sale and subsidize/reimburse part of the costs of STCs so there is rapid adoption of this FAA approved unleaded fuel to improve the health of children and families nearby.** One of the goals of LAWA's Sustainability Action Plan is to achieve net-zero carbon emissions from airport operations by 2045. However, while G100UL fuel for piston aircraft is certified for use in certain aircraft, it is not yet commercially available. We are monitoring the development process very closely so we can incentivize its use at VNY as soon as possible. GAMI 100UL still requires full certification for production, transfer, and storage at airports before it will be commercially viable, and the best industry estimate is that GAMI 100UL could be stocked by Fixed Based Operators (FBOs) by the end of 2025, but that is only an estimate and subject to change based on production. LAWA is also looking at the possibility of including language in future relevant RFPs to require provisioning and sale of unleaded 100 octane fuel within 60 days of a product becoming "commercially available". This would help ensure that we are an early adopter of this fuel.



- 2. Cooperate with LA City Council Districts in utilizing airport revenue where applicable in funding reports, studies and consultant needs associated with the development of the CF-23-1339 Specific Airport Plan. Including economic and environmental impacts, FAA regulations, and other matters related to potential airport development land use changes.** LAWA supports the creation of a new airport specific plan at VNY, working closely with Council District 6 (CD6) and the City Planning Department to guide the long-term vision for VNY. Last year, we hosted more than two dozen small group meetings and listening sessions to hear directly from a cross section of stakeholders and community members. We have committed to Councilmember Padilla that we will fund the necessary City Planning staff resources to support development of an airport specific plan. It is premature to comment on the specifics of the plan or approach, but it will be a robust planning process led by the City's Planning Department with the full support of LAWA and engagement of the Council Office and stakeholders.
- 3. Allocate more funds for public relations to promote and honor the voluntary Quieter Nights program via notices, banners, posters, constant promotions conferring the need to avoid night flights. Expand the hours and types of aircraft as originally requested. Paint more signage around VNY including sound walls with the times when not to fly to obtain more compliance and improve the health of surrounding communities.** At the July 18 Board of Airport Commissioners meeting, LAWA honored 21 VNY operators with Friendly Flyer Awards for their efforts to reduce noise as part of our Quieter Nights Program, and the next day shared a press release congratulating the winners. We agree that now is the time to strengthen our commitment to this program by investing in signage both off and on the airfield — including posters for our FBOs and our tower, repainting signage on the airfield, and continuing ongoing education and outreach to pilots and operators at VNY. A comprehensive communications campaign will further increase awareness of the program and encourage jet aircraft operators to participate — unless they are involved in military, law enforcement, emergency, fire, or air ambulance/life flight operations.
- 4. Improve security like TSA check-ins of all FBO passenger departures for passenger counts and to reduce drugs and illegal activities.** Aviation security is under the authority of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and FAA Part 135 and Part 380 charter operations are not subject to security provisions that are common at airports like LAX. HR 9268 was introduced in Congress earlier this month and would require TSA-style security for Part 135 and Part 380 charter operators at general aviation airports like VNY. In addition, FAA issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in June that would require public charter operators (under FAA Part 380) to meet the same FAA safety requirements as scheduled airlines. If the rules are updated, all VNY operators will be required to comply with any updated applicable standards. LAWA is on the record as opposed to the Part 380 “charter by the seat” operations occurring at VNY, and our team worked last year to introduce legislation and provided comment to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) asking that airport operators have greater authority to regulate Part 380 operators at a general aviation airport like VNY. While we are not currently able to regulate these activities, we hope in the future the federal government develops rules that will restrict these types of operations at general aviation airports like VNY.

