

September 8, 2026

Commissioners:

One of the benefits of having someone with over 54 years on the airport is continuity of institutional knowledge that extends beyond the terms of the Airport Commissioners.

In approximately 2015, local media investigated a number of issues regarding San Jose Fire Station 20 and airport emergency response. A number of the statements made before the commission made little sense at the time and even less now. For example:

Response times from the nearest three stations to the airport to the perimeter fence were stated to the commission as being from 8 to 11 minutes.

At the same time, the airport removed all of the flush water hydrants from the airfield. For the benefit of the commission, Station 20 response times to the center of the airfield are 2 minutes 30 seconds to 3 minutes 30 seconds and each unit is certified to expend their entire water supply in 90 seconds. That means in 4-5 minutes all three ARFF units could expend their water supply and additional water would still be minutes to the perimeter fence. Further, all of the available hydrants to refill the trucks are located on the perimeter of the airport. The units would have to leave the scene to replenish their water supply.

Why is this being brought up now? Two accidents years apart highlight a need for a review by the commission.

Asiana 214 at SFO: This tragedy unfolded at eastern edge of the airport. It is notable that at the time the only water hydrant on the airfield was located at the mid-field fire station. The effort to control the fire required approximately 45,000 gallons of water - NTSB documented interviews showed that at least one ARFF unit returned 4 times to refill its water supply. Current SJC ARFF units carry only a fraction of that amount of water to fight a fire and the hydrant situation is discussed above.

Prime Air at Miami: While we are still early in the investigation, there are already issues with this accident that should be of concern here:

Statements made before the commission by the Fire Department Captain that Airport ARFF units would not leave the perimeter of the airfield in order to keep the airport were inconsistent with FAA Air Traffic procedures and ensuring the safety of the traveling public. You will note that the Miami Airport was closed immediately and the Airport ARFF units responded to the site off airport.

You will also hear on the audio tapes Airport ARFF units reporting that they are out of water to extinguish the fire. This is to be expected but we need to take efforts to minimize this occurrence.

You should note the response by Miami-Dade Fire Department - 60 units and 200 First Responders to the scene. What would the response from SJFD look like and how long would it take? What would mutual aid look like and who would coordinate the response.

Now let's complicate the situation by placing this accident at SJC. The overrun would take place at the farthest point from Station 20 extending response time. But more to the point, **if the accident breached the perimeter fence then the accident scene is located in Santa Clara.** Currently, Santa Clara and San Jose Fire Departments do not train together - does Santa Clara have an emergency response plan to respond to this situation? Does San Jose Fire Department have a plan? How would the response look or be coordinated?

Next, let's look at the statistical probabilities of where an accident location might occur. Based on international studies applied to SJC, there is a 30 percent likelihood that an aircraft accident would occur in the City of Santa Clara. What is the airport response plan in that event?

As the San Jose Airport Commission, your bylaws allow you to investigate or study any matter regarding aviation or the airport - Section 505 (A) 2. Since the safety of the traveling public is an important part of your mandate, I am asking as a member of the general public for the San Jose Airport Commission to begin inquiry into:

The SJC Airport Safety Plan

The San Jose Fire Department Airport Emergency Plan

The City of San Jose Emergency Plan as it pertains to the Airport

Any Office of Emergency Services Emergency Plan as it pertains to the Airport

And offer the items be accomplished by resolution of the commission:

Recommend, at a minimum, an annual table top exercise for emergency response which includes City of San Jose Police and Fire Departments, Office of Emergency Management, Appropriate County Offices, City of Santa Clara Police and Fire Departments, Airport Staff, and observers from the Airport Commission.

Recommend joint emergency training exercises between San Jose and Santa Clara Fire Departments on at least an annual basis.

Ensure development of an appropriate emergency plan for the airport - **to include an after hours plan during hours that the Air Traffic Control Tower is closed to ensure adequate emergency response and support services are available and coordinated. As a reminder, in one month we may see as many as 145 takeoffs and/or landings after midnight and additional operations before 6 am.**

These items are by no means a complete list of areas where the commission might study fire-related safety issues at the airport. The focus here is on the airfield where the state of readiness requires rapid response and the highest level of safety for the traveling public.

As a further comment, I urge the commission to not be dissuaded by the 10 man hour limit the city places on items not on your annual workplan. The need for action dictates a timely response and outreach to the Transportation and Environment Committee of the City Council to allow the process to begin as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Rice

September 8, 2026

Mr. Mookie Patel
Director of Aviation
San Jose Mineta International Airport
1701 Airport Blvd. Suite B-1130
San Jose, CA 95110

Dear Director Patel,

Over six months ago, I spoke in public forum regarding the impact the major changes to the San Jose Airport Master Plan Amendment would have. Specifically, I asked if the airport had determined what impacts the removal of taxiways would have on runway latency and airport capacity. There was no response from airport staff at that time and thus far no response has been forthcoming from the airport.

I reached out to the FAA Airport District Office (ADO) and discussed whether this had item had been brought to their attention. Their response is below. In addition, I also reached out to the SJC Tower Air Traffic Manager (ATC) and San Jose Fire Station 20. Neither of those entities had any knowledge of the Master Plan revision nor had they been consulted on the impacts of taxiway removal.

