

## Background Data: Desert Center Airport and Environs

### INTRODUCTION

Desert Center is situated in a remote area of eastern Riverside County, literally—as the name suggests—in the center of the desert. The nearest cities—Indio to the west and Blythe to the east—are both more than 50 miles away via Interstate 10. The area’s population is mostly clustered near the freeway interchange and nearby at the Lake Tamarisk retirement community and golf course.

Desert Center Airport was originally constructed early in World War II as one of numerous training facilities that were part of the Army’s California-Arizona Maneuver Area. Known then as Desert Center Army Air Field, it had two runways capable of accommodating B-24 aircraft, an aircraft parking area, and more than 40 buildings. Today, the airport is owned by Riverside County and operated primarily for emergency access to the local community. One runway and a small aircraft parking apron remain, but there are no services and no aircraft are based there.

Data regarding the airport’s facilities and usage are summarized in the tables and maps on the following pages (Exhibits DC-1 through DC-4).

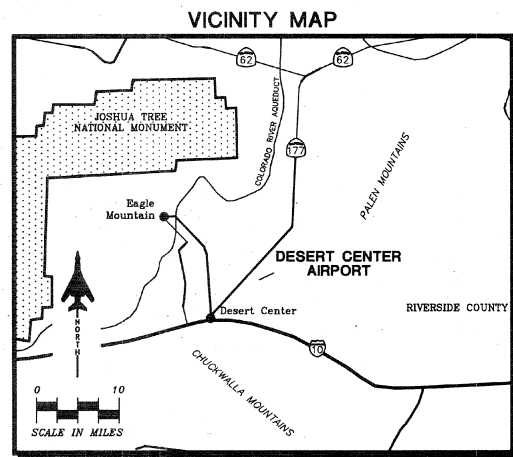
Surrounding land uses consist of desert and some agricultural areas. The nearest populated areas are more than 3 miles distant. There are no existing land use compatibility conflicts and none are anticipated. An assessment of local land use conditions and plans is presented in Exhibits DC-5 and DC-6.

<p><b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Airport Ownership:</i> County of Riverside</li> <li>▶ <i>Year Opened:</i> 1942; County-owned since 1947</li> <li>▶ <i>Property Size</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Fee title: 1,129 acres</li> <li>▶ Avigation easements: None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Airport Classification:</i> General Aviation</li> <li>▶ <i>Airport Elevation:</i> 559 feet MSL</li> </ul>	<p><b>AIRPORT PLANNING DOCUMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Airport Master Plan</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Airport Layout Plan Drawing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Last updated June 1992</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>RUNWAY/TAXIWAY DESIGN</b></p> <p><b>Runway 5-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Critical Aircraft:</i> Single engine, piston</li> <li>▶ <i>Airport Reference Code:</i> B-II</li> <li>▶ <i>Dimensions:</i> 4,200 ft. long, 50 ft. wide</li> <li>▶ <i>Pavement Strength (main landing gear configuration)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 45,000 lbs (single wheel)</li> <li>▶ 80,000 lbs (dual wheel)</li> <li>▶ 140,000 lbs (dual-tandem wheel)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Average Gradient:</i> 0.9% (rising to west)</li> <li>▶ <i>Runway Lighting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Primary Taxiways:</i> No parallel taxiway; only a connecting taxiway between apron and Rwy 5 approach end</li> </ul>	<p><b>TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND APPROACH PROCEDURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Airplane Traffic Patterns</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Runways 5 &amp; 23: Left traffic</li> <li>▶ Pattern Altitude: 1,000 feet AGL</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Instrument Approach and Departure Procedures</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Visual Approach Aids</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Operational Restrictions / Noise Abatement Procedures</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Daytime operations only</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>BUILDING AREA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Location:</i> Southwest corner of airport property</li> <li>▶ <i>Aircraft Parking Capacity</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Hangar spaces: 0</li> <li>▶ Tiedowns: 3</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Other Major Facilities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Services</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None; airport unattended</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>APPROACH PROTECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Runway Protection Zones (RPZ)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Runway 5: 1,000 ft. long; all on airport property</li> <li>▶ Runway 23: 1,000 ft. long; all on airport property</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Approach Obstacles</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>BUILDING AREA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Location:</i> Southwest corner of airport property</li> <li>▶ <i>Aircraft Parking Capacity</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Hangar spaces: 0</li> <li>▶ Tiedowns: 3</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Other Major Facilities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Services</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None; airport unattended</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>PLANNED FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Airfield and Building Area</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Property</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ None</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Exhibit DC-1

