

Department of Conservation and Development

County Planning Commission

Tuesday, May 24, 2016 – 7:00 .P.M.

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item #2a

Project Title:	Amendment to General Plan Land Use Element Policy 3-98
County File Number:	GP16-0002
Applicant/Owner:	Contra Costa County (Applicant and Owner)
General Plan/Zoning:	Business Park / Unrestricted
Project Location:	South intersection of Marsh Drive and Sally Ride Drive (Buchanan Field Airport), unincorporated Concord area Parcel Number 125-010-023
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Status:	Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)
Project Planner:	Will Nelson, Principal Planner, (925) 674-7791
Staff Recommendation:	Adopt a resolution recommending that the Board of Supervisors adopts the proposed General Plan Amendment. See full recommendation in Section II.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is a County-initiated General Plan Amendment (GPA) to revise Land Use Element Policy 3-98 to increase the development limit for a three-acre portion of Buchanan Field Airport from 18,500 square feet to 52,300 square feet.

II. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the County Planning Commission adopt a resolution (see Attachment B, Draft County Planning Commission Resolution #9-2016) recommending that the Board of Supervisors:

1. FINDS, on the basis of the whole record before the County, for purposes of compliance with CEQA, that there is no possibility that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment, and that the project is therefore exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3); and
2. ADOPTS the General Plan Amendment, County File #GP16-0002, amending the text of Contra Costa County General Plan (2005-2020) Land Use Element Policy 3-98.

III. SITE/AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located on the west side of Buchanan Field Airport between Sally Ride Drive and Marsh Drive. The area designated BP (the “subject area”), which is the area affected by Policy 3-98, is located at the southern intersection of these streets and comprises the southernmost 4 acres¹ of the approximately 19-acre subject site. The entire property is vacant except for a large concrete pad. To the north, east, and south are airport-related uses and to the west is a mobile home park.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

- General Plan: The subject property is designated Business Park (BP) on the Land Use Element Map. The BP designation allows a mix of commercial, office, and light industrial uses which, “[b]y the high quality of their development and the nature of their operations, demonstrate compatibility with adjacent commercial and residential uses.” (Land Use Element page 3-20)

The following standards apply in areas designated BP:

- Maximum site coverage: 40 percent
- Maximum building height: 60 feet
- Maximum floor area ratio²: 1.5 (150 percent)
- Average employees per gross acre: 100
- Zoning: The subject property is zoned Unrestricted (U). Pursuant to County Ordinance Code Section 84-64.002:

All land within a U unrestricted district may be used for any lawful use, but the board of supervisors may hereafter amend this division to place land now placed in an unrestricted district into another district, or by proper amendment of this division may provide regulations for the use of land now in any unrestricted district.

Land zoned U is not subject to limitations on use and no development standards (setbacks, height limitation, etc.) are applicable. However, development at both County airports must comply with the adopted *Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Minimum Standards, Development, Facility Use & Lease Policies* (the “*Minimum Standards*”).

¹ While the subject area is approximately four acres, a 52-foot-wide swath along the west property line is reserved for a future transit corridor and trail and the Buchanan Field Master Plan depicts an access road crossing the site, effectively reducing the developable area to approximately three acres.

² Floor area ratio (FAR) is the ratio of developed or developable square footage relative to the size of the parcel. For example, a FAR of 50 percent or 0.5 means that a property can be developed with square equal to half its size. Thus, a 10,000-square-foot property with a FAR of 0.5 could be developed with up to 5,000 square feet.

- Environmental Review: The proposed project is an amendment to the text of the County General Plan. All GPAs qualify as projects under CEQA and are therefore subject to environmental review.

Prior to 2008, Land Use Element Policy 3-98 limited development of the subject property to 180,000 square feet of commercial development. In 2008 the County adopted an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the GPA associated with updating the Buchanan Field Master Plan. That IS/MND analyzed the impacts of over 300,000 square feet of potential new development on airport property, including the subject area, and identified potentially significant impacts in the following CEQA topics of study: Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation/Traffic, Utilities and Services Systems, and Mandatory Findings of Significance. Mitigation measures were identified to reduce all potentially significant impacts to less-than-significant levels.

