



Fly Into the Future:
An on-line dialogue about the future of San Diego's airport

A Report to the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

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Executive Summary

In June 2005, more than 700 San Diego residents from almost every ZIP code in San Diego County participated in a unique on-line dialogue about the future of San Diego's airport and what that means for the region. This dialogue, called "Fly into the Future" (FITF), was sponsored by the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority as part of their Airport Site Selection Program and convened by SignOn San Diego, the web site of *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. Because the entire dialogue was publicly available through SignOn San Diego, many more residents were able to follow along as the participants worked through the difficult tradeoffs involved in determining the future of San Diego's airport.

Dialogue Design

Over two weeks, the FITF participants worked in 14 small groups using an on-line platform called "Small Group Dialogue" that has been used successfully around complex issues like the redevelopment of Ground Zero in New York City. The FITF dialogue was designed to answer the question "**What** kind of airport do we want?" not "**Where** should we put it?" To start the conversation, participants were provided with four distinct choices for the future of air travel in San Diego County, and their pros and cons:

- **Improve Lindbergh Field as Much as Possible**
- **Supplement Lindbergh Field with a Second Airport**
- **Close Lindbergh Field and Replace It with a Single Airport**
- **Build an "Aeroplex"**

Key Findings

Participants wrote almost 4,000 posts in total. Several themes evolved over the two weeks. One theme that played a role in nearly all of the postings was that participants felt strongly that they could not talk about the "what" in a vacuum; the "where" was just as important, and the two had to be discussed together. In general, the groups followed a consistent path in their thinking:

- ***Significant support for increased capacity:*** The vast majority of the participants came to agree that Lindbergh Field alone (in its current configuration), even with some minor improvements, would not work as the long-term solution (2020 and beyond)
- ***The obvious answer was Miramar:*** Postings about Miramar highlighted criteria participants generally required in a new airport: central location, good existing access, and minimal displacement of residents and businesses. Miramar meets these criteria

and also provides an existing airfield. The fact that the base was not currently available did not, in the minds of most participants, mean that it was off limits. It meant that leaders and citizens should make a concerted effort to acquire the base in the next round of base realignments and closures, and/or look at joint use of the base for both military and civilian aircraft..

- ***If not Miramar, then what?*** As either a bridge to acquiring Miramar or as an alternative if necessary, many FITF participants looked to solutions that added capacity but incorporated Lindbergh Field. Possibilities included:
 - **Build a supplemental airport** (in North County or through joint use of an existing military base) with high-speed transit to Lindbergh Field
 - **Export the problem** to other Southern California airports through high-speed transit to LAX, Ontario, John Wayne, etc.
- ***Every solution must include transit:*** It became clear that any airport proposal MUST include a regional transportation solution to gain public support.
- ***But even with transit, the most distant sites won't work:*** For the most part, FITF participants did not see the remote sites as worthy of consideration. Both Borrego Springs and the Imperial desert struck them as absurd and totally unsupportable
- ***The need for trust:*** Even when discussing solutions they strongly supported, participants expressed mistrust on many levels: of San Diego leadership, of the Airport Site Selection process, of the data and information and on how the results would be used. Overcoming this mistrust will be an essential part of developing a solution to the airport issue that the public will support.

Some participant conclusions were driven by assumptions common among the general public. These assumptions, however, differ significantly from research findings and assumptions used by the Airport Authority and widely accepted by aviation experts and economists. Three of these were particularly notable:

1. *Participants believed that any improvements to Lindbergh Field, no matter how major, would cost less than a replacement airport.* In fact, any major expansion would require acquisition of extensive commercial and residential property in some of the most expensive areas of the city, creating enormous cost before a single cubic foot of earth is moved.
2. *Participants believed that exporting the problem can be the long-term solution.* Experts, however, have asserted that LAX and John Wayne are already facing their own capacity issues, with Ontario not far behind.
3. *Participants believed it was possible to buy time at Lindbergh Field by moving cargo and general aviation.* Cargo currently has very little impact on runway operations (only 10 dedicated flights a day), and general aviation (charter flights, corporate jets, etc.) make up approximately 2% of takeoffs and landings at Lindbergh Field. Moving either to other airports in the region would provide negligible relief.

Implications for the Airport Site Selection Process

Participants brought a great deal of commitment and intensity to this process. It is safe to assume that FITF participants will continue to be powerfully engaged in the site selection process, many visibly so. Their concerns and questions merit serious consideration as the site selection process unfolds – and rebuilding trust will require responsiveness to these concerns. Top of the list will be:

- Updated and accurate projections of economic and population growth.
- Public and transparent assessment of Miramar’s potential as an airport site, with openness to the possibility of the Marines’ departure.
- Investigation of joint use of military facilities.
- Transit solutions that work for the region as a whole.
- Making sure Lindbergh Field is maintained and improved in the years before a new airport can be built .
- Accessible locations that make sense for most county residents.
- Smart, accountable decision-making .
- Strong leadership.

This process was an important and unprecedented opportunity for a large group of engaged and informed county residents to engage in a thoughtful, complex dialogue about a pressing public policy issue concern in full view of the general public. Offering more opportunities such as FITF and incorporating the results will help create the kind of accountable, transparent process demanded by the participants of this dialogue. This will be an important part of building the broad public support that will be needed for a sustainable solution to the airport question.

Fly Into the Future

An on-line dialogue about the future of San Diego's airport

Introduction

In June of 2005, over 700 San Diego residents participated in a unique on-line dialogue about the future of San Diego's airport and what that future means for the region. This two-week-long, highly structured process was part of an ongoing outreach and education effort of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority's Airport Site Selection Program (ASSP). Called the "Fly into the Future (FITF)" Dialogue, the process built on a number of previous activities, in particular drawing on a series of day-long citizen "ChoiceDialogues" about the future of the airport conducted in the spring of 2004.

The approach used in both the ChoiceDialogues and the FITF dialogue differs dramatically from typical survey or focus group research. Experts and advocates sometimes assume that in order to reach judgment on a difficult issue, the public simply needs more information, presented in the right way. In other words, all you need to do is give the public the facts, and they will reach sound decisions (and these decisions will be the same ones that experts would make).

