



Regional Airport Planning Committee

To: Regional Airport Planning Committee

Date: April 27, 2012

Fr: RAPC Staff

Re: The Future of RAPC and RAPC's Work Plan

The latest Regional Airport Planning Systems Analysis contains a number of recommendations, which would be implemented through the new Work Plan. At your January, 2012 meeting RAPC approved the Work Plan shown in Exhibit 1, and staff reported that there were still unresolved issues about how to manage, fund and implement this Work Plan. Discussions have continued with the staffs of Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose Airports to determine the best way to proceed. To recap the situation:

- None of the regional agencies that comprise RAPC will have in-house airport planning expertise after June 2012 when Chris Brittle, our current in-house airport expert, steps down
- MTC is preparing a Request for Qualifications for a part-time Airport Planner to support RAPC, subject to funding from the Airports (See: <http://procurements.mtc.ca.gov/Solicitations/solicitation-list.html>)
- Each regional agency has limited staff time and resources to devote to RAPC due to new higher planning priorities
- The adopted Work Plan contains a number of discretionary types of activities that are not mandated by any planning requirements
- The recently completed RASPA will likely not need to be updated again for a number of years, however the Work Plan suggests several ongoing monitoring activities

While maintaining a public forum to discuss regional aviation issues is something that both elected officials and the public have valued in the past, the current funding and staffing situation suggest that there needs to be a review of all future options for RAPC. Several of the main options staff has been considering are presented below:

Option 1- Revise the Current MOU to Include the Airports to Support RAPC

An MOU would make the airports and regional agencies formal partners in the ongoing regional airport planning process and do the following:

- Split the cost of a part time Airport Planner position between the Airports and Regional Agencies
- Agree to alternate the Chair of RAPC between the Airports and Regional Agencies
- Have the Airports provide the administrative support for RAPC when they are the Chair
- Have the Airport Directors attend more meetings
- Have the Airports give consideration to the recommendations of the RASPA and, when consistent with their statutory authority and policies, incorporate the recommendations into their planning processes

Pros:

- RAPC's work, such as the last RASPA, has always required major assistance from the Airports, including technical, financial, and ultimately the formation of policies and recommendations
- The Airports are full participants on RAPC and the Committee frequently seeks their input and advise
- Many of the recommendations in the RASPA must be implemented by the airports, as RAPC has no powers to do so on its own
- This arrangement could provide more visibility for RAPC's work at the Airport policy board level
- A formal MOU would provide a long term commitment to maintaining RAPC and would provide greater continuity for the Work Plan

Cons:

- Based on past experience, the public may have concerns about the objectivity of RAPC when the Airports are chairing the Committee or funding the work
- The airport policy boards may have concerns about expanded involvement and their requirement to implement the recommendations under an MOU; particularly given the limited number of votes they currently have on RAPC
- The Airports may have concerns about increased time commitments on the part of their Executive and administrative staffs

Option 2 - Keep the current MOU as is and RAPC Continues Primarily as an Informational Forum with Staff Support from the Airports

This option assumes that the part time Airport Planner position is not funded and that staff support for RAPC and implementing the Work Plan would be shifted primarily to the Airports. RAPC would keep its quarterly meeting schedule to discuss progress with the Work Plan and would have informational briefings from the Airport staffs on other topics of interest and relevance to the Bay Area's airport system. The Regional Agencies would be involved through contacts with their Planning Directors, scheduling of RAPC meetings, and review of reports, memos, and other items that would go before RAPC. The Airports could decide to rotate responsibility for organizing RAPC meetings among themselves, and the Regional Agencies could consider providing administrative support for RAPC meetings.

