



Item 7A

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 27, 2017
TO: JLUS Policy Committee
FROM: James McMurray, HB&A; Brian Potts, JLUS Program Manager
THROUGH: Rick Sonnenburg, Acting Executive Director
SUBJECT: USAFA AREA PUBLIC INPUT MEETING REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED: Information Only

SUMMARY

A Public Input Meeting was held for the USAF Academy Area on Thursday, February 23, 2017, at Library 21c from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The purpose of this meeting was to:

1. Gather public input on the recommended strategies developed at this point in time
2. Provide the public with information about the issues covered by the JLUS
3. Encourage the public to stay involved and provide details on how they can continue to provide input for this study.

Estimated attendance was approximately 100 people. Stakeholders that joined this event included local elected officials, City of Colorado Springs staff working on Plan COS (Comprehensive Plan Update), Larry Small from the Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway District, CONO, and officials from the USAF Academy. Representatives from working groups attended and volunteered to assist with answering citizen's questions. The information stations (display posters are posted on our website) were designed to both inform citizens and ask for specific input on the draft recommended strategies and other useful input to guide staff on further issue research. Overall comments from attendees about the event were positive and that they had productive interactions with the all the staff, especially with the planning consultant team of HB&A, TetraTech, and Bachman PR, who were all essential to the success of this event.

Staff would welcome feedback from the Policy Committee on this meeting format. Staff has reviewed and summarized the public input received at the meeting and organized the input by the topical categories as displayed at the meeting.

TRAILS

The strategies below are in order of importance per citizen feedback (number of dots placed next to each strategy):

1. Establish safe and optimal alternative on-street and off-street routes, including a route with a natural character similar to the existing New Santa Fe Trail (12)
1. Create a major maintenance and improvement program to address trail sustainability and enhance security for the installation and users (12)
2. Create a way for trail users to receive communication on trail status (4)
3. Update existing wayfinding within this corridor (1)

Summation of Written Comments

- The primary public sentiment is to keep the trails that are located on the USAF Academy open to the public.
- Communication related to trail status is the next most significant request of the public. The use of smart phone applications, website announcements, social media, and signage are methods to be considered as communication medium.
- Trail alternatives were emphasized, such as a parallel trail system along the east side of I-25; establishment of trail connections between The Shops at Briargate/Pine Creek drainage and Woodmen Road and a designated paved bicycle commuter trail that is allocated right-of-way.

USAF ACADEMY FLIGHT TRAINING

The strategies below are in order of importance per citizen feedback (number of dots placed next to each strategy):

1. Examine ways to continue to reduce flight training impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. (22)
2. Improve public understanding of the community impacts from USAF Academy flight operations. (12)
3. Develop methods to improve disclosures of flight activity for real estate transactions. (7)
4. Formalize the process of planning and development, and determine the steps and timeline for installation involvement for areas where overflight occurs. (3)
5. Develop a communication plan for education, outreach, and to improve working relationship between USAF Academy, local jurisdictions, and citizens. (1)
6. Create a centralized online mechanism for local military installations to receive complaints about flight activity and distribute information. (1)

Summation of Written Comments

Twenty-one written comments were placed on the “Comments and Discussion” board for Flight Training.

- Nearly half of all comments expressed dissatisfaction with the noise, frequent flights, and early morning start time. A few of these comments expressed that flights should be rerouted so that they did not fly over their neighborhood. A few also were concerned with the safety of the flight maneuvers over their homes.
- Six comments were supportive of continued flight training.
- Two comments stated that there needed to be better communication with the citizens about flight activity.
- Two comments included the suggestion that buffer areas need to be created for open space and to limit residential development under flight training areas.
- One comment supported increasing solar farms in the area.

- One comment was concerned about future closure of the high school should there be another security threat as occurred on 9/11/2001.

STORMWATER

The strategies below are in order of importance per citizen feedback (number of dots placed next to each strategy):

1. Stabilize the creek and floodplain to reduce erosion and sediment transport (2)
1. Stabilize eroding banks along the creek (2)
2. Utilize the Monument Creek Watershed Restoration Master Plan (1)
2. Encourage stormwater management standards and techniques (1)
3. Establish performance criteria (0)
4. Restore, enhance, and conserve riparian vegetation (0)

Comments

- One comment asked for disclosure of information on ongoing litigation and approved measures and planning over time.
- The second comment wanted stakeholders to look for ways to integrate trails, open space and habitat into stormwater projects

WILDFIRE

No specific strategies were presented aside from use of existing plans that have been developed by local communities. One comment was provided by a citizen who wanted increased disclosure of emergency access routes. Staff is aware that this information is accessible to the public on various agency websites where a Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) can be obtained. CWPPs exist for El Paso County, and most other city and towns within the Pikes Peak area. Interagency cooperative agreements exist between each CWPP and military installations as well.

ADDITIONAL JLUS TOPICS

A display board listed other categories of compatibility issues that were not presented at this event. Citizens placed dots next to the items that they thought were most important out of the other topics:

1. Noxious Weeds (5)
2. Water Supply (2)
3. Frequency Spectrum (2)
4. Light and Glare (2)
5. Cultural Resources (1)
6. Air Quality
7. Transportation Network
8. Anti-terrorism/security
9. Vibration
10. Dust/smoke/steam

GENERAL COMMENTS

There were three methods for attendees to provide additional unstructured comments to us:

1. Write comments on a board as they exited the meeting:

These comments were positive and constructive. Only one comment concerning train noise fell outside the scope of the JLUS study.

2. Discuss the issues directly with staff:

Numerous conversations occurred with the total of nine staff at the meeting. In general, citizens wanted to understand these issues and express their viewpoints, frequently inline with the comments noted previously in this document. Citizens also expressed their appreciation that we were researching these issues and thankful that we had this type of meeting so they could be heard.

3. Written comment forms:

Twenty-one written comment forms were filled out by citizens and many reinforced the comments left at many of the stations. Below is a summary of each comment:

Topic Area:	Asked to Receive Updates?:	Comment Subject Summary:
Other	Yes	Train Horn Noise
Military Operations	No	Change Flight Path
Other	Yes	Aircraft Noise
Land Use	Yes	Bike Trails
Military Operations	Yes	Aircraft Noise
Military Operations	Yes	Aircraft Noise
Other	No	Bike Trails
Military Operations	No	Communications Need To Improve
Other	Yes	Trails
Military Operations	Yes	Aircraft Routes
Military Operations	Yes	Aircraft Routes
Transportation	Yes	Regional Bus to Installations; avigation documentation on deeds
Military Operations	No	Aircraft Noise
Land Use	No	Public Access
Did Not Specify	No	Public Access to Trails
Did Not Specify	No	Aircraft Routes & Noise
Did Not Specify	No	Aircraft Noise
Transportation	No	Public Access
Did Not Specify	No	Aircraft Noise
Did Not Specify	No	Traffic at I-25
Did Not Specify	No	Communications From The Academy

Half of the comments left were anonymous and the rest had a name and contact information so we could communicate with them in the future. Nearly half of these comments were focused on the aircraft noise associated with flight training and the details of the comments fit in with the draft strategies created by the USAF Academy Flight Working Group. Note that train horns and their use is governed by the Federal government and the trains are operated by BNSF Railway. Train horn noise is not within the scope of this study as it does not directly relate to military activity, but staff will look into how we can address this comment.