However, this is not the way things actually work. When the public grapples with a difficult issue, information is only one component among the many they consider, and often not the most important. Instead, they draw on core values and deeply-held priorities, and they must frequently make painful tradeoffs when strongly held values come into conflict. This "working through" process does not happen in isolation, but instead occurs through conversations with friends, family and colleagues over time; months, years, sometimes even decades. The approach used in these dialogues was designed to help people work through the difficult tradeoffs in an accelerated manner and the results reveal where the public will be willing to go: what sorts of solutions they would be willing to support and under what conditions. The results provide a critical input for decision makers; one that is usually lacking when making major policy decisions. A solution to the airport problem must be technically feasible, but it will also need public support.

Both the ChoiceDialogues and the FITF Web Dialogue were designed to answer the question "what kind of airport do we want?" not "where should we put it?" Instead of debating the merits of locating an airport at Miramar vs. Camp Pendleton vs. the Imperial desert, participants were asked to focus on what they want in air travel, how they see the future of the city and the region, their attitudes towards growth, and their priorities for economic development. Understanding these values are crucial if decision makers want to ensure public support.

The ChoiceDialogues were conducted with representative samples of San Diegans in order to provide insight into how the views of the general population would evolve given the opportunity to work through some of the difficult choices at hand. The results provide a road map for leadership interested in fostering a true public learning process in which citizens learn from leaders and leaders learn from citizens.

The FITF dialogue offered the same opportunity, but participants were self-selected. As a result, these findings are not as representative of the general population, but of a particularly engaged and informed group. Many participants demonstrated a strong interest in the subject, a great deal of knowledge about San Diego International Airport and aviation in general, and a love for the region as a whole. Using the Internet as the primary means of communication allowed this group of mainly professional, highly informed San Diegans to get involved in an intense way. And because the postings were publicly available, many San Diegans who were not actively engaged in the dialogue had the opportunity to learn from their fellow residents as they worked through the difficult tradeoffs involved in determining the future of San Diego's airport.

This report begins with a description of the findings from the ChoiceDialogues followed by a brief overview of the design of the FITF dialogues and the demographic make-up of the participants. The majority of the report describes key findings from the FITF dialogue and goes into some detail about how these results compare to the ChoiceDialogue results. The final section deals with the experience of the FITF participants and important lessons for decision-makers.

Spring 2004: Citizen Dialogues on the Future of San Diego's Airport

The process and the materials used in the FITF dialogue were based on a series of day-long face-to-face "ChoiceDialogues" about the airport that took place in the spring of 2004. Viewpoint Learning, a La Jolla-based company specializing in dialogue-based research on gridlock issues, conducted a series of six eight-hour dialogues with San Diego County residents. During these sessions, representative samples of 35 to 40 residents considered a set of different approaches for the future of air travel and San Diego's airport. The project was designed with several goals:

- To provide an in-depth understanding of San Diegans' values and priorities regarding air travel, growth, transit and the economy;
- To inform the design of an airport solution so that what goes before the voters in November 2006 will be aligned with those values and priorities;
- To reveal ways to bridge the disconnect between leaders' and the public's priorities;
- To lay the groundwork for broader citizen engagement.

Citizens in the ChoiceDialogues considered four choices and their pros and cons:

- **Improve Lindbergh Field as Much as Possible:** In this scenario air travelers to San Diego will continue to fly in and out of Lindbergh Field and no new airport facility will be built elsewhere in the county. All reasonable improvements and expansions will be made to increase Lindbergh's capacity. Lindbergh Field will continue to offer primarily shorter-haul flights on smaller aircraft. These

improvements will postpone the most serious overcrowding but it will not solve the longer-term problem.

- **Supplement Lindbergh Field with a Second Airport:** In this scenario travelers will continue to use Lindbergh Field for trips of less than 500 miles. People making longer trips (including international flights and all flights on larger airplanes) will use a second mid-sized airport that will be built either on a military base or elsewhere in the county. Lindbergh Field will be left largely as it is today. Between these two airports San Diego's projected air travel needs will be met for at least a generation.
- **Close Lindbergh Field and Replace It with a Single Airport:** In this scenario, all travelers will use a new airport that will be accessible from most areas of San Diego in 45 minutes or less. The new airport will be built either on a current military base (if one becomes available) or built from the ground up elsewhere in the county. Lindbergh Field will be closed down. The new airport will handle all of San Diego's air transportation and it will accommodate the region's growth for the foreseeable future.
- **Build an "Aeroplex":** In this scenario, San Diego will move beyond simply building a new airport to create a multi-faceted "Aeroplex" that will combine air travel, high-speed rail, highways and conventional rail in a planned regional network. Designed to enhance the flow of people, goods and services around the region, the Aeroplex will aim to attract "smart" high-tech industries and create a wide variety of new jobs. Aeroplex planning will include incentives for housing, business and cultural development, with the aim of improving the region for generations to come.

ChoiceDialogues: General Findings

The 2004 ChoiceDialogues revealed that participants' positions on the airport question changed markedly as a result of extended discussion. As diverse groups of citizens holding a wide range of views talked through the various possibilities and tradeoffs, they discovered a great deal of common ground, and a consistent pattern of priorities and beliefs emerged.