## Airport Features Summary

### Desert Center Airport



RUNWAY END COORDINATES		
RUNWAY	EXISTING	ULTIMATE
Runway 5	Latitude 33° 44' 46.17" N	33° 44' 46.17" N
	Longitude 115° 19' 43.07" W	115° 19' 43.07" W
Runway 23	Latitude 33° 45' 3.82" N	33° 45' 3.82" N
	Longitude 115° 18' 56.92" W	115° 18' 56.92" W

BUILDINGS/FACILITIES			
EXISTING	ULTIMATE	DESCRIPTION	ELEVATION
1		STORAGE BUILDING (40' x 60')	579
2		GREENHOUSE (To Be Removed)	571
3		PILOT LOUNGE	570

AIRPORT DATA		
Desert Center Airport (L64)		
CITY: Desert Center, California	COUNTY: Riverside California	
RANGE: 16 East	TOWNSHIP: 5 South	CIVIL TOWNSHIP: None
	EXISTING	ULTIMATE
AIRPORT SERVICE LEVEL	General Aviation	General Aviation
AIRPORT REFERENCE CODE	B-II	B-II
AIRPORT ELEVATION	559 MSL	559 MSL
MEAN MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE OF HOTTEST MONTH	107°F	107°F
AIRPORT REFERENCE POINT (ARP) COORDINATES	Latitude 33° 44' 55" N Longitude 115° 19' 20" W	33° 44' 55" N 115° 19' 20" W
AIRPORT and TERMINAL NAVIGATIONAL AIDS	Airport Beacon (Nonoperational)	Airport Beacon (Nonoperational)