As explained in Section VI below, development of the subject area was artificially limited in order to limit cumulative peak-hour traffic trips associated with the updated Master Plan. However, several specific projects that were anticipated to occur in 2008 and studied in the IS/MND never materialized. Thus, their anticipated contribution to peak-hour traffic also did not occur.

The proposed GPA involves restoring the subject area's former development potential in light of the fact that the projects anticipated in 2008 did not occur. The proposed GPA would not have a significant impact on the environment for the following reasons:

1. The amended text would still limit cumulative peak-hour trip generation, thus meeting the intent of the limitation placed in 2008.
2. The subject area is already approved for development and remains subject to the mitigation measures adopted in 2008.
3. Individual projects on airport property undergo their own CEQA review, so any specific development proposal in the subject area will be studied for potential environmental impacts.

Based on the foregoing, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the proposed GPA is exempt from CEQA because it can be seen with certainty that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment.

V. AGENCY COMMENTS

- Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC): ALUC staff indicated that the proposed GPA is not of a type that requires formal ALUC review.
- Regional Transportation Planning Committee (TRANSPAC): The proposed GPA would not result in 100 new peak-hour automobile trips. Thus, pursuant to the Contra Costa

Transportation Authority's *Technical Procedures Manual*, TRANSPAC review is not required.

VI. STAFF ANALYSIS

- A. Proposed Amendment to Land Use Element Policy 3-98: In 2008 the County General Plan was amended to support the update of the Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan that occurred that same year. Prior to the Master Plan update, the 19-acre County-owned property located between Marsh Drive and Sally Ride Drive was planned for commercial development and had a General Plan land use designation of Commercial (CO). At the time, Land Use Element Policy 3-98 allowed for up to 180,000 square feet of commercial development on this property.

When the Master Plan update was occurring, several large development projects were planned at Buchanan Field. To accommodate these projects while ensuring that enough land remained for future aviation-related development, the County determined it was appropriate to redesignate approximately three-quarters of the subject property from CO to the Public/Semi-Public (PS) use designation and redesignate the subject area to BP.

As the County proceeded with the environmental review for the Master Plan update and GPA, the analysis revealed that anticipated development would generate over 100 peak-hour traffic trips, thus necessitating preparation of a traffic impact analysis. In an effort to stay below 100 peak-hour trips, the County ran numerous development scenarios for the subject area assuming that the then-proposed projects would be developed, which resulted in a determination that development of the subject area should be capped at 18,500 square feet of business park use types. However, mainly as a result of the recession, none of the projects planned in 2008 were implemented. The County has now been approached by an applicant seeking to develop up to 52,300 square feet of industrial/business park uses on the subject area, but the current iteration of Policy 3-98 prevents such development.

The 18,500-square-foot development limit for the subject area is an artificial limitation meant to address cumulative trip generation from projects that never materialized and has no other practical reason for existing in the General Plan. This artificial limitation yields an allowable FAR of approximately 12 percent for the subject area, where the normal FAR for land designated BP is 150 percent (it is worth noting that the former CO designation for the site allows an FAR of 100 percent). In order to restore some of the subject area's former development potential, staff proposes amending Land Use Element Policy 3-98 as follows (with deleted text shown as ~~strikethrough~~ and new text shown as double-underlined):

- 3-98 The area designated for Commercial (CO) use at the entrance of John Glenn Drive is limited to development of 220,000 square feet of space; the area designated Business Park (BP) at Marsh Drive and Sally Ride Drive is limited to ~~18,500~~ 52,300 square feet. New development undertaken pursuant to the

Buchanan Field Master Plan (2008) shall not cause cumulative automobile trip generation to exceed 99 peak-hour trips unless a traffic impact analysis has been performed consistent with the most recent version of the *Technical Procedures Manual* adopted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority and the appropriate documentation has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Adoption of this amended language provides a FAR of approximately 40 percent, which is well within the allowable FAR for land designated BP, while still maintaining the intent of the 2008 GPA to limit peak-hour traffic generation to 99 trips or fewer. Any eventual development of the subject area must comply with the adopted *Minimum Standards* and the mitigation measures identified in the 2008 IS/MND. Such development must ultimately be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

- B. General Plan Consistency: Policies 3-91 through 3-101 (Land Use Element), and 5-59 and 5-61 through 5-63 (Transportation and Circulation Element) pertain specifically to Buchanan Field Airport. Additional goals and policies in the Transportation and Circulation Element are general and pertain to both County airports.

