

BRIGGS LAW CORPORATION [FILE: 1977.05]
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Friendly Airport

ELECTRONICALLY FILED
Superior Court of California,
County of San Diego

6/22/2026 8:17:19 PM

Clerk of the Superior Court
By N. Lopez ,Deputy Clerk

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO – CENTRAL DIVISION

CITIZENS FOR A FRIENDLY AIRPORT,

Plaintiff and Petitioner,

vs.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO; and DOES 1 through
100,

Defendants and Respondents;

AMERICAN AIRLINES, INC.; and DOES 101
through 1,000,

Defendants and Real Parties in
Interest.

CASE NO. 26CU034101C

**VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR
DECLARATORY RELIEF AND
PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDATE
UNDER THE CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT AND
OTHER LAWS**

Plaintiff and Petitioner CITIZENS FOR A FRIENDLY AIRPORT ("Petitioner") alleges as
follows:

Parties

1. Petitioner is a non-profit organization formed and operating under the laws of the State
of California. At least one of Petitioner's members resides in or near the County of San Diego,
California, and has an interest in protecting the region's air quality, minimizing and ameliorating
airplane noise, ensuring informed and responsible growth, and promoting other environment-related
quality-of-life issues.

2. Defendant and Respondent COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO (“Respondent”) is a public agency under Section 21063 of the Public Resources Code. Respondent is authorized and required by law to hold public hearings to determine whether the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) applies to development within its jurisdiction, to determine the adequacy of and certify environmental documents prepared pursuant to CEQA, and to determine whether a project is compatible with the objectives, policies, general land uses, and programs specified in the applicable land-use plans.

3. Petitioner is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that Defendants and Real Parties in Interest AMERICAN AIRLINES, INC. (“RPI”), is the applicant for the proposed project (which includes the related contract to which Respondent and RPI are parties) that is the subject of this lawsuit.

4. The true names and capacities of the Defendants/Respondents identified as DOES 1 through 100 and Defendants/Real Parties in Interest identified as DOES 101 through 1,000 are unknown to Petitioner, who will seek the Court's permission to amend this pleading in order to allege the true name and capacities as soon as they are ascertained. Petitioner is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that each of the fictitiously named Defendants/Respondents 1 through 100 has jurisdiction by law over one or more aspects of the proposed project that is the subject of this lawsuit and that each of the fictitiously named Defendants/Real Parties in Interest 101 through 1,000 either claims an ownership interest in the proposed project or has some other cognizable interest in the proposed project.

Background Information

5. On or about May 20, 2026, Respondent's board of supervisors took certain action as set forth in Minute Order no. 7 (the "Project").

6. Petitioner opposes the Project (including all entitlements and other aspects thereof) and challenges certain actions taken by Respondent. In particular, Petitioner seeks to invalidate the Project's approval on the grounds, among others, that Respondent has violated CEQA, the Planning and Zoning Law ("PZL"), and/or other laws; and/or has also violated the judgment previously entered in and/or acted contrary to Respondent's representations made in San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2018-00057624-CU-TT-CTL.

1 **Notice Requirements and Time Limitations**

2 7. This lawsuit was commenced not more than 30 days after the notice authorized by Public
3 Resources Code Section 21152(a) was filed (if such a notice was filed).

4 8. Petitioner has caused a Notice of Commencement of Action to be served on Respondent,
5 as required by Public Resources Code Section 21167.5. A true and correct copy of the Notice of
6 Commencement of Action is attached to this pleading as Exhibit “A.”

7 9. Petitioner will have caused a copy of this pleading to be served on the Attorney General
8 not more than 10 days after its filing, as required by Public Resources Code Section 21167.7 and Code
9 of Civil Procedure Section 388.

10 **Jurisdiction and Exhaustion of Administrative Remedies**

11 10. Petitioner seeks review by and relief from this Court under Public Resources Code
12 Section 21168 or 21168.5, as applicable; Government Code Section 65000 *et seq.*; and Code of Civil
13 Procedure Sections 526a, 1060 *et seq.*, and 1084 *et seq.*, among other provisions of law.

14 11. Petitioner exhausted administrative remedies to the extent required by law; by way of
15 example and without limitation, at least one of Petitioner’s members expressed opposition to the
16 Project. Additionally and/or alternatively, Petitioner was not required to exhaust its administrative
17 remedies under the circumstances presented by the Project.