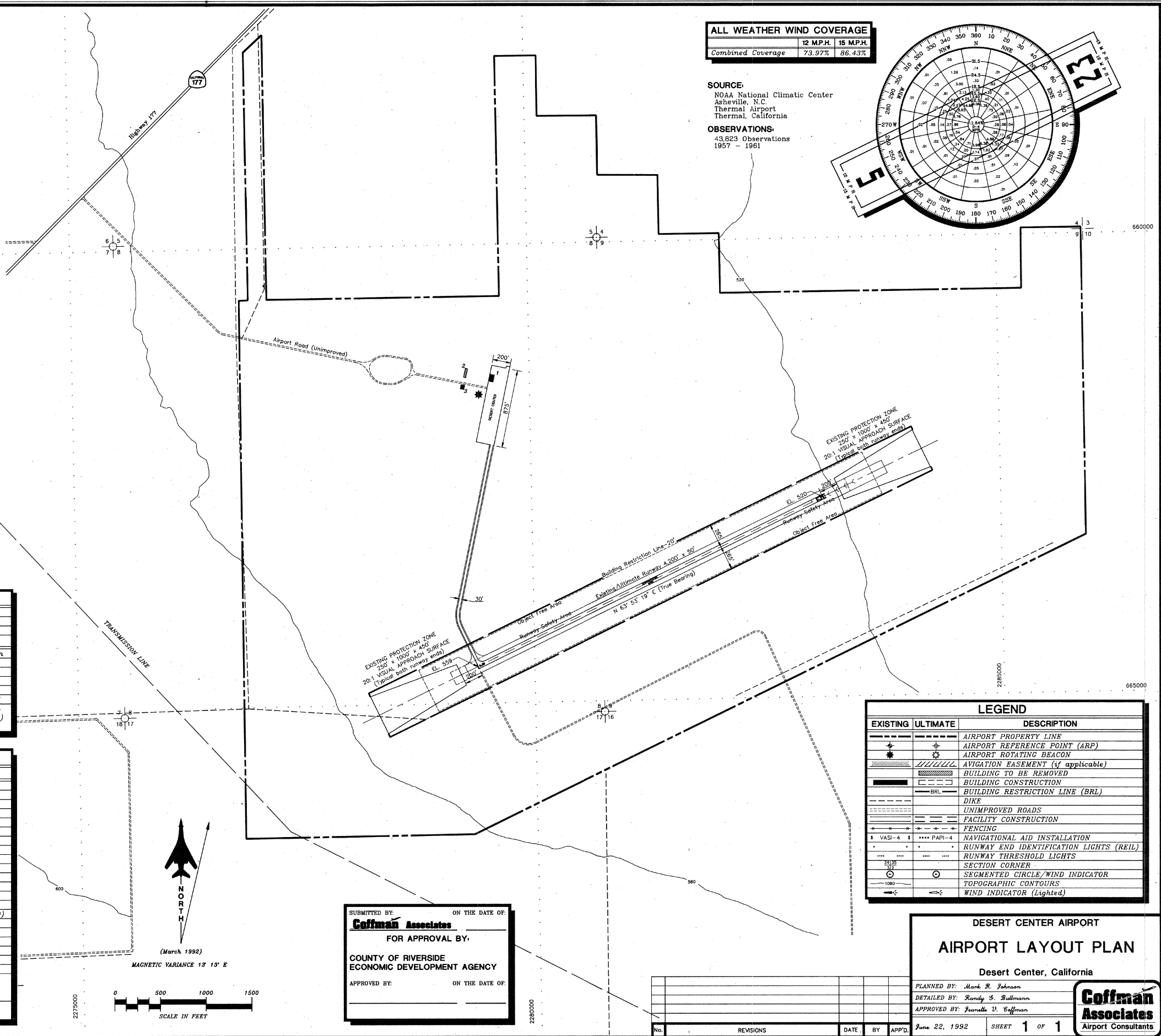
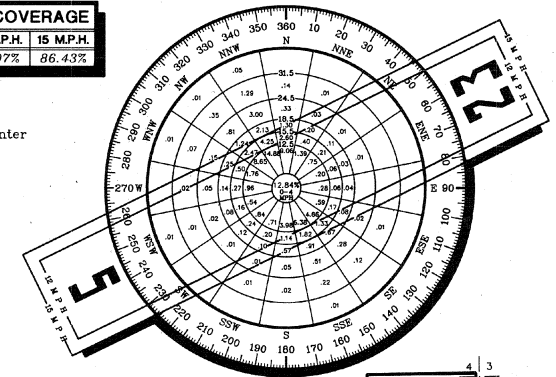
RUNWAY DATA	RUNWAY 5-23	
	EXISTING	ULTIMATE
AIRPORT REFERENCE CODE	B-II	B-II
RUNWAY CATEGORY	General Utility	General Utility
RUNWAY AZIMUTH	63.8886°	63.8886°
RUNWAY BEARING	N 63.8886° E	N 63.8886° E
RUNWAY DIMENSIONS	4200' x 50'	4200' x 50'
RUNWAY INSTRUMENTATION	Visual	Visual
RUNWAY APPROACH SURFACES	20:1	20:1
RUNWAY THRESHOLD DISPLACEMENT	None	None
RUNWAY STOPWAY	None	None
RUNWAY SAFETY AREA	4800' x 150'	4800' x 150'
RUNWAY OBSTACLE FREE ZONE	4600' x 250'	4600' x 250'
RUNWAY OBJECT FREE AREA	5400' x 500'	5400' x 500'
PAVEMENT MATERIAL	Asphalt	Asphalt
PAVEMENT SURFACE TREATMENT	None	None
PAVEMENT STRENGTH (in thousand lbs.) <sup>1</sup>	45(S),D(80),DT(140)	45(S),D(80),DT(140)
RUNWAY EFFECTIVE GRADIENT (in %)	.928	.928
RUNWAY MARKING	Basic	Basic
RUNWAY LIGHTING	None	None
RUNWAY APPROACH LIGHTING	None	None
TAXIWAY LIGHTING	None	None
TAXIWAY MARKING	Centerline	Centerline
NAVIGATIONAL AIDS	Airport Beacon (Nonoperational)	Airport Beacon (Nonoperational)

<sup>1</sup>Pavement strengths are expressed in Single (S), Dual (D), Dual Tandem (DT), and/or Double Dual Tandem (DDT), wheel loading capacities.

