



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# Governmental Affairs Committee Memorandum

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**TO: GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** **DATE: February 7, 2018**

**FROM: GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT** **WARD: 3**

**SUBJECT: RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT  
AIR SHOW PRESENTED BY THE RIVERSIDE AIRPORT OPEN HOUSE, INC.**

## **ISSUE:**

Receive a report presented by Riverside Airport Open House, Inc. on recommendations to improve the Riverside Air Show and forward the recommendations to the City Council.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Governmental Affairs Committee receive a report presented by the Riverside Airport Open House, Inc. on improvements to the Riverside Air Show and forward the recommendations to the City Council.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Riverside Municipal Airport (Airport) is a transportation and economic development asset serving general and corporate aviation in the Inland Southern California Region. The Airport is equipped with complete landing and navigation systems for all-weather conditions, provides full conference facilities, full service pilot and aircraft services, and is the location for the Riverside Municipal Airport Air Show (Air Show) -- the second largest public event in the City of Riverside.

The City has been hosting Air Shows at the Airport since 1993. In 1998, the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Riverside Airport Open House, Inc. (Operator) to identify the respective roles of the Operator and the City relative to the Air Show activities. The MOU defined the rights, duties and obligations between the Airport and the Operator and authorized the Operator to publicize, organize, conduct and operate the Air Show at the Airport as a City event. On March 7, 2000, City Council approved an updated MOU shifting financial responsibility for police and fire support services from the Operator to the City.

At the August 2, 2017 Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC) meeting, an update was provided on the 2017 Air Show. The GAC was presented with staff suggestions, organizer comments and survey feedback on how to improve the future air shows, starting with the 2018 Air Show. The GAC and later the City Council requested that the Operator present a plan to the GAC by January 2018 to consider opportunities for improving the Air Show that were identified in the staff report.

## **DISCUSSION**

On October 30, 2017, General Services staff met with representatives of the Operator to address, discuss, and evaluate the opportunities identified in the GAC report dated August 2, 2017. The following information reflects recommendations from the GAC report to improve the Air Show, as provided through staff suggestions, organizer comments and survey feedback; and subsequent recommendations from the Operator.

### **Establish a Citywide Executive Committee**

**Recommendation:** The current Air Show committee is comprised of a variety of members that have significant aviation and public safety experience. The Air Show Committee provides regular updates to the Airport Commission and Airport staff during the planning process. Because the Air Show is a City event, staff recommends creation of a sub-committee (City Executive Committee) to include the City's marketing team, members of the Airport staff, Riverside Police Department, and representation from the Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce. The City Executive Committee would serve as an advisory group to the Corporation committee and provide input on marketing, sponsorships, parking services and other items that may impact City residents and/or businesses.

**Operator response:** As established by a Memorandum of Understanding with the City in 1998, the Operator currently has in place a Board of Directors, an Executive Committee and a Steering/Operational Committee. The Steering/Operational Committee consists of representatives from the Airport, General Services, Riverside Police, Riverside Fire, and the Airport Commission. The Operator does not support the recommendation of another "Executive Committee", however; the Operator welcomes input and feedback from the aforementioned groups for consideration.

### **Marketing/Outreach**

**Recommendation:** Expand the marketing and public outreach effort to include members of the City Executive Committee to boost attendance and revenue.

**Operator response:** The Operator concurs with this approach and appreciates any help and assistance from the City with this aspect of the Air Show.

### **Establish Annual Metrics**

**Recommendation:** In order to align with the Riverside 2.1 Performance Measurement Program, staff is recommending the Corporation work with City staff to establish metrics to evaluate the annual performance of the Air Show.

**Operator response:** The Operator concurs with the recommendation and is willing to explore options to track Air Show performance. The Operator will continue to present Air Show updates to the Airport Commission and welcomes the opportunity to present updates to City Council on an annual basis.

### **Sponsorships**

**Recommendation:** Currently, the majority of sponsorships provide in-kind services. Staff recommends exploring expansion of the sponsorship program to include cash value/corporate sponsorships, which will serve to increase the Air Show profile and to offset program costs and attract additional performers.

**Operator response:** The Operator concurs that in-kind services are a benefit to the Air Show and welcomes the opportunity to explore any input from the City relative to cash value/corporate sponsorships to offset program costs and attract additional performers.

### Parking

**Recommendation:** Review parking operations with the City Executive Committee to maximize the visitor experience and manage on-street parking in residential neighborhoods. This may require several street closures to be coordinated with Riverside Police Department and the Public Works Department.