The sum total of this issue is that the airport seems to be ignoring the impacts the removal of the taxiways will have. Further, this issue is part of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) process which is the controlling factor in the Master Plan Amendment implementation - which the Airport Commission has not been apprised of. It will also delay full implementation of the full leasehold availability for the proposed new facility on the west-most corner of the airport and reduce the revenue to be expected.

As the FAA has determined that this issue is to be addressed at the local level, I look forward to your response regarding the impacts these changes will have on the airport.

Respectfully,

Douglas Rice
Regional Vice-President - CalPilots

Cc: San Jose Airport Commission
CalPilots
ALPA Air Safety - Air Traffic Committee

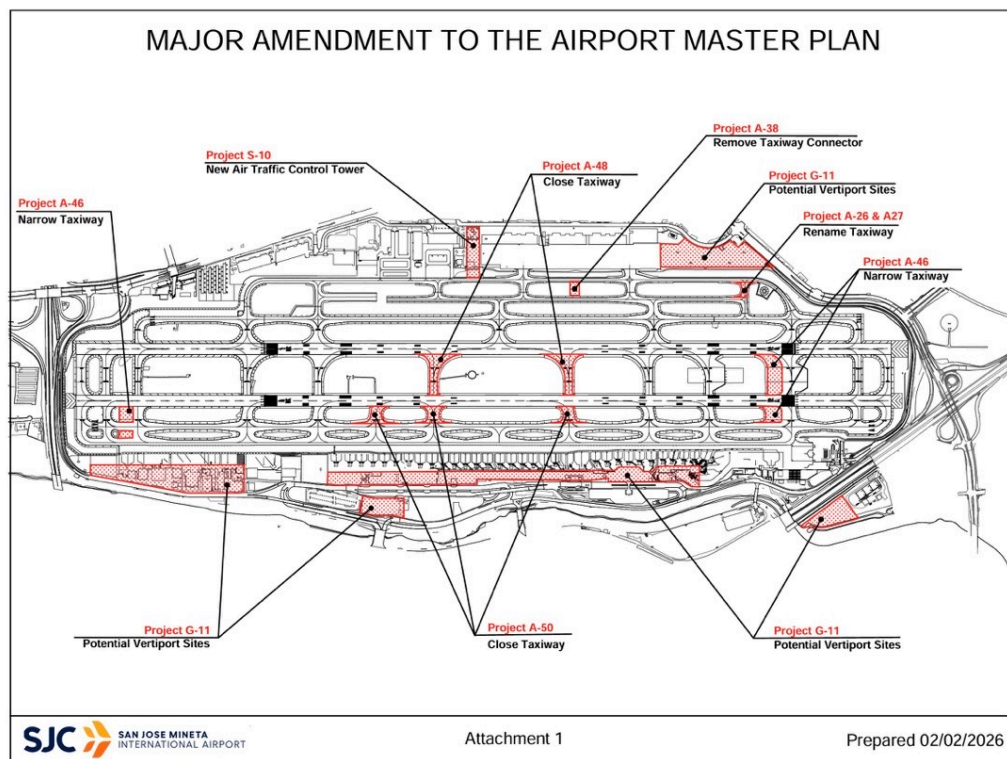
Gentlemen,

We have previously worked on Airspace Issues in the Bay Area. A new concern/issue has come up and inquiring minds want to know. KSJC has just done a Master Plan amendment that includes the removal/narrowing of exit taxiways for the runways for arrivals. My belief is that runway latency will be impacted - I brought that question to the fore in a public meeting and the airport planners gave me a quiet stare. Does the FAA model runways for this prior to approval? Can you now model with these planned taxiways removed and determine the decrease in airport capacity due to runway latency? Is this data available without FOIA or other public request or how would one request the information? FYI - from my inquiry ARFF was not consulted prior to development of this plan its effects on their response.

For further info into the thinking of the airport, both full service FBO's on the airport (Signature and Atlantic) are already contracted with eVTOL manufacturers and programs and Atlantic has purchased the largest Vertiport company in the US, yet the airport has added all of these eVTOL operating areas. In addition, the area is bracing for electrical power issues due to numerous data centers in development.

Thanks for your input and looking forward to your thoughts.

Doug Ricer
Regional Vice-President - CalPilots





Amy L Choi

To: Douglas Cc: Gordon, Faviola, Carol >

8/20/26

RE: Runway Latency Calculations/Master Plan Approvals

Hello Mr. Rice,

Thank you for your email. As an agency safety is our first priority. The information shared in the email regarding the proposed ALP changes at SJC were part of a public outreach effort at the local level. This was not submitted to the ADO for review, nor has it been routed for airspace impacts, one of the many steps that are included in an ADO ALP review and approval process.

This planning appears to still be at the local level; we encourage you to continue discussions with the airport sponsor and making them aware of your safety concerns. Again, we assure you that safety to the NAS is our main priority and take all aspects of safety and efficiency into consideration prior to any ALP approval.

V/r,

Amy



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