ALL WEATHER WIND COVERAGE	
	12 MPH 15 MPH
Combined Coverage	73.97% 86.43%

SOURCE:  
NOAA National Climatic Center  
Asheville, N.C.  
Thermal Airport  
Thermal, California

OBSERVATIONS:  
43,823 Observations  
1957 - 1961



LEGEND		
EXISTING	ULTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
---	---	AIRPORT PROPERTY LINE
+	+	AIRPORT REFERENCE POINT (ARP)
*	*	AIRPORT ROTATING BEACON
////	////	AVIGATION EASEMENT (if applicable)
---	---	BUILDING TO BE REMOVED
---	---	BUILDING CONSTRUCTION
---	---	BUILDING RESTRICTION LINE (BRL)
---	---	DIKE
---	---	UNIMPROVED ROADS
---	---	FACILITY CONSTRUCTION
---	---	FENCING
---	---	NAVIGATIONAL AID INSTALLATION
---	---	RUNWAY END IDENTIFICATION LIGHTS (REIL)
---	---	RUNWAY THRESHOLD LIGHTS
---	---	SECTION CORNER
---	---	SEGMENTED CIRCLE/WIND INDICATOR
---	---	TOPOGRAPHIC CONTOURS
---	---	WIND INDICATOR (Lighted)

SUBMITTED BY: **Coffman Associates** ON THE DATE OF: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR APPROVAL BY: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

APPROVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ ON THE DATE OF: \_\_\_\_\_

DESERT CENTER AIRPORT  
AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN

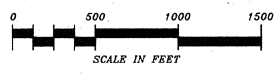
Desert Center, California

PLANNED BY: Mark R. Johnson  
DETAILED BY: Randy S. Bullmann  
APPROVED BY: Jeanette V. Coffman

June 22, 1992 SHEET 1 OF 1

**Coffman Associates**  
Airport Consultants

No.	REVISIONS	DATE	BY	APP'D.



<b>BASED AIRCRAFT</b>			<b>TIME OF DAY DISTRIBUTION <sup>b</sup></b>		
<i>Aircraft Type</i>	<b>Current <sup>a</sup></b> <i>2002 data</i>	<b>Future <sup>b</sup></b> <i>2025 forecast</i>		<b>Current</b>	<b>Future</b>
Single-Engine	0	5	<i>All Aircraft</i>		
Twin-Engine Piston	0	0	Day	80%	no change
Turboprop	0	0	Evening	20%	
Turbojet	0	0	Night	0%	
Helicopters	0	0			
<i>Total</i>	0	5			
<b>AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS</b>			<b>RUNWAY USE DISTRIBUTION <sup>b</sup></b>		
	<b>Current <sup>a</sup></b> <i>2002 data</i>	<b>Future <sup>b</sup></b> <i>2025 forecast</i>		<b>Current</b>	<b>Future</b>
<i>Total</i>			<i>All Airplanes</i>		
Annual	150 <sup>c</sup>	2,300	Takeoffs & Landings		
Average Day	<1	6	Runway 5	60%	no change
<i>Distribution by Aircraft Type</i>			Runway 23	40%	
Single-Engine	95%				
Twin-Engine Piston	5%	no change			
Twin-Engine, Turboprop	0%				
Business Jet	0%				
Helicopter	0%				
<i>Distribution by Type of Operation</i>					
Local	50%				
(incl. touch-and-goes)		no change			
Itinerant	50%	change			
<b>Notes</b>			<b>FLIGHT TRACK USAGE</b>		
<p><sup>a</sup> Source: Airport management records and estimates</p> <p><sup>b</sup> Source: Estimated/projected for compatibility planning purposes</p> <p><sup>c</sup> Source: California Division of Aeronautics aircraft operations counter program</p>			<p><b>Current &amp; Future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Approaches, Both Runways                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Mostly left-hand pattern, some straight-in, depending upon direction of arrival</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Departures, Both Runways                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Mostly straight-out, some left-hand pattern, depending upon direction of travel</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

