

APPENDIX C

EXAMPLE DEPARTURE PATHS AGREEMENT

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The voluntary departure path height limitation at the San Carlos Airport is an example of cooperative pre-project planning activities. Recent development activities in the vicinity of the airport, a general aviation facility, included proposals for high-rise buildings from eight to fourteen stories in height. A 100-foot high hotel was to be located 3800 feet from the runway, almost directly on the runway centerline. Under FAR Part 77, with an approach slope of 20:1 to the runway, the proposed hotel building could be as high as 180 feet. However, members of the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce were concerned that even the 100-foot building would pose a safety hazard to the twin engine aircraft commonly flying out of San Carlos when mechanical problems reduce climb performance on departure.

At the request of the Chamber of Commerce, the developer, Redwood Shores, Inc., met with members of the Chamber's Commercial and Industrial Committee and with the Airport staff to discuss their concerns. In addition to the height limits applicable to the property under current FAR Part 77, the developer agreed to limit the height of buildings above the existing ground level within two defined departure paths at the northwesterly end of the San Carlos Airport runway. Within these zones, building heights will be limited to sixty (60) feet above mean sea level which is approximately fifty (50) feet above the airport runway. This voluntary height limit restricts the height of buildings in these designated paths to one-third of the height presently allowed under Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77. The proposed 100-foot hotel has been relocated, outside these two departure paths.

The agreement, with a map illustrating the protected departure paths, has been recorded in the minutes of the San Mateo County ALUC meeting of April 14, 1983. This is the extent of formality to the agreement.

The key point is to recognize that such negotiated settlements are most successfully achieved when the parties involved consult early, before the development plans progress to a level that major design changes are no longer economically feasible.

Source: San Mateo County ALUC, meeting notes, April 14, 1983.