- 5. Invest in expanding air and noise monitor systems that use as an example the SENEL method in areas not currently covered and outside the 65 db DNL counter line to assess exposures for adjacent communities and identify prime spots under the arrival and departure paths that would expand reporting to the FAA on lived impact and decibel increases where complaints are most numerous.** FAA requires all airports, including VNY, to follow 14 CFR part 150, Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL). However, FAA also accepts the more stringent California Community Noise Equivalent (CNEL), and this is what LAWA uses to generate our contour maps. You can view the quarterly reports with contour maps at the LAWA Noise webpage. The FAA is currently conducting a [Noise Policy Review](#) (NPR), where the threshold of noise disturbance and noise monitoring metrics are being reevaluated. LAWA will continue to monitor that process and will fully comply with any new policy that may result from the NPR. We will continue to utilize these FAA approved methods but will not create new standards.
- 6. Assist impacted communities and members with home purification units and HVAC filters to reduce ultra-fine particles and (VOCs). Upgrade soundproofing measures and subsidiaries within the 65 dB DNL contour line.** Because of FAA's policy and procedures concerning the use of airport revenue, LAWA is unable to pay for HVAC systems or home purification units. Additionally, homes around VNY are not eligible for soundproofing due to the location of the applicable noise contours. However, LAWA is working with CD6 on possible upgrades to sound walls or other sound mitigation measures on airport property that could assist local neighbors by reducing aircraft noise, and we are committed to finding other solutions that would provide a similar benefit to the community.
- 7. Fund a similar health mitigation program for all the nearby schools' classrooms and parks impacted by aviation air pollution and noise.** Unfortunately, FAA's policy concerning the use of airport revenue would not allow us to fund these measures. LAWA is committed to finding other solutions that would provide a similar benefit to the community.
- 8. Investigate sound/fume barrier along Hayvenhurst Avenue near residents' homes.** LAWA supports finding opportunities to improve the VNY airport infrastructure, including through additional sound barriers, beautification, and landscaping. As we consider the future of VNY and redevelopment, we will look for opportunities to increase sound mitigation measures and beautification through future planning processes, competitively bid leases for hangar and tenant space, and the creation of airport design standards for VNY.
- 9. Budget to assess the properties that were void of critical modernization upgrades and produce a report on the expense, feasibility and options of working with established FBOs and tenants in electrifying all ramps in order to provide the practical use of electric pre-conditioned air and ground power units to reduce the use of idling and auxiliary power units at VNY thereby reducing pollution.** LAWA is strongly committed to sustainability, and our efforts and goals are outlined in our [Sustainability Action Plan](#). LAWA is currently undergoing an electrification study to look at infrastructure needs and common charging opportunities for GSE. This would include the charging of electric ground power units (eGPU's) for aircraft power. Not all aircraft are compatible with plug in power, and we are exploring other options.

- 10. Provide the VNY CAC meetings and ensure working technology for presentations, live audio, and video capture of all monthly meetings similar to the BOAC and other city meetings.** In 2023, LAWA began recording and posting to the VNY CAC website audio recordings, and in some cases video recordings, of the monthly meetings. LAWA will continue uploading video or audio recordings to increase accessibility for anyone in the community who wishes to access a previous meeting.
- 11. Fund reserves sufficiently to cease accepting Federal FAA grant funds to free Los Angeles from the burden of FAA restriction in the future. LA Residents and City officials deserve self-determination.** Federal grant funding allows LAWA to pay for critical taxiway and runway safety improvements and supports our continued sustainability efforts. Over the past 5 years LAWA has received more than \$61.7 million in federal grants for VNY. The federal grants have been used primarily for airfield projects, including runway and taxiway reconstruction and rehabilitation. If LAWA were to cease the acceptance of grants for VNY we would still be required to comply with FAA rules and regulations, due to the reality of the governance of airports in the United States and our federal grant assurances in place from over the course of nearly 100 years of operations.

Thank you again for your thoughtful ideas on how we can improve VNY for our community and tenants. Please contact LAWA and the Van Nuys team with questions or comments.

Sincerely,



John Ackerman
CEO, Los Angeles World Airports

cc: Hon. Imelda Padilla, Los Angeles City Council District 6
Deputy Mayor Rachel Freeman