Exhibit DC-3

## Airport Activity Data Summary

Desert Center Airport



DCN-compatibility

**Exhibit DC-4**

## Future Noise Impacts

### Desert Center Airport

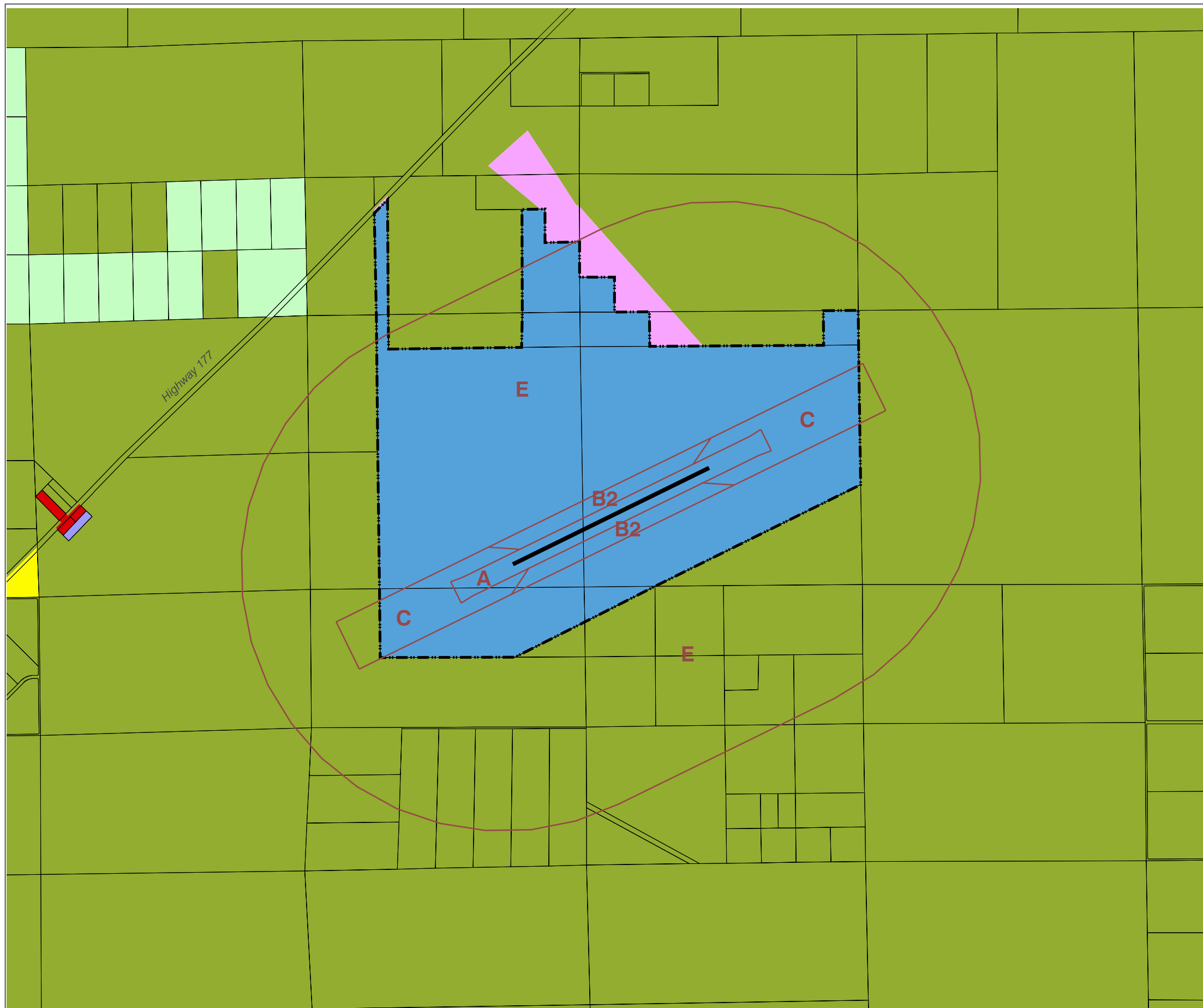
This page intentionally blank

<p><b>AIRPORT SITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Location</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Eastern Riverside County</li> <li>▶ 55 miles east of Indio; 50 miles west of Blythe</li> <li>▶ 4 miles northeast of community of Desert Center</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Nearby Terrain</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Airport in flat desert lands of Chuckwalla Valley, elevation 559 feet MSL</li> <li>▶ Coxcomb Mtns to north, Eagle Mtns to west, Chuckwalla Mtns to south, Palen Mtns to east all 7+ miles distant with peak elevations 3,000 to 4,000 feet</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>AIRPORT ENVIRONS LAND USE JURISDICTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>County of Riverside</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Located entirely within unincorporated Riverside County</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>EXISTING AIRPORT AREA LAND USES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>General Character</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Primarily uninhabited desert; some agriculture</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Runway Approaches</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Southwest (Runway 5): Desert; agriculture; Lake Tamarisk retirement community, 3 miles from runway</li> <li>▶ Northeast (Runway 23): Desert</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <i>Traffic Patterns</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Desert; Highway 177, 1.5 miles northwest</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>STATUS OF COMMUNITY PLANS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Riverside County</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ General Plan, a portion of Riverside County Integrated Project, adopted by Board of Supervisors Oct. 2003</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>ESTABLISHED AIRPORT COMPATIBILITY MEASURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Riverside County General Plan</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Prohibit new residential uses, except single-family dwellings on legal residential lots of record, within airports' 60 dB CNEL contour as defined by ALUC (Policy N 7.4)</li> <li>▶ Safety compatibility zones