18 12. Respondent’s conduct in approving the Project without complying with CEQA and other
19 applicable laws constitutes a prejudicial abuse of discretion because, as alleged in this pleading, it failed
20 to proceed in the manner required by law and made findings not supported by substantial evidence.

21 13. Petitioner has no plain, speedy, and adequate remedy in the ordinary course of law, since
22 its members and other members of the public will suffer irreparable harm as a result of Respondent’s
23 violations of CEQA and other laws. Respondent’s approval of the Project also rests on its failure to
24 satisfy a clear, present, ministerial duty to act in accordance with those laws. Even when Respondent
25 is permitted or required by law to exercise its discretion in approving projects under those laws, it
26 remains under a clear, present, ministerial duty to exercise its discretion within the limits of and in a
27 manner consistent with those laws. Respondent has had and continues to have the capacity and ability
28 to approve the Project within the time limits of and in a manner consistent with those laws, but

Respondent has failed and refuses to do so and has exercised its discretion beyond the limits of and in a manner that is not consistent with those laws.

14. Petitioner has a beneficial right and interest in Respondent's fulfillment of all its legal duties, as alleged in this pleading.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION:
Illegal Approval of Project
(Against All Respondents and Real Parties in Interest)

15. Paragraphs 1 through 14 are fully incorporated into this paragraph.

16. Petitioner is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that the Project does not comply with all applicable laws.¹ By way of example and without limitation (including alternative theories of liability):

A. The Project violates CEQA. For example:

i. Whenever a project proposed to be carried out or approved by a lead agency has the potential to cause an adverse environmental impact, CEQA prohibits the agency from relying on a negative declaration. Instead, CEQA requires the preparation of an environmental impact report to identify and analyze the significant adverse environmental impacts of a proposed project, giving due consideration to both short-term and long-term impacts, providing decision-makers with enough information to enable them to make an informed decision with full knowledge of the likely consequences of their actions, and providing members of the public with enough information to participate meaningfully in the project's approval and environmental-review process. CEQA also requires every environmental impact report to identify and analyze a reasonable range of alternatives to a proposed project. CEQA further requires every environmental impact report to identify and analyze all reasonable mitigation measures for a proposed project's significant adverse environmental impacts. An environmental impact report must be prepared for a proposed project if there is a fair argument, supported by substantial evidence in the administrative record, that the project may have an adverse environmental impact; stated another way, a negative declaration may not be used unless the lead agency determines with certainty that there is no potential for the project to have an adverse environmental impact.

¹ Respondent has not produced all contents of the record to Petitioner. Petitioner's allegations in this pleading, though legally sufficient, are based on the limited information available to Petitioner within the applicable limitations period.

1 ii. The Project’s significant direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts
2 on the environment give rise to Respondent’s legal obligation to prepare an environmental impact report
3 specifically for the Project.

4 iii. Respondent failed to prepare an environmental impact report specifically
5 for the Project, and that failure is a violation of CEQA.

6 iv. As a result of Respondent’s violation of CEQA, Petitioner has been
7 harmed insofar as Petitioner, its members, other members of the public, and the responsible decision-
8 makers were not fully informed about the potential adverse environmental impacts of the this Project,
9 and insofar as Petitioner, its members, and other members of the public did not have an opportunity to
10 participate meaningfully in the analysis of such impacts prior to approval of the Project.

11 B. The Project violates the PZL. For example:

12 i. Respondent did not comply with the controlling conditional use permit,
13 CUP-172, issued by the City of Carlsbad, prior to approving the Project.

14 ii. Prior to and in connection with issuance of CUP-172, Respondent stated
15 that the facility commonly known today as the McClellan-Palomar Airport had been designated as a
16 General Aviation Airport and will remain so; and acknowledged that this designation precludes
17 commercial scheduled airlines from using the facility.

18 iii. In or around 1984, the City of Carlsbad’s city council resolved that the
19 McClellan-Palomar Airport continue to be designated as a General Aviation facility.

20 iv. In or around 2004, the City of Carlsbad explained that the designation
21 refers to all types of aircraft other than certified air carriers and military aircraft.

22 v. In 2012, the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) defined “general
23 aviation” as all non-scheduled flights other than military conducted by non-commercial aircraft,
24 covering local recreational flying to business transport that is not operating under FAA regulations for
25 commercial air carriers.