Pros:

- Would provide a mechanism for continuing RAPC absent having a part- time Airport Planner to oversee Work Plan implementation
- The Airport staffs have the knowledge and contacts to assist RAPC with the review of new and emerging aviation issues affecting the Bay Area and to formulate recommendations for consideration by the Regional Agencies
- The Regional Agencies would continue to be involved, at least at the Planning Director level, and would provide assistance in crafting any recommendations coming out of RAPC that would be considered by the Regional Agency committees and Boards

Cons

- The Airports may not have the staff time and resources to commit to their own work as well as RAPC's Work Plan
- RAPC meetings would likely be largely informational, which would could result in reduced interest by Regional Agency Board members The public may have concerns about the objectivity of RAPC if staffed by the Airports

Option 3- Keep the current MOU as is but De-activate RAPC until the Next RASPA Update

If there is no staff support for RAPC or funding lined up to conduct the Work Plan, this option would become the default option. Since most of RAPC's future Work Plan is discretionary, and the RASPA recommendations are largely implemented by other agencies (primarily the airports, FAA, local jurisdictions), RAPC would not meet unless there is some new, major study required (update to the forecasts, the airports request a specific study to be performed by RAPC, the next update of the RASPA is needed, etc.). At this point, the discussion about longer term staffing and funding would need to be resumed.

Pros:

- Recognizes the reality that RAPC is largely advisory and has little direct implementation responsibility for the recommendations coming out of the RASPA
- Recognizes that the regional agencies have already incorporated much of what they need from the RASPA into their current plans and programs
- Frees up time for those involved in the RAPC process to work on other agency priorities
- Similar to the current situation for the Regional Seaport Planning Committee, which meets when the Seaport Plan needs to be amended or updated
- Since runways in the Bay are not being considered, there does not appear to be overwhelming public interest in the RASPA and few members of the public attended the RASPA workshops or the regular RAPC meetings

Cons:

- It may be more difficult to gear up the RAPC process in the future after a long hiatus
- There may still be some level of public interest in seeing RAPC continue

Regional agency staff has reviewed the above options with the airport staffs. The airport staffs mostly supported Option 2. SFO and OAK expressed some interest in hiring and funding the Airport Planner position given Chris Brittle's pending departure. However, they thought that it was more appropriate to have the regional agencies retain RAPC's administrative responsibilities.

Recommendation

We have presented a broad range of options with varying levels of Committee, staff and consultant support. Staff requests that the Committee provide direction on which option or combination of options above should be pursued.

Exhibit 1

Task 1. RAPC Meetings

Objective: Maintain adequate staffing support for RAPC; responsible for developing agenda items with input from the airports.

- Consult with airports and regional agency staff to develop agenda for meetings
- Organize/prepare presentations
- Write memos for meetings as required
- Meeting follow up as required

Task 2. Air Passenger Survey (assumes airports fund and manage 2012 survey)

Objective: Conduct the next regional airport passenger survey at Bay Area airports as well as out-of-region airline service airports. The survey will provide essential information to advance the region's interest in air passenger redistribution and to improve MTC's modeling tools for assessing air passenger behavior in choosing airports and ground transportation modes.

- Obtain copies of past RFP, consultant mailing lists, consultant selection criteria etc. from MTC
- Assist with reviewing the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a survey firm
- Assist with evaluation of Proposals submitted by survey firms and consultant selection
- Assist with developing questions for survey instrument itself

Task 3. Prepare first Tracking Report

Objective: The tracking report will provide information on the accuracy of the latest regional aviation forecasts, progress with redistribution of air passenger traffic, and severity of delays at SFO. The report will assist RAPC and the airports in determining the effectiveness of regional policies and initiatives to address forecasted runway and airspace congestion issues.

- Coordinate with airports to obtain information for Tracking Report
- Prepare outline and circulate proposed report outline to airports for review
- Assemble data and write report
- Coordinate with MTC Graphics and Public Information staff to prepare an attractive report for public and media consumption
- Work with airports to foster media interest
- Present report to RAPC

Task 4. Develop Regional Approach for Traffic Redistribution

Objective: Working with the airports, develop new ideas for programs and strategies that could help shift more airline passenger service from SFO to OAK and SJC

- Review current airport efforts to attract more service to OAK and SJC
- Review airport marketing programs and discuss potential for a more coordinated regional approach
- Develop list of most underserved airline markets at OAK/SJC
- Regularly apprise RAPC of airline service additions/ deletions at each Bay Area airport