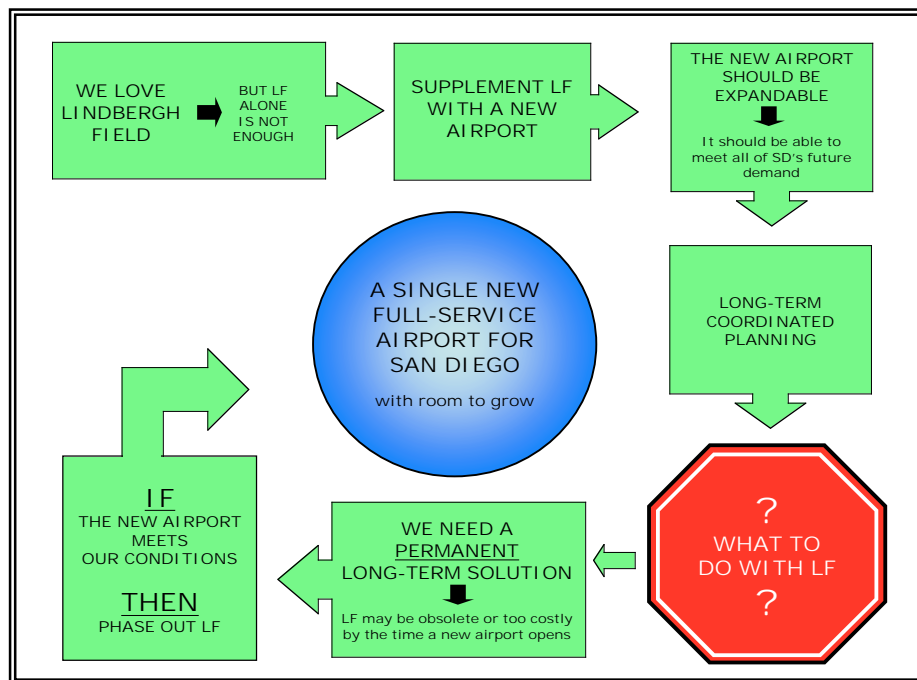
Core values: Participants' core values were consistent across all six dialogues. Across the board, participants wanted accountability, a voice in major decisions, permanent solutions (as opposed to ad-hoc or piecemeal approaches), and plans that can adapt to changing circumstances – all coupled with a powerful love of San Diego and a desire to enhance its quality of life. These core values shaped participants' responses to everything that was said or heard throughout the day.

The evolution of views: The specific evolution of participants' views is discussed in detail in the body of the full report on these dialogues, but in general it followed a consistent pattern.¹ Most participants entered the conversation with a strong attachment to Lindbergh Field, but they quickly came to realize that Lindbergh alone (as currently

¹ Data tabulations are available for download at www.viewpointlearning.com/vlpubs/FITFdata.pdf

configured) will not be able to meet the region’s needs in the future. Building a supplemental airport was an obvious next step. Participants had several key requirements for this new airport – that it be able to accommodate all of San Diego’s future demand, be easily accessible by car and public transportation, and offer a wide range of domestic and international flights.

Participants agreed that long-term, coordinated planning will be needed to effectively integrate a new airport with housing, commercial development and transit throughout the region. As they came to see the new airport in more concrete terms, participants began wrestling seriously with the question of whether Lindbergh Field should remain operational. Ultimately, most participants decided that it should close, in large part because of the long lead time before a new airport could begin operating, a strong resistance to piecemeal solutions and a growing enthusiasm for other possible uses for the Lindbergh Field property. Five out of the six groups concluded that if the new airport met their conditions, then Lindbergh Field should be phased out and the new airport should become San Diego’s primary facility.



Web Dialogue design

The materials and process for the web dialogue were based directly on the ChoiceDialogues; however the goal was somewhat different. The FITF dialogue was not designed to provide statistically representative data (as a scientific research study would have been). Instead its purpose was to engage many more San Diegans in the conversation and to provide critical input for the ASSP. Unlike the representative cross section of citizens in the ChoiceDialogues, participants signed up on their own to

participate in the two week process. As a result, these dialogue results represent the views and values of a select group of passionate, committed citizens.

To adapt the ChoiceDialogue process to an on-line environment, Viewpoint Learning worked with WebLab, a New York based software company that created a customizable software platform called Small Group Dialogue (SGD). The software enables large numbers of participants to be divided into small groups of 40 to 50 people functioning as a community as they work thorough a complicated issue. WebLab has used SGD successfully on a number of complex issues, including the redevelopment of Ground Zero after the attacks of 9/11, reform of the New York City school system, same sex marriage and breast cancer, among others. The software design combined with Viewpoint Learning's process promotes a more transparent and accountable form of on-line communication in which flaming and similar verbal attacks (typical in many on-line chat rooms and discussions) is rare.

FITF Participants: Who They Were

SignOn San Diego, the web site of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, served as the convener of the dialogue and promoted it heavily. The value of this media partnership should not be underestimated. SignOn San Diego has higher household penetration than almost any other web site in San Diego, including Yahoo. Participants signed up through SignOn San Diego, and many local companies and community organizations also promoted participation in their newsletters and on their Intranets. Local business and civic organizations such as the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and LEAD San Diego included sign-up information in newsletters. Ultimately 735 people registered to participate and were divided into 14 groups.

The participants came from 99 different zip codes within the county. Almost half (48%) were from metro/central San Diego. Another 35% were from the North County, both inland and coastal. The rest were divided between the East County and the South Bay. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the zip code with the highest representation among participants (5.5% of the total) was Point Loma, the neighborhood closest to the current location of Lindbergh Field. However only three zip codes had more than 3% of the total number of participants, and most zip codes represented had less than 1%. This impressive geographic diversity turned out to be very important. As prior Viewpoint Learning research has revealed, typical "NIMBY" viewpoints are more quickly put aside when a group includes members from more than one community. This proved to be the case in both the ChoiceDialogues and the FITF dialogue, and participants were able to take a broader view of the needs of the region, rather than viewing the problem from a purely parochial perspective.

The group was somewhat less representative of the county population on other measures, however the group was fairly typical when compared to other on-line forums.

- More men (68%) than women (32%) participated.
- Average incomes were high; two thirds of participants (67%) were in households with incomes of \$50,000 or more and 36% were in households with incomes of \$100,000 or more.

- 80% of participants were Caucasian, which is a much higher percentage than for the county as a whole (67%.)
- 65% of the participants had completed a college degree or better (more than twice the county average); 27% had completed a graduate degree.

All participants were asked to post short biographies, and these introductions revealed a wide range of careers, interests and experiences. There were former navy pilots, stay-at-home moms, CEOs, engineers, college students, retirees and schoolteachers – just to name a few. Some were lifetime San Diego residents; some had moved here only recently. Some were frequent business travelers; some used the airport rarely if at all. Some were aviation experts; others were complete novices. However, all shared a common belief that this issue is critical to the future of San Diego and that the public needs to have a voice in the decision.