The proposed amendment to Policy 3-98 is consistent with the general and specific policies for County airports. The General Plan as originally adopted included Policy 3-109, which allowed for up to 180,000 square feet of development on the subject property. The policy remained unchanged until 2008 when it was amended to reflect the newly-applied BP land use designation and limit development of the subject area as described above. At that time several other policies pertaining to Buchanan Field were adopted or amended. Three of these, Policies 3-95 through 3-97, refer specifically to the subject area and reinforce the County's intent to develop it with non-aviation uses. Restoring a portion of the subject area's original development potential is consistent with those policies.

VII. CONCLUSION

The 18,500-square-foot development limit for the subject area is an artificial limitation that no longer has a practical purpose. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Planning Commission adopt Resolution #9-2016, recommending that the Board of Supervisors finds the project to be exempt from CEQA and adopts the proposed GPA to restore the development potential of the subject area.

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Memo from Public Works Department – Airports Division Requesting a General Plan Amendment
- B. Draft County Planning Commission Resolution #9-2016
- C. General Plan Land Use Map and Aerial Photograph of Subject Area

WN 5/12/16

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
Public Works Department-Airports Division

FEB 12 P 2:45

DATE: February 10, 2016

TO: Will Nelson,
Principal Planner

FROM: Beth Lee, *BL*
Assistant Director of Airports

SUBJECT: General Plan Amendment, Buchanan Field Airport

Per past discussions, this memorandum serves to request a General Plan Amendment related to the Policies for the Buchanan Field Airport (Airport) that was one of several changes made in 2008 to bring conformity with the updated Airport Master Plan. The specific item of concern is Policy 3-98 which changed a portion of a commercial use to a business park, but also specified a development limit of 18,500 square feet for the 3-acre site (see "BP" noted on attached map). At that time there were several large, planned Airport development projects and, as a result, the business park development envelope was limited to 18,500 square feet in order to address the cumulative peak hour trip generation concerns (total not to exceed 99). Subsequent to the 2008 General Plan Amendment, however, the economy went into a recession which resulted in none of the planned Airport projects proceeding.

Fast forward eight years and we are finally getting resurgence in development interest at the Airport. The first project is an industrial business park on the 3 acre site but the 18,500 square foot development envelope constraint is too low for a project to be economically viable. As previously mentioned, the constraint was derived from past cumulative development conditions that are no longer applicable. As such, the maximum building size should be changed to reflect current circumstances. Specifically, we are requesting the General Plan be amended to reflect the following:

- The development envelope be increased to a maximum of 52,300 square feet of industrial business park use (more service oriented with little, or no, point of sale expected at the site);
- A maximum of 20% (or 10,460 square feet) of the space would be office;
- A majority (80% plus, or 41,840 square feet or more) of the space would be warehouse;
- The maximum peak hour trip generation be calculated based on the type of development (industrial business use) and primarily based on trips per number of employees as the development is not expected to generate many trips particularly at peak hour times (the few jobs created could offer local residents employment opportunities thereby alleviating commute traffic to other workforce locations).

NOTE: the actual project size is likely to be below the maximum requested and, as such, we request that the final peak hour trips applied to this project be calculated based on the type of development, actual development size, and trips per employee.

The proposed General Plan Amendment is desired to best ensure that the land uses are consistent with the adopted Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Minimum Standards, Development, Facility Use & Lease Policies (Minimum Standards) and provides optimum flexibility to accommodate future changes. Further, it will provide maximum future opportunities while minimizing the need to undertake future

General Plan or zoning amendments as infrastructure and/or other circumstances change (to address concern of time delay and cost will destroy a future opportunity).

Please contact me at 681-4203 to discuss any questions you may have, next steps, process and anticipated timing.

cc: Joe Yee, Public Works
Keith Freitas, Airports

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, INCORPORATING A RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS FOR A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT RELATING TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN OF SAID COUNTY.

