



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 26, 2016

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator *CHH*

Re: **Spaceport Suitability**

A question has arisen regarding the suitability of locating a spaceport in the vicinity of Tucson International Airport, south of the Raytheon facilities. Spaceport permitting is now proceeding through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Space Division.

We believe the spaceport will be permitted. Its location is most appropriate, as demonstrated in the attached map. The map shows the number of commercial flights on a normal day in the United States and their resulting flight paths. The areas not crisscrossed with flight paths are relatively free of commercial aviation airlines flights. One such area is southern Arizona, including the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range. The open space and lack of commercial flights is a key factor in the location of these kinds of facilities in southern Arizona. Others include the vast Military Operating Areas around White Sands Missile Range, Nellis Air Force Base and Edwards Air Force Base. The lack of flight path density in southern Arizona makes the spaceport location ideal.

Raytheon was consulted and participated in the location and orientation of the building, as well as the placement of the launch pad to insure compatible use of the space. Raytheon is now in discussions with World View for joint study projects utilizing the launch pad.

Finally, the Air Traffic Control (ATC) Division of the FAA is the arm that controls national airspace up to 60,000 feet, as well as the airspace around an active airport. World View must collaborate with the ATC Division for all launches, adhering to very specific planning and launch protocol. The Tucson ATC has managed a number of World View launches from Benson, Marana Regional Airport, and Pinal Air Park and was consulted prior to the decision to locate the launch pad on County property. Their reaction was supportive. Their new control tower will have visible contact with the launch pad, which is considered beneficial. The Midland Airport in Texas is actually certified to launch off their runway, as is another airport in Florida. In addition to the lack of commercial traffic as shown on the attached map, launching from controlled airspace near the airport is actually the preferred option.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Dr. John Moffatt, Director, Strategic Planning

Commercial Flights - Normal Day