*"I, too, am excited about the opportunity to be heard (read?) in this forum. An airport needs to be user-friendly, and we are the users!"...
Group #12*

FITF: Key Findings

Participants wrote almost 4,000 posts during the FITF dialogue. This analysis highlights themes and perspectives that were consistent throughout many (and in most cases all) of the fourteen groups. When identifying common themes, we noted ideas that seemed to be supported by a majority of participants posting within a group, and also themes that were common to multiple groups. While most comments supported these findings, there were vocal minorities who felt very differently on almost every point, and their points are noted as such.

It is also important to note one key difference between the ChoiceDialogues and the FITF process. In the former, facilitators worked with the groups to identify and delve into areas of common ground and this was the stated goal of the sessions. In the FITF dialogue, while participants were encouraged by facilitators to look for common ground and make the difficult choices required to make solutions realistic, there were fewer formal mechanisms to help them do so. Only 5 of the 14 groups in the FITF dialogue had active facilitation and the rest were self-moderated (although a dialogue manager provided daily instructions). As a result of this difference, coupled with the fact that many participants in FITF came into the process with more knowledge than the average citizen and more firmly held views, participants did not work through the tradeoffs as thoroughly as in the face-to-face dialogues.

Throughout the analysis that follows, the findings from FITF are compared and contrasted to the ChoiceDialogue findings. Similarities are noted, as are points of difference. In considering some of the more notable differences, it is important to keep in mind three key factors that may have played a role:

- The difference in samples: representative (ChoiceDialogues) vs. self-selecting (FITF)
- The difference in process: active, in-person facilitation and a focus on common ground (ChoiceDialogue) vs. more hands-off, participant-driven (FITF). Part of this difference is attributable to the fact that in-person dialogue allows for a more

intense conversation; body language, facial expression and tone provide a great deal of information and impact the conversation enormously. This element is completely missing in on-line dialogues.

- The difference in timing: Spring 2004 (ChoiceDialogues), before the Department of Defense released a list of base realignments and closures (BRAC) so military sites were still real possibilities for a new airport location and before San Diego's astonishing fiscal and political collapse. And Summer 2005 (FITF), after these events had dramatically reshaped the region's political landscape. The list of base closures did not include any San Diego sites, which has made the search for a viable location more complicated. Further, San Diego's recent political turmoil has eroded public trust in its leadership to a remarkable degree, making it far more difficult for decision-makers to take action.

What AND Where

*"What kind of airport we have and where it will be cannot be separated. That people paid to be on commissions have been seriously proposing as airport options the old El Toro base, March AFB, Borrego Springs and the Imperial County desert as tells me that sound thinking has not really taken place in these committees. These are not realistic."
– Group #9*

In both the ChoiceDialogues and the FITF dialogue, participants were asked to focus on **“what,”** not **“where.”** By **“what,”** we meant what kind of airport: what services, what capacity, what benefits, what kind of flights, etc. This focus proved to be easier to maintain in the face-to-face dialogues than in the on-line version. In the web dialogue, participants felt strongly that they could not talk about the **“what”** in a vacuum; the **“where”** was just as important, and the two had to be discussed together. Some of this

difference is probably attributable to the factors listed above (on-line vs. in person, post-BRAC). In addition, many of the participants got involved because they lived in neighborhoods that might be affected by an airport move, and ignoring sites was unacceptable for them. In fact, the dialogue team's initial instructions to focus on **“what,”** not **“where”** met with a great deal of concern and resistance.

However, although participants continued to include site-specific references throughout the dialogue, they were also able to talk very specifically about what kind of airport they wanted. Groups independently started up topics with names like “What Kind of Airport Do We Want?” and “How Much Airport do We Need?” to deal very specifically with the **“what.”** Of particular interest here was the participants' ability to acknowledge the interests of their neighborhood and then see the problem in the larger context. It is unlikely that a conversation made up exclusively of Point Loma residents would have been able to discuss expansion of Lindbergh Field with ease, or that Clairemont residents would have particularly good feelings about a new full service airfield at Miramar that might put them right in the flight path. But because each group was geographically diverse, the group as a whole was able to overcome NIMBY and have a deeper conversation.

*"I contend that we cannot have a truly meaningful dialogue on the airport without discussing location. So I propose that we have this one topic where we break the rules and we do discuss location. If others don't want to participate, that, of course, is OK. But I invite any fellow rebels to break the 'no location rule' in this topic."
– Group #13*

Significant support for increased capacity

The vast majority of the participants agreed that sticking with Lindbergh Field (in its current configuration), even with some minor improvements, would not work as the long-term solution. Over time, almost every dialogue participant came to support the conclusion that Lindbergh Field would not be able to handle San Diego's air traffic by 2020 and beyond. While they differed as to how dramatic the capacity shortage might be and how long it might take to reach a crisis point, few participants argued that doing nothing or making only minor fixes was the answer.

"I do however agree with your assessment that the numbers we are being given about the future growth of air passenger traffic are probably a bit on the optimistic side. Nevertheless, even if it takes 30 years instead of 15 to reach capacity at Lindbergh, it still makes sense to choose an option now while it's still available."
– Group #7

Folks with the vision of SD as the sleepy little Navy town of 50 years ago are happy with Lindbergh, its convenience and relative small 'footprint'. This isn't reality! San Diego will continue to grow, expand, and develop across a broad range of areas. This city sits astride America's edge of the Pacific Rim, enjoys some of the best weather in the world, and a rich blend of ethnic, social, economically diverse population. We should encourage an airport that recognizes this reality."
– Group #9

Where the complexity (and therefore the need for dialogue) came in was therefore not in whether we need something better, but what we need and where it should go. It is important to note that this shift towards acceptance of the need for a new airport is relatively recent; the past few years have shown a notable change in public perception of need.