- Track changes in air fares at each airport in competitive markets (airport assistance required)
- Discuss ways that SFO's upgauging approach and FAA's Level 2 slot control program might be leveraged to increase airline interest in OAK and SJC
- Identify key marketing questions for the next air passenger survey (above)
- Participate in discussions with airports and airline route planning staffs to convey regional interests in traffic redistribution
- Consult with business community to obtain their ideas
- Consult with out-of-region airports to understand their airline marketing objectives
- Possibly develop a marketing brochure that explains the region's long-term aviation goals and the need for traffic redistribution; have this ready to send out to the airlines and public if major delays arise at SFO in the future
- Also, develop media Op Ed material from RAPC Chair for publication when delays at SFO increase

Task 5. Implement a Legislative Advocacy Program

Objective: Develop a legislative strategy whereby Bay Area airport capacity and delay issues are given greater attention in Washington and there is a unified Bay Area legislative approach to addressing important issues such as Reauthorization and NextGen.

- Convene periodic meetings of MTC and airport legislative staffs to identify and discuss current legislative issues of importance to the Bay Area
- Develop position papers for RAPC and MTC's Legislative Committee
- In particular, develop positions that will help expedite NextGen deployment in the Bay Area, including incentives for airlines to equip with the latest technologies
- Explore forming NextGen legislative coalitions with other major metro areas experiencing airport and airspace congestion
- Engage airport and MTC lobbyists in Sacramento and Washington DC in support of these positions
- Develop media interest in these issues
- Write letters from RAPC/MTC to Bay Area Congressional delegation as needed

Task 6. Airfield and Airspace Capacity

Objective: Monitor airport capacity and delay problems as well as implementation of runway and airspace improvements.

- Monitor Design and Implementation phase of FAA's Northern California Airspace and Procedures Optimization Study and schedule periodic briefings by FAA staff
- Identify any Bay Area airport issues or concerns with the above program and discuss with RAPC
- Provide regular progress reports to RAPC on SFO's key technology initiatives to improve capacity in poor weather conditions

- Assess impact of future airfield and air traffic control improvements on runway capacity as estimated in the latest RASPA update
- Monitor aircraft flight delays at SFO and report any significant increases in delays to RAPC

Task 7. Demand Management

Objective: Monitor the effectiveness of new demand management programs, both at SFO as well as other airports around the country

- Attend SFO airline delay forum meetings
- Provide regular reports to RAPC on SFO's Fly Efficient program (upgauging aircraft size)
- Monitor changes to airline schedules resulting from FAA's Level 2 slot control program
- Develop information for airports/RAPC on any new demand management programs around the country, particularly any that involve congestion pricing
- Monitor changes in federal legislation affecting an airport's ability to engage in demand management programs
- Attend meetings of general aviation airports and discuss strategies to increase their ability to serve in a reliever capacity

Task 8. Noise/Noise compatibility

Objective: Reduce long-term population exposure to airport noise, monitor the effects of air passenger traffic redistribution (to the extent that it is occurring) on airport noise levels at OAK/SJC, and have RAPC become more engaged in supporting ALUC decisions that would prevent new land use compatibility problems.

- Work with ABAG to ensure airport noise compatibility issues are given attention in their next regional land use forecasts being prepared as part of the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Monitor any significant changes/updates to current ALUC plans
- Discuss with ALUC staffs the possibility of RAPC becoming engaged in land use compatibility discussions they are having with local jurisdictions
- Monitor annual changes in airport 65 CNEL noise contours and population exposure
- Participate in any updates to airport Noise Exposure Maps (NEMs)
- Prepare case study report for RAPC on how current land use compatibility conflicts are being addressed by ALUCs, airports, and local jurisdictions

Task 9. Monitor and report to RAPC as needed.

- Various studies being conducted by Bay Area airports, as outlined in their "work program" information provided to RAPC
- HSR developments
- New legislation/regulations affecting aircraft GHGs and criteria pollutants
- New airport programs to reduce GHGs

