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Sun Valley Area
Neighborhood Council
info@svanc.com

Letter/Resolution/Community Impact Statement

June 9, 2026

RE: The future of Whiteman Airport regarding the Los Angeles County's study that looks to close or redevelop it.

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council, SVANC, declares that on June 9, 2026 at a Brown Act noticed public meeting held by this Neighborhood Council with a quorum of 13 board members present and that by a vote of 12 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention, and 4 absences adopted the following resolution.

The Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council strongly supports keeping Whiteman Airport open and to redevelop some areas to accommodate green space for the adjacent community. There are many great services Whiteman Airport provides that no other entity can such as **critical public safety infrastructure, and economic and community resources.**

Critical Public Safety Infrastructure

Whiteman Airport serves as a base of operations for multiple public safety agencies, including the Los Angeles County Fire Department Air Operations, KTLA 5 News, CAL FIRE, LAPD Air Support, and humanitarian organizations such as Angel Flight.

From this location, crews deploy wildfire suppression, search and rescue, medical response, and emergency transport. Its location in the northeast San Fernando Valley allows for rapid response times that directly impact public safety across the region. This is an active, daily function that would be difficult to replace if lost. The Angel Flight is a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization that provides free, non-emergency air transportation for people with serious medical conditions needing to reach specialized care.

Economic and Community Resource

Whiteman Airport contributes approximately \$110 million annually to the regional economy and supports more than 400 local jobs across 20+ aviation businesses and 8 nonprofit organizations.

It is also a gateway to education and career pathways. For many San Fernando Valley families, this is the only accessible entry point into aviation careers.

Programs include:

- Glendale Community College, offering lower-cost pilot training
- Civil Air Patrol Squadron 35, providing leadership and aerospace education

- Experimental Aircraft Association Young Eagles, offering thousands of free introductory flights for youth
- Latino Pilots Association, providing mentorship and scholarships

There are other reasons why keeping Whiteman Airport are important in addition to providing critical public safety infrastructure, and economic and community resources. Whiteman is self-funded and it is key to air traffic control.

Self-Funded, Not Taxpayer Supported

Los Angeles County airports operate under a self-supporting aviation enterprise fund. This means the airport is funded by aviation-generated revenue, not by local taxpayer dollars.

Whiteman Airport is one of the stronger-performing airports in that system and generates surplus revenue that helps support other general aviation airports in the County network. If Whiteman were to close, it would not only remove a self-sustaining asset but could also place additional financial strain on the remaining airports. That creates a real risk of broader service reductions or closures, with regional impacts to public safety, training, and aviation access.

Air Traffic Reliever

Whiteman is part of the Los Angeles County Airport System, a five airport system that, with the exception of General William J. Fox Airfield in Lancaster, are classified as "reliever" airports as they relieve nearby commercial service airports of general aviation aircraft activity, allowing them to better facilitate commercial airline traffic. For more information about general aviation and its numerous benefits to the local and national economy. Whiteman Airport specifically serves as a critical reliever airport, helping to alleviate general aviation traffic and hangar demand for larger facilities like Van Nuys Airport and Burbank Airport.

Those who oppose keeping Whiteman open argue that there are safety concerns, health and lead exposure, and environmental injustice. However, there is no data backing up those arguments.

Safety Concerns

Claims of frequent crashes and danger to surrounding neighborhoods are not supported by the data. Whiteman Airport handles approximately 80,000 to 100,000 operations annually, representing millions of takeoffs and landings over nearly 80 years. The accident rate is extremely low relative to total activity, and there have been no fatalities of people on the ground caused by aircraft operating from the airport.

Health and Lead Exposure

South Coast AQMD monitoring measured lead levels near the airport at 6.9 ng/m³, far below the EPA standard of 150 ng/m³. A Los Angeles County Department of Public Health report (February 2024) found that 1.75% of children under 6 near the airport had elevated blood lead levels, compared to 2.26% countywide. There is no credible evidence showing that the airport creates a unique or disproportionate health risk.

Environmental Justice Context

The most significant and continuous sources of pollution in the northeast San Fernando Valley are major transportation corridors and industrial uses, including freeways, aggregate processing, recycling operations, landfills, and diesel truck traffic. These sources operate daily and at high volume. Aircraft activity at Whiteman is intermittent and comparatively limited in scale.

Whiteman Airport operates under strict federal safety and environmental oversight, with ongoing monitoring and compliance. It remains one of the more regulated and transparent facilities in the area. When viewed in full context, the case against the airport relies heavily on perception rather than verified data, while the benefits to the community are immediate and substantial. Whiteman supports critical public safety infrastructure, economic resources, educational and community resources that no other entity can provide; therefore, the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council supports keeping Whiteman Airport open.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Cindy L. Valle", written over a circular stamp or seal.

Cindy L. Valle
President,
Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council