What to do about Miramar

Almost as soon as FITF launched, Miramar was part of the conversation. The subject of MCAS Miramar was prominent in every group and was for many of the participants the obvious solution to this problem. This focus emerged as a key difference between the ChoiceDialogues, when people refrained from discussing sites to any great extent, and the FITF dialogue. The FITF postings around Miramar revealed a set of key criteria it seemed participants generally required in a new airport: a central location, good existing transit access and low displacement of residents and existing businesses. Miramar meets these criteria handily, not to mention the added benefit of having an existing airfield infrastructure. The fact that the base was not on the BRAC list did not, in the minds of most participants, mean that it was off limits. It meant instead that leaders and citizens should make a concerted effort to acquire the base in the next BRAC round.

"After spending a great deal of time reading many of the responses throughout all the groups, Miramar continues to be the most logical and practical location. It has all the features to facilitate a large multi-runway regional airport with room to expand and adequate space for noise buffering. Miramar's existing freeway access and rail corridors could be the foundation to developing the Aeroplex concept. If San Diego's politicians, local, state, and federal, cooperatively worked towards a 25 to 30 year plan, it would come to fruition."
– Group #4

Short of the marines leaving Miramar, a number of posts suggested exploring joint-use possibilities at Miramar for the near future, with a full-scale commercial airport down the road.

"I believe the Marines can work out a joint-use situation – MCAS retaining the north half of Miramar with the civilian terminals located on the south portion of the property. San Diego has supported the military, it's time for the military to be reasonable and support San Diego." – Group #8

While participants were aware of San Diego's political and business leaders' blanket opposition to base closures, most saw this position as obstructionist and short-sighted. Participants wanted the SDCRAA to push hard to get this base on the closure list, and felt that the authority would be derelict in its duty to pursue all reasonable options if it did not do so. Some groups went as far as posting the web address for the Department of Defense so that other group members could write to the DOD and request that they reconsider the base. Unlike in the

"BRAC is not set in stone. Miramar is only off limits because our elected officials adamantly refuse to lobby for its acquisition; in fact they've irresponsibly FOUGHT it being closed. We need leaders that have backbone to stand up and do what's right for San Diego." – Group #7

ChoiceDialogues, this very strong push to rely on Miramar, available or not, made it difficult to get past the wishful thinking that a perfect and easy solution was out there and to consider other sites.

It is important to note that there was strong disagreement on the viability of Miramar from a vocal minority of participants. For some of these residents, the base was clearly off the table and the urgency of the situation dictated the need for other solutions that could be more realistically implemented in the near term. For others, Miramar was unattractive because of its environmental value and the impact a major airport would have on surrounding communities.

Interestingly, very few posts argued that the base should be maintained because of its important role in the San Diego economy and the importance of national security.

"I'll admit it appears many people tie the mere presence of the Marines at Miramar to either better security or a loss of jobs if they left. I do not believe we are truly safer with the marine helicopter squadrons at Miramar, nor do I believe that there would be a permanent loss of jobs if they left. Building an airport at Miramar would employ far more people and would create more jobs" – Group #1

If not Miramar, then what?

FITF participants who felt that Miramar was not likely to be available soon – if ever – looked to solutions that incorporated the current location of San Diego International Airport.² Underlying these solutions was a general agreement that San Diego was and

² The FITF dialogue took place just before the technical team on the site selection project, Ricondo & Associates, released a plan for major improvements to Lindbergh Field. The plan, published in the

would continue to be primarily an origin-and-destination (O&D) market, and would never need to be a hub like LAX or Sky Harbor in Phoenix. This understanding led to a focus on pragmatic rather than ideal solutions. Throughout the dialogue, participants brought up technological solutions; floating airports, filling in the Bay, unanticipated changes in aviation technology, but these ideas gained little traction in the groups. Those solutions that gained the most support fell into two categories; build a second airport to supplement Lindbergh Field, or find a way to export the problem and move travelers to LAX, Ontario and other Southern California airports.

1. *Build a supplemental airport:* A number of posts in every group came to the conclusion that without the perfect site, it would be better to develop a second supplemental airport, most likely somewhere in the North County. For some participants, this seemed like the best long-term solution, as it maintained the convenience of Lindbergh Field as well as the investment in that airport.

"I must admit that I did not realize the potential of a two (or more) airport scenario. Keeping LF is key, building a bigger one somewhere becomes merely a planning problem and not quite so fraught with emotion"
– Group #12

One essential component of a supplemental airport that most proponents agreed on was the need for some sort of high-speed rail connecting the new facility to Lindbergh Field as well as other parts of the county. This was absolutely fundamental to many participants.

"For this option to work, there must be a dedicated, high speed transfer between two airports." – Group #6

"I concur 100% with your statement, "Improve Lindbergh for now, but "PUSH" for Miramar for future expansion." Though I vigorously opposed such thinking in the past it has become quite clear to me that we really have no choice. I feel we have to do what it takes to improve Lindbergh for the near term and send a very clear message to our politicians and the Marines that the city of San Diego needs Miramar. I am convinced that we can begin joint operations at Miramar as the Marines begin to move some of their assets elsewhere or decommission them"
– Group #5

There was a great deal of discussion as to where to locate a supplemental facility, and questions over how big it would need to be and how much capacity would be necessary. Many participants thought another option worth investigating was an approach in which one of the local military bases (most likely MCAS Miramar, NAS North Island or Camp Pendleton) would become a joint-use facility, incorporating both military and civilian air traffic. North Island made a great deal of sense to some participants, who saw the opportunity to supplement Lindbergh Field with additional capacity at North Island, perhaps for international flights.

newspaper the week after the dialogue concluded, showed a configuration that would add a second parallel runway at Lindbergh Field, doubling current capacity, but that would involve enormous land acquisition costs along with considerable residential and commercial displacement, more than has ever been attempted for a domestic airport to date.

Although a few participants believed that any joint-use arrangement would be unsafe and a possible threat to security, there was a widespread belief that joint-use was possible and should not be dismissed out of hand.