WHEREAS, on October 28, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved General Plan Amendment (GPA) #GP07-0001, which amended the Contra Costa County General Plan (2005-2020) Land Use and Transportation and Circulation elements in support of the 2008 update to the Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, when the Master Plan was updated and GPA #GP07-0001 was adopted, several significant development projects were proposed at Buchanan Field and in order to restrict cumulative traffic generation below 100 peak-hour trips, the County limited development of the three-acre portion of Buchanan Field property designated "Business Park" on the Land Use Element Map to 18,500 square feet; and

WHEREAS, as part of its adoption of GPA #GP07-0001, for purposes of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Board of Supervisors adopted an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration which analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the Master Plan update and determined, among other things, that impacts related to transportation and traffic could be mitigated to less-than-significant levels; and

WHEREAS, primarily as a result of the economic recession beginning in 2008, none of the projects anticipated under the Master Plan were implemented, and none of the traffic attributable to these projects was generated; and

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2016, the Public Works Department – Airports Division submitted a request to amend Land Use Element Policy 3-98 to increase the development limit for the three-acre portion of Buchanan Field designated Business Park from 18,500 square feet to 52,300 square feet citing the fact that none of the development projects anticipated in 2008 had been implemented and therefore the aforementioned limit on development was no longer necessary; and

WHEREAS, on May 24, 2016, the Board of Supervisors voted to authorize GPA study #GP16-0002; and

WHEREAS, for purposes of compliance with the provisions of CEQA and the State and County CEQA Guidelines, the County determined that there is no possibility that the proposed GPA will have a significant effect on the environment, and that GPA #GP16-0002 is therefore exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3); and

WHEREAS, after notice having been lawfully given, a public hearing was scheduled before the County Planning Commission on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, whereat all persons interested in the matter might appear and be heard; and

WHEREAS, on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, the County Planning Commission fully reviewed, considered, and evaluated all testimony and evidence submitted in this matter.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the County Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors:

1. FINDS, on the basis of the whole record before the County, for purposes of compliance with CEQA, that there is no possibility that GPA #GP16-0002 will have a significant effect on the environment, and it is therefore exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3); and
2. FINDS that the proposed GPA would be in the public interest as it furthers the goals and policies in the Contra Costa County General Plan related to development of Buchanan Field Airport; and
3. FINDS that the proposed GPA would be consistent with the other goals, policies, and implementation measures described in the General Plan, and would not cause a violation of any of the Growth Management Performance standards as described in the Growth Management Element; and
4. ADOPTS GPA #GP16-0002, amending the text of General Plan Land Use Element Policy 3-98 as follows, as the 1st Consolidated GPA for calendar year 2016, as permitted under State law:

(deleted text is shown as ~~striketrough~~ and new text is shown as double-underlined):

3-98 The area designated for Commercial (CO) use at the entrance of John Glenn Drive is limited to development of 220,000 square feet of space; the area designated Business Park (BP) at Marsh Drive and Sally Ride Drive is limited to ~~18,500~~ 52,300 square feet. New development undertaken pursuant to the Buchanan Field Master Plan (2008) shall not cause cumulative automobile trip generation to exceed 99 peak-hour trips unless a traffic impact analysis has been performed consistent with the most recent version of the *Technical Procedures Manual* adopted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority and the appropriate documentation has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

The instructions by the County Planning Commission to prepare this resolution were given by motion of the County Planning Commission on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners -
NOES: Commissioners -
ABSENT: Commissioners -
ABSTAIN: Commissioners -

Duane Steele,
Chair of the Planning Commission,
County of Contra Costa,
State of California

I, Aruna Bhat, Secretary of the County Planning Commission, certify that the foregoing was duly called and approved on May 24, 2016.