26
27 vi. The aviation activities authorized by the Project operate under FAA
28 regulations for commercial air carriers.

vii. In light of the foregoing designation and definition, the Project authorizes the use of aircraft and/or flights that do not qualify as General Aviation within the scope of CUP-172 at the time it was issued.

17. There is currently a dispute between Petitioner and the other parties to this lawsuit over the Project's legal force and effect. Petitioner contends that the Project's approval has no legal force or effect because it violates CEQA and/or one or more other applicable laws. The other parties to this lawsuit dispute Petitioner's contention. The parties therefore require a judicial determination of the legal force and effect (if any) of the Project's approval.

Prayer

FOR ALL THESE REASONS, Petitioner respectfully prays for the following relief against all Defendants/Respondents and all Defendants/Real Parties in Interest (and any all other parties who may oppose Petitioner in this lawsuit):

A. A judgment or other appropriate order determining or declaring that Defendants/Respondents failed to fully comply with CEQA, the PZL, and/or one or more other applicable laws as they relate to the Project and that there must be full compliance therewith before final approval and implementation of the Project may occur;

B. A judgment or other appropriate order determining or declaring that Defendants/Respondents failed to comply with CEQA, the PZL, and/or one or more other applicable laws as they relate to the Project and that its approval was illegal in at least some respect, rendering the approval (including any subsequent actions or omissions based on the approval) null and void;

C. Injunctive relief prohibiting Defendants/Respondents and Defendants/Real Parties in Interest (and any and all persons acting at the request of, in concert with, or for the benefit of one or more of them) from taking any action on any aspect of, in furtherance of, or otherwise based on the Project unless and until Defendants/Respondents comply with CEQA, the PZL, and all other applicable laws, as determined by the Court;

D. Any and all other relief that may be authorized by CEQA, the PZL, or other applicable laws, or any combination of them, but is not explicitly or specifically requested elsewhere in this Prayer;

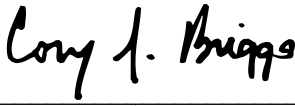
1 E. Any and all legal fees and other expenses incurred by Petitioner in connection with this
2 lawsuit, including but not limited to reasonable attorney fees as authorized by the Code of Civil
3 Procedure; and

4 F. Any and all further relief that this Court may deem appropriate.

5 Date: June 20, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

6 BRIGGS LAW CORPORATION

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8 By: _____
Cory J. Briggs

9 Attorneys for Plaintiff and Petitioner Citizens for a
10 Friendly Airport
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**COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF AND PETITION
FOR WRIT OF MANDATE UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY ACT AND OTHER LAWS**

Exhibit "A"

Cory Briggs

From: Microsoft Outlook
<MicrosoftExchange329e71ec88ae4615bbc36ab6ce41109e@briggslawcorp.com>
To: Andrew.Potter@sdcounty.ca.gov
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2026 1:50 PM
Subject: Relayed: Notice of Commencement of Action

Delivery to these recipients or groups is complete, but no delivery notification was sent by the destination server:

Andrew.Potter@sdcounty.ca.gov (Andrew.Potter@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Subject: Notice of Commencement of Action



Notice of
Commencemen...



99 East "C" Street, Suite 203
Upland, CA 91786
T: 909-949-7115
F: 909-949-7121

BLC File(s): 1977.05

20 June 2026

Andrew Potter, Board Clerk
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 402
San Diego, CA 92101

Via E-mail to Andrew.Potter@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Notice of Commencement of Action

Dear Board Clerk:

I represent Citizens for a Friendly Airport and am sending this Notice of Commencement of Action on my client's behalf.

Please be advised that an action is to be commenced by my client in San Diego County Superior Court against your agency. The action will challenge your agency's approval of the project that was the subject of Item 7 on the May 20, 2026 agenda of the Board of Supervisors (MCCLELLAN-PALOMAR AIRPORT - APPROVE LEASE WITH AMERICAN AIRLINES AND RELATED CEQA FINDING), on the grounds that the approval violated the California Environmental Quality Act (PUB. RES. CODE § 21000 *et seq.*). The action may also challenge your agency's approval of the project based on one or more violations of other laws.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

BRIGGS LAW CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cory J. Briggs'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cory J. Briggs