and criteria from previous compatibility plan incorporated into General Plan</li> <li>▶ Review all proposed projects and require consistency with any applicable compatibility plan (LU 14.2)</li> <li>▶ Submit proposed actions and projects to ALUC as required by state law (Policy LU 1.9); other actions may be submitted on voluntary and advisory basis (LU 14.8)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>PLANNED AIRPORT AREA LAND USES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>Riverside County</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Open space rural lands (1 dwelling unit per 20 acres) entirely surrounding airport</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Exhibit DC-5

## Airport Environs Information

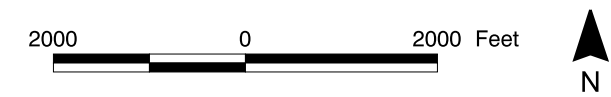
### Desert Center Airport



**Legend**

- Airport Boundary Line
- Runway
- Compatibility Zones
- Very-High-Density Residential (>20 du/ac)
- High-Density Residential (14.1-20 du/ac)
- Medium-High-Density Residential (8.1-14.0 du/ac)
- Medium-Density Residential (5.1-8.0 du/ac)
- Low-Density Residential (2.1-5.0 du/ac)
- Very-Low-Density Residential (0.4-2.0 du/ac)
- Mobile Home Park
- High-Intensity Commercial/Office
- Low-Intensity Commercial /Office
- Office/Business Park
- Heavy Industrial
- Light Industrial/Warehousing
- Mixed Use
- Airport
- School
- Other Public/Institutional
- Parks & Recreation
- Rural Residential (2.5-10.0 ac parcels)
- Agriculture (>10.0 ac parcels)
- Open Space/Conservation
- Federal Lands
- State Lands
- Indian Lands
- Unclassified

Note: This map is combined and simplified from the following map source:  
Riverside County General Plan (October 2003)



**Riverside County**  
**Airport Land Use Commission**  
**Riverside County**  
**Airport Land Use Commission Plan**  
**East County Airports Background Data**  
**(October 2004)**

Exhibit DC-6

**General Plan Land Use Designations**  
**Desert Center Airport Environs**

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE:  
GENERAL PLAN (2003) AND DESERT CENTER AREA PLAN**

---

**Residential Land Use**

- ▶ *Compatibility Zones A – D*
- › No inconsistencies noted

**Non-Residential Land Use**

- ▶ *Compatibility Zones A – D*
- › No inconsistencies noted

---

**Other Policies**

- ▶ *General Plan*
  - › Acknowledgement of ALUC policies
  - › Established ALUC 60 dB CNEL noise contour policy for new residential development
- ▶ *Zoning Codes*
  - › No height limit zoning established

Exhibit DC-7

**General Plan Consistency Review (Preliminary)**  
**Desert Center Airport Environs**