ATTEST:

Aruna M. Bhat,
Secretary of the Planning Commission
County of Contra Costa,
State of California

Buchanan Field Airport, Concord Area General Plan Amendment Study (GP16-0002)



Legend

- Project Site
- Parcels

General Plan Land Use Designation

- MO (Mobile Home)
- BP (Business Park)
- LI (Light Industry)
- PS (Public/Semi-Public)

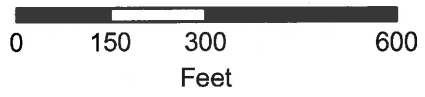
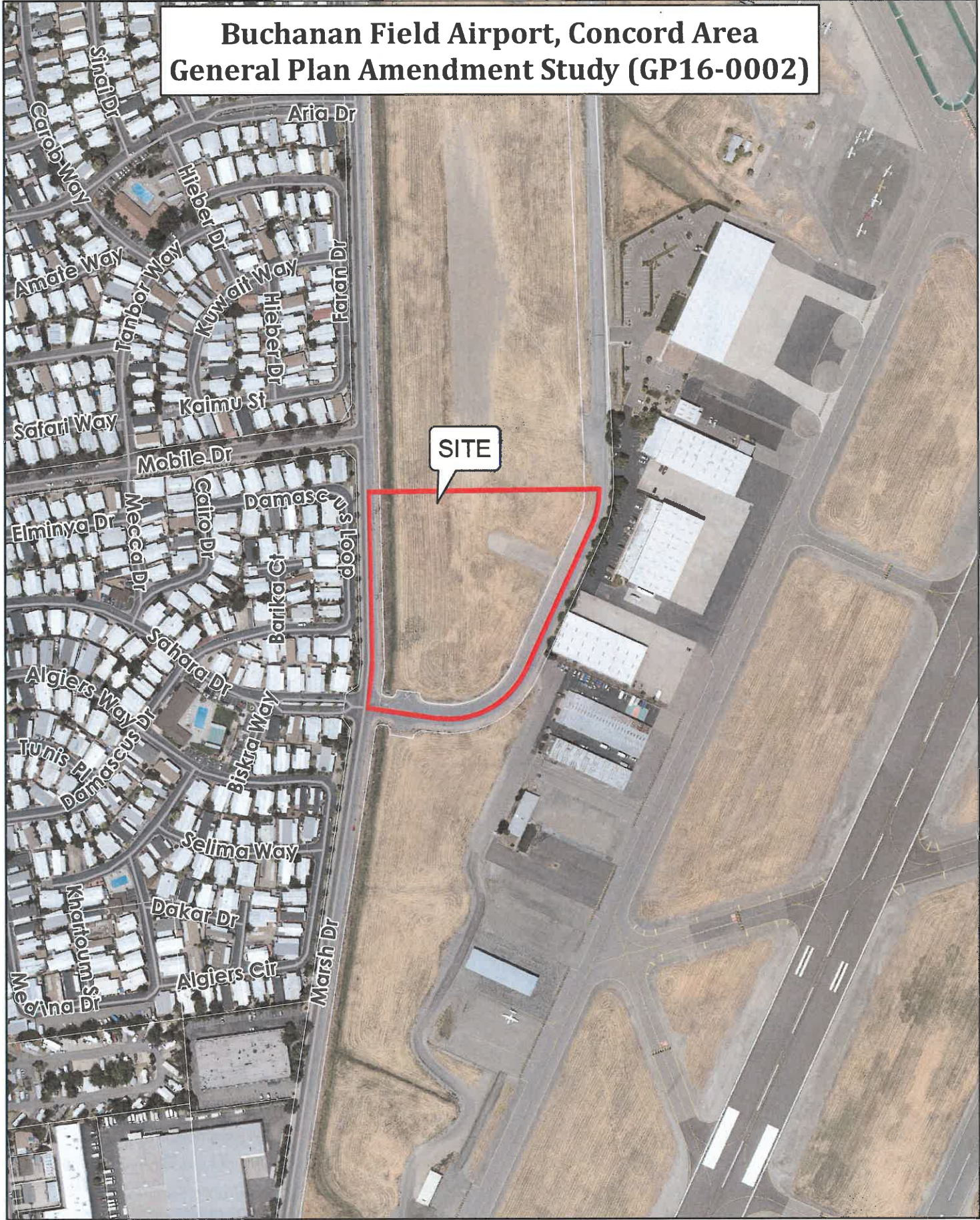


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37.59:41.791N 122:07:03.756W

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Buchanan Field Airport, Concord Area General Plan Amendment Study (GP16-0002)



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