"For those who prefer to think outside the box try this one. There is a splendid additional underutilized runway only ten minutes away from Lindbergh -- North Island could offer a shared-use runway -- just as in Honolulu and many other cities -- reached by water transport at a modest cost since the right of way is free and uncongested. Instead of boarding a bus as you do at Dulles your gate is at the dock. Here is the opportunity for large long haul aircraft to absorb the peak demand and make Lindbergh viable for decades to come. While some may think this far fetched it certainly is no more absurd than Borrego Springs." – Group #1

2. *Export the Problem.* Another popular idea, although by no means universal, was to improve transportation systems from San Diego County to other airports throughout the region: LAX, Ontario, John Wayne, and possibly a future airport at March AFB. The assumption was that most people flying out of these other facilities would be long-haul travelers. Participants that supported this approach looked at the problem as a regional, not a county-specific challenge. Participants expressed confidence that between existing Southern California airports and possible new airports outside of San Diego there would be more than enough capacity to go around.

"How about this as a radical idea... hi speed rail to LAX for the long hauls and lower fares... and reasonable improvements to Lindbergh, second runway, new terminal, etc. For a few more transcontinental and some new transoceanic flights." – Group #9

"At this time I favor the idea of keeping LF. San Diego is a destination not a hub. Let LAX keep the mess up there. Do rapid transit, it is expensive but long range, better for more of us." – Group #3

Transit is essential in every solution

Across the board in every group, participants agreed that any airport solution **MUST** incorporate mass transit. As demonstrated above, this was true of single airport and supplemental airport supporters alike, including proponents of improving Lindbergh Field.

Rail and trolley were the most common suggestions, and high-speed rail was mentioned repeatedly as a critical component of any good regional solution. This was true of a supplemental solution, but equally true for those who supported building an entirely new airport, moving travelers to other regional airports or finding ways to get more capacity out of Lindbergh Field. Without an explicit transit component, participants in general were less willing to support any investment in a new airport or even in improving Lindbergh Field. This was also part of a desire to see the airport solution address the pressing need for improvements to the transportation system throughout the region.

"I think it should be a given that any airport plans be coordinated with efficient mass transit, and the planned California high-speed rail project. Even if those plans just include no future airport expansion out side of maintaining and upgrading Lindbergh field." – Group #1

"The new airport must be connected to mass rail transit with inducements to travel by rail to the airport rather than by personal automobile. No more freeways should be expanded before more mass rail transportation is in place." – Group #8

"The one thing I would like to communicate to our community leaders is to think big and to be great visionaries. We truly are blessed to live in America's finest city. While I want them to be prudent in their spending, I also want them to be bold and be willing to make a world class air transport facility with all the mass transit that go along with it. We are woefully behind in meeting the demands of our future transportation needs." – Group #1

Part of the support for a supplemental airport solution emerged from a strong belief that San Diego needs to think regionally about transit and other pressing issues, and in future planning needs to integrate air, highway and rail as much as possible. They believed that a supplemental airport could provide the catalyst for a thoughtful transportation system that would benefit not just air travelers, but also all residents of the county. An airport solution that provided benefits beyond those normally associated with an airport was extremely important.

Far-flung sites wrong for a new airport

"Borrego is so far away from everything it would defeat the purpose of a new airport. Not to mention affecting national park land with noisy planes." – Group #4

"People fly to save time - an irreplaceable commodity. It is the wise use of the precious moments of our lives that matters. Travel time for most San Diegans to the airport is probably less than 20 minutes. This minimizes the portal-to-portal time for trips. The advantage is lost if the airport is 1-2 hours from the city, such as in Borrego or Ocotillo Wells. What were people thinking? Why?" – Group #2

For the most part, FITF participants did not see the remote sites on the list as worthy of consideration. Travel time was of enormous importance to most groups, and while they understood that they might someday need to drive farther than the 15 to 30 minutes many of them currently drive to Lindbergh Field, the idea of a major airport in Borrego or the Imperial desert struck them as absurd and totally unsupportable.

The issue of these remote sites led some to question the site selection process to date, and what kind of criteria could possibly maintain them as viable candidates. They felt that the process lost credibility by keeping remote sites on the list, and in particular maintaining sites outside of the county. Some wondered about the competence and motivation of the SDCRAA in doing so. The only exception to this response was to the Campo site. Participants were not as unanimously opposed to this site, as it seemed more feasible than the others (no mountain passes, an existing freeway route). While certainly not demonstrating whole-hearted support, many participants were willing to consider this site as a possibility if a more central location was not obtainable.

"Although it's not my first choice either, Campo deserves some discussion. Assuming that all military sites are off the table (including the MCRD by Lindbergh), it's really the next best option. The two big benefits as I see them are that there's land there and the impact to the surrounding community would be minimal since it is sparsely populated. I think it's clear that LF is not a viable alternative for a major airport, and if Miramar is not available, I say we must consider compromises such as longer commutes to the East County. In my mind Campo is becoming a close second alternative if Miramar is not available." – Group #4

The issue of trust

Issues of trust, or more accurately mistrust, surfaced time and time again in the groups. This occurred to a lesser extent in the ChoiceDialogues, but appeared as a central theme in the FITF dialogue. Some of this mistrust may have been aggravated by the on-line format. While participants knew who was sponsoring the dialogue and were aware of the team that was running the process, online dialogue is ultimately more anonymous than in-person conversation. They could not question the facilitators or the conveners and could not challenge the data they were given except among themselves.

Participants expressed mistrust on many levels: of San Diego leadership, of the Airport Site Selection process, of the data and information and of how the results would be used.

1. *Trust in San Diego leadership* Perhaps not surprisingly, participants expressed a great deal of doubt about the leadership in San Diego County. This included the San Diego Airport Authority, but it also extended to city council members, the mayor, SANDAG, the Port District and state and federal representatives.

Previous research by Viewpoint Learning in California and specifically in San Diego has demonstrated very high levels of mistrust. And these already high levels of mistrust have been compounded by a truly amazing run of political scandals, fiscal crises, indictments and now convictions.

What is more interesting about the intense doubt about leadership was that it extended so far beyond elected officials to the SDCRAA. Few distinctions were made between elected, appointed or civic leaders. There seemed to be a sense that “leaders are all in cahoots” and that sweetheart deals and backroom dealing are rife in every big decision. No prominent leaders were exempt from this: business interests and civic leaders were viewed as part of the problem as well.