**Operator response:** The Operator agrees parking for the Air Show has always been an issue for an event of this size. In an effort to better optimize and manage street parking in residential neighborhoods, the Operator is entertaining an entrance gate fee versus the existing parking fee. The proposed entrance gate fee will increase revenues and better manage parking for the Air Show. The Operator recommends that the Airport, Police and the Public Works Department work together to maximize the parking and visitor experience.

### Performers

**Recommendation:** Currently, the Air Show runs two identical performances – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Staff recommends reviewing the performance schedule to offer greater variety (i.e. run a different show in the morning than in the afternoon to encourage attendees to stay longer).

**Operator response:** The Air Show currently has a morning and afternoon show with the same performers. Entertaining separate shows in the morning and afternoon would substantially increase performer costs. In addition, it is the Operator's experience that the morning and afternoon crowds are different so having the same performance works for both groups of attendees and is more cost efficient relative to performer expenditures. The Air Show Committee is constantly exploring opportunities for new performers and increasing event revenues will enhance the selection of future Air Show performers.

### Fees

**Recommendation:** Staff conducted a survey of surrounding air shows to compare the cost of admission, vendor booth fees and parking fees. The table below reflects the results of this survey:

Venue	Admission	Parking	VIP	Booth Fee
Apple Valley Air Show	\$5.00	\$0	-	\$100
Cochran Air Show	\$0	\$0	-	\$450
French Valley Air Show (Wings, Wine & Craft Brew)	\$0	\$0	\$32	N/A
Hemet-Ryan Air Show	\$0	\$0	-	\$350
March Reserve Air Base Air Show	\$0	\$0	\$29	N/A
Chino (Planes of Fame Air Show)	\$25.00	\$0	-	25% of sales
Redlands Air Show	\$15.00	\$5.00	-	20% of sales
Riverside Air Show	\$0	\$10.00	-	\$500
San Bernardino Air Show	\$20.00	\$0	-	N/A

**Operator response:** The Operator agrees with the survey of surrounding Air Show fees. These fees vary depending on the individual airport/air show needs. The Operator is reviewing how the Riverside Air Show fees will be structured for future events. The Air Show's current fees for booth rentals are very competitive and additional requests for new booths are regularly received. Food trucks were introduced at the 2017 Air Show with less than favorable feedback relative to staff management and food pricing. As stated previously, the Operator will administer a competitive entrance fee in lieu of the existing parking fees to increase revenues and better manage the parking processes.

#### Beer Garden

**Recommendation:** Nearly all Air Shows offer beer sales (no wine or liquor) with some shows including the brewery culture into their branding. The Corporation's Air Show organizers have evaluated inclusion of a beer garden and recommend against it. However, staff believes that to remain competitive with neighboring air shows, a controlled beer garden is an item worth exploring for future Air Shows.

**Operator response:** The Operator does not recommend introducing a beer garden to the Air Show. Although a beer garden may increase revenues, the Operator views the Air Show as a family event and wants the Air Show, and the City, to continue to set this example. Additionally, the added costs, risk and liability involved with a beer garden operation may offset revenues collected from serving alcohol.

#### Airspace

**Recommendation:** The performance airspace is referred to as the "show box". Due to constraints of development on the north side of the Airport, the City of Riverside currently has the smallest show box of nearby Air Shows for performers. This restriction significantly limits the type of aircraft that are scheduled for an air performance, resulting in no jet-type aircraft. Staff recommends exploring options to work with businesses north of the Airport to close on the day of the Air Show. In addition, in the event the show box is expanded, staff recommends working with March Air

Reserve Base to provide ground support facilities for military jet aircraft that cannot land at the Airport but are willing to perform.

**Operator response:** The FAA's terminology for the performer's airspace is the "Air Box". It is classified into three categories depending on the participating aircrafts' capable speed. At one time, the Airport had a "Category 2" Air Box which allowed some jets to perform, however, due to the development north of the Airport the FAA re-assigned the Air Show to a "Category 3" Box. The FAA does not permit jet aircraft to perform as aerobatics in a "Category 3" Air Box, however; jet fly-bys are allowed. In the past the Airport tried to clear the area along Central Avenue by closing down businesses and preventing parking on Central Avenue. The Operator understands the Air Show can be inconvenient for businesses and enforcing compliance with parking on a major thoroughfare during the event can be extremely challenging. With the challenges of meeting federal regulations to meet the "Category 2" Air Show Box, the Operator recommends continuing with the existing performance airspace and exploring options to provide additional performers.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Kim Ellis, Airport Manager  
Certified as to  
availability of funds: Adam Raymond, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer  
Approved by: Marianna Marysheva, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation