



September 15, 2008

Proposed Updates to Airport Hazard Zoning Ordinance

- FAA 65 dnl “Minimum Standard” is insufficient for Gainesville in today’s environment. FAA’s adoption of the 65 dnl standard was largely based on what was economically feasible for FAA to mitigate in the 1970’s and early 1980’s due to the size of the noise foot print around most commercial airports. The EPA and others have recommended a higher standard of noise protection for human health and safety.
- Our research indicates that most airport noise complaints occur outside of the 65- 70 dnl zone and even the 60-65 dnl zone.
- While noise contours around airport’s are generally shrinking due to improvements in aircraft technology, an airport’s the size of GNV can experience wide fluctuations in noise levels due to seemingly small changes in fleet mix or night-time operations. A case in point would be the Ocala Airport which is similar in size to Gainesville but has a much larger noise foot print, according to it’s recently completed Part 150 Study.
- The City of Gainesville should consider airport growth and potential changes in aircraft operations/fleet mix in revising its ordinance. GACRAA’s recommendations are based upon year 2027 noise contours developed in its current draft FAR Part 150 Study.
- The City of Gainesville should consider the close physical proximity of aircraft operations, both low/near overflight and frequency of overflight in its ordinance. We believe these factors contribute significantly to homeowner anxiety and dissatisfaction. Such complaints, while not always directly attributable to noise levels, are often logged as noise complaints by airport operators.
- GNV currently receives complaints for single event noise and anxiety about aircraft perceived as flying “too low” from homeowners near 15th St. (This area is outside of the current 60-65 dnl noise zone (as depicted in the current draft of the latest FAR Part 150 Study, Phase I).

- The City of Gainesville should consider the potential for aircraft accidents, particularly in residential areas, in the revision of the Airport Hazard Zoning Ordinance and future land use planning. The City should reference concerns raised by the FDOT and available data on where aircraft accidents are likely to occur around airports similar to Gainesville.
- GACRAA's recommendation to adopt a strict policy against residential use or any other noise sensitive uses within the year 2027 60-65 dnl zone (Sub-zone B) is designed to protect the health and wellbeing of future residents balanced with other interests of the community. It should be noted that both current and future 60-65 dnl zones (current draft FAR Part 150 Study, Phase I) are much smaller than the restrictions in the city's current ordinance and represents an easing of restrictions for current property owners. (See comparison exhibit, page 19.)
- GACRAA does recommend that residential uses within the year 2027 55-60 dnl sub zone (Sub-zone C) be discouraged except for "true" in-fill development. Should the City decide that residential or other noise sensitive uses are desirable in this area, GACRAA believes that obtaining aviation easements and proper sound insulation of residential structures is essential.
- GACRAA believes residents with the highest exposure to aircraft overflights at altitudes of less than 1,000 ft. above the ground should be notified of their proximity to the airport. The Airport Environs Overlay Zone includes areas of higher potential impact. Builders of new homes built in these areas should be required to file a "notice to owner" signed by the buyer which outlines potential nuisances that homeowners may experience due to aircraft overflight. It should be noted that these nuisances may change as airport operations evolve. A public notice will be issued periodically for owners of existing homes.
- We believe GACRAA's recommendations are consistent with the best practices being employed by other communities. This is especially evident in communities where the 60-65 dnl noise zone has not already been compromised by residential encroachment.
- Again, it is important to note that the proposed area **prohibiting** new residential development (60-65 dnl Sub-zone B) is considerably smaller (less restrictive) than the City's existing ordinance.