“I’m beginning to think that the kind of leader we need just doesn’t live here, or doesn’t see the problem as requiring an heroic effort, or this isn’t on their radar because it’s not a crisis YET. Good leadership and management means knowing how to engage positive change BEFORE there’s a crisis, when times are GOOD. Well, that window of opportunity to help San Diego go from Good to Great is quickly closing. We need a hero... A Champion, someone who can cut through the political confetti and make something happen. No solution will make everyone happy, but no solution at all will fail the city far more miserably.”
– Group #13

“My biggest concern echoes that of the others that have spoken...that this is just an “exercise” to show they’ve “let the people speak” and the politicians, contractors, developers and the rest that will gain the most financially will do as they wish anyway.” – **Group #10**

“I’ve long had the concern that the board is covering for the truth - the members were appointed because they know how to follow instructions and have already picked the new airport location. We’ll see...”
– Group #14

And it was not just the possibility of behind the scenes deals that worried participants. They questioned the competence of San Diego's leadership and expressed serious doubts about their ability to pull off a project of this magnitude. This led many to lobby for more minimal solutions even though they liked the idea of a world-class airport.

"After reading the comments here I think there should be a new poll:

Do you trust the local governing body(ies) to accurately address the issue of L.F. and come up with a solution/compromise that will benefit the people of San Diego County?

A: If given the opportunity the local government will screw it up.

B: If given the opportunity the local government will REALLY screw it up

Honestly, does anyone in this group have any faith in the local government to NOT screw this up?"

- Group #14

2. *The Airport Site Selection Process.* As mentioned above, a number of participants had come to suspect the assumptions and decisions made as part of the Airport Site Selection Program (ASSP) to date. This started, for some, with the premise that a new full service airport would be necessary at all. The inclusion of sites they felt were untenable, the absence of any serious discussion of Miramar or other military bases, the perceived lack of creativity and the lack of movement in over a year all made them skeptical about the seriousness of the effort and the ability of the organization to find a real solution in the near future. They worried that the entire process was a conspiracy of special interests, where the real work was taking place behind closed doors and without authentic public consultation.

"Fix it. Expand it. Whatever it takes keep Lindbergh operational. This bit about needing two runways is being pushed on us by the folks who will make the money from the "New" Airport...Lindbergh is the only real choice. And you know something is fishy when not one of the money folks admits it might be an option. Go look at the Airport Selection committee site. They analyzed and offered an assessment on every other potential idea, but when you select Lindbergh field on their site locator, it says it's still being studied. This isn't about capacity, or capability, or need. It's about money." - Group #11

3. *Trust in data and information.* Participants' concerns about the region's leaders, as well as the site selection process and the motivation behind it, spilled over to tarnish the information provided in the dialogue. A vocal minority questioned the accuracy of the projections (population and economic growth, increase in air travel, etc.) that pointed to the need for a new airport. In addition to questioning the accuracy of the data, they expressed doubts about the source of the information: some believed there was a vested interest or agenda at work.

"Provide the public with full and independently verified disclosure. Stop the sales job. Give us hard data on the number of jobs and economic impact based on factual research rather than boosterism. Tell us what the airlines think about LF and their long-range projections for the SD market. Put all the cards on the table face up." - Group #1

In addition, participants were skeptical of the four scenarios they were asked to discuss. Initially many felt it set limits on the conversation and many suspected that scenarios had been included as part of a larger agenda.

This seemed to apply in particular to the aeroplex scenario, which some participants thought was a pet idea by the SDCRAA that sounded fantastic but would potentially bankrupt the city and forever alter the environment and character of the county. (On the other hand, some participants liked this scenario and felt it represented a long-term, forward-thinking approach.)

“The Four Scenarios are not presented equally. The way each is written affects how we respond...Is this a neutral discussion? Or a “push-poll,” a way to lead us all to agree with the developers, planners, politicians, and others who always want to vote new bonds and taxes, increase population, create mega-projects, spend more and pocket more, regardless of what happens to the ambience we live in?”
– Group #6

A note on polls. At several points during the dialogue, participants were asked to complete polls about the scenarios and indicate their responses to the potential benefits and tradeoffs associated with the various airport solutions. These polls were intended to provide some information about participants’ reactions to the scenarios and to help the groups in their search for common ground.

However, they were not perceived that way. Instead, these polls (in particular one that dealt only with potential benefits – additional jobs, more variety of flights, improvements in San Diego’s economy) added to the mistrust, as people attributed an underlying agenda to these types of questions. The intention was to provide groups a useful tool. The perception, however, was that these polls were evidence of a particular hidden agenda, and this oft-repeated perception became a clear indicator of the level of mistrust in the process and the powers-that-be.

“I didn’t even answer question #1 the first time around! It felt very much like “push polling”, where they are forcing you into certain responses. I am beginning to question this entire process, after the inherent biases in the Scenario descriptions and the poll questions, etc.!” – Group #9

Due to the participants’ overwhelmingly negative response, subsequent polls were adjusted and participation rates and reactions improved.³

“Best poll so far. I hope all of you will take a moment to fill in this poll. Even though I felt the previous polls made me ‘uneasy’ due to the way in which the introduction and questions were worded, I believe this poll is much more straightforward in asking what we are willing and not willing to accept when it comes to resolving this issue.” – Group #9 (regarding Poll #3)

³ The results of the initial and final judgment surveys and the full text of the scenarios participants drafted in the final survey are available on-line at www.viewpointlearning.com/vlpubs/FITResults.pdf.

4. *Is anyone listening?* Many wondered whether there was a hidden purpose to the FITF dialogue. They questioned whether it was an elaborate effort to spin some sort of pre-cooked solution. Many feared that public comment and dialogue were being treated as a pro-forma matter, and some went as far as to worry that they were being coerced into participating in a propaganda or disinformation campaign.

