

**Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa
Community Impact Statement
Council File 25-1505 — Safety and Infrastructure Study**

The Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa strongly urges immediate expansion of the Safety and Infrastructure Study to address the unique and high-risk conditions affecting communities adjacent to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

Westchester and Playa del Rey are not typical Los Angeles neighborhoods. They are physically constrained by the I-405 and I-105 freeways, the Pacific Ocean, and the Ballona Wetlands, while simultaneously functioning as the primary surface access network for one of the busiest airports in the world. Major corridors in this community are not simply local streets—they are essential airport access routes carrying passenger traffic, freight, transportation network vehicles, and employee commutes. As a result, these corridors already operate under persistent congestion and are highly vulnerable to system-wide gridlock.

Despite these known constraints, the pending Westchester/Playa Community Plan Update (CPU), combined with state housing laws including SB 79, SB 677, and SB 908, may substantially increase residential density in airport-adjacent areas without first evaluating whether the existing infrastructure can safely support such growth. Once these laws are triggered, the City's ability to impose meaningful mitigation measures is significantly limited. This creates a critical and urgent policy gap.

Unlike wildfire-prone areas—where evacuation modeling and hazard planning are required—no comparable analysis exists for communities immediately adjacent to major commercial airports. In the event of an aviation accident, fuel spill, hazardous materials incident, or major operational disruption at LAX, Westchester/Playa faces a credible risk of gridlock conditions that could delay emergency response and compromise evacuation capacity.

At the same time, residents are already exposed to elevated levels of aircraft-related air pollution and noise, with well-documented links to respiratory illness, cardiovascular disease, sleep disruption, and developmental impacts in children. Increasing residential density without fully evaluating these cumulative impacts raises serious public health and environmental justice concerns.

Failing to analyze these conditions now—at the planning and zoning stage—risks foreclosing future mitigation options and undermines the intent of CEQA and state environmental review requirements.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Expand Study Scope

Amend Council File 25-1505 to include all areas within a two-mile radius of Los Angeles World Airports, including LAX.

2. Evaluate an Airport Overlay Zone

Direct the study to assess the need for an Airport Overlay Zone. If impacts are identified, the Overlay must include enforceable standards for density, air filtration, noise attenuation, infrastructure capacity, and emergency access.

3. Require Inter-Agency Analysis

Conduct a coordinated assessment among Fire, Police, LAWA, Emergency Management, and City Planning to evaluate cumulative impacts and identify mitigation strategies.

4. Defer the Community Plan Update

Delay adoption or advancement of the Westchester/Playa CPU until the study is completed, publicly reviewed, and incorporated into planning decisions.

Conclusion

Westchester/Playa's proximity to LAX creates conditions that are fundamentally different from other parts of Los Angeles. Planning decisions that fail to account for these realities place public safety, infrastructure reliability, and community health at risk. The City must complete this analysis before moving forward with policies that could permanently alter the area.