"I had believed that the dialogues were seeking new ideas and sincere opinions from the community to provide objective guidance to the airport selection process, not to devise a strategy for marketing a pre-conceived plan." – Group #9

At first this suspicion was exacerbated by participants' concerns about "overblown" scenarios and data. However, these concerns largely subsided as the groups came to know and trust each other – as the dialogue progressed, participants found that the process allowed them to write about whatever they wanted; no managers or facilitators shut down any topic of conversation or line of argument. In addition, most of the scenarios they proposed were really elaborations or refinements of one of the existing scenarios, usually including specific detail about location.

What did not change, however, was a serious concern that their views be listened to and taken seriously. They wondered about what good this or any public conversation might do; how the results might be used and whether they would have any impact at all on the ASSP. In their closing comments, many expressed great appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the process but at the same time expressed skepticism that someone would pay attention to what they felt was a very important dialogue.

"I'm very serious when I say that reading some of the group members' thoughtful comments, I'm even more convinced that we have the right people on the wrong side of the ballot box. If anybody has the total of expenditures that have been blown on airport analysis uselessly over the years, please don't print it! I cry very easily. Let's just hope that these dialogues will prove much more useful and cost effective, and that SOMEBODY WILL LISTEN!" – Group #14

"The one message that I want to communicate to decision-makers is that the people have spoken! We are not uninformed. We are not unconcerned. We do care about our communities and the welfare of our neighbors. We place decision-makers in their respective offices because we believe they truly represent our viewpoints and desires. Listen to us!!" – Group #3

"One of the most important insights I got from the dialogue here is that the people of San Diego have more of a common vision than the politicians do. A message to the politicians: Not only listen to us, but use our advice. It is not only advice, it is the will of the San Diego people whom they work for." –Group #1

Widely held public perceptions

Several common perceptions and assumptions influenced participants' opinions and drove some of their conclusions. These assumptions are commonly held by a well-informed section of the public, and they differ significantly from widely accepted research findings and assumptions used by the aviation industry, planners throughout the region and the Airport Authority. This disconnect could lead to a major misunderstanding, and it is important to clarify these points quickly so that leaders and the public share an understanding of the problem at hand. Three of these assumptions in

particular are at odds with results of analysis undertaken by the SDCRAA and the aviation industry.

- *Participants believed that any improvements to Lindbergh Field, no matter how major, would cost less than a replacement airport.* In fact, any major expansion of Lindbergh Field would require the acquisition of considerable commercial and residential properties in some of the most expensive areas of the city, creating enormous cost before a single cubic foot of earth is moved. There are also significant terrain restrictions surrounding Lindbergh Field (the proximity of downtown buildings, the cliffs at Point Loma, the water to the east) that impede further development, made more difficult by the proximity of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) which was not included on the BRAC list.

“The costs identified for Scenario 1 are essentially the reasons why people say that LF is not viable for the long term. The lack of room to grow means lost economic opportunities. And that is a legitimate concern. However, the costs associated with the other 3 scenarios are equally troubling - large financial risk, who pays for it, potential displacement of people, environmental impacts, increased travel time to get to airport... Unless a really superior location can be found, and that’s a long shot, I don’t believe our region will be willing to take the risks and incur the costs of a new airport. This leaves us with Scenario 1, the least liked by most people but also the most feasible.” – Group #2

- *Participants believed that exporting the problem can be the long-term solution.* This belief assumes that other Southern California airports will be able to assume the added capacity necessary to serve the growing population. Experts have asserted that LAX and John Wayne are already facing their own capacity issues, with Ontario not far behind. Assuming current growth projections are correct, regional planners state that unless these airports make significant and currently unplanned improvements that significantly increase their capacity, they will not be able to comfortably handle San Diego County’s overflow.

“A sound financial solution is a high speed rail to LAX.... and save the cost of an airport...put that \$15 billion to better use” – Group #4

- *Participants believed it was possible to buy time at Lindbergh Field by moving cargo and general aviation elsewhere.* Currently at Lindbergh field, fewer than 10 flights a day are devoted to cargo. The vast majority of cargo, over 75%, currently travels in the baggage compartments of passenger aircraft. Therefore, cargo currently has very little impact on runway operations, and moving it to Brown Field or elsewhere would do little to ease the coming crunch. Similarly, general aviation (charter flights, corporate jets, etc.) make up approximately 2% of takeoffs and landings at Lindbergh Field and moving that to other airports in the region would provide negligible relief.

“What might be a good idea is to move everything except commercial passenger flights to another existing airport (Palomar, Brown, etc) or to a new airport, although I don’t think building another airport is a wise use of money. This would include all freight airlines (FedEx, etc.), private aircraft, and private commuter flights. This would free up a lot of capacity and extend the life of Lindbergh Field. If Miramar never becomes available we would still have a nice centrally located airport.” – Group #7

“What about as another option retaining Lindbergh Field as the primary passenger airport, and moving all air freight business to another field, such as Brown Field?” – Group #1

The experience of the participants

Many participants remained highly committed to the FITF process over the course of the dialogue. As is common in prior experiences with Small Group Dialogue, each group had between 15 to 20 active posters and a number of “lurkers” that read posts daily but did not contribute regularly. In a wrap-up survey conducted after the end of the official dialogue, many said that while they had not posted often, they had followed the dialogue closely.⁴ In addition, many of the groups registered thousands of page views a day, which means that members of the public (not only participants) were reading the posts regularly.

“I have not posted very many responses to this topic, but I have read them all. Thank you for allowing us to be part of this important issue. I have learned a lot” – Group #6

The FITF dialogue was designed to allow for learning; learning primarily from other participants, along with background information provided by the dialogue team and from other sources brought in by the participants. Civil discourse was strongly encouraged, and for the most part prevailed. Participants were encouraged to always look for common ground rather than focus on areas of disagreement. This is not to say that powerful disagreements did not arise, but the tone was mostly respectful, and in the end, most participants reported that they greatly appreciated the experience and that they had learned a great deal in the process. The vast majority (88%) of the more than 200 participants who responded to a final feedback survey felt that they had learned something from their FITF group. Another 83% answered that they learned some or a lot from the background documents

Three out of four survey respondents felt that members of their groups listened to one another, and a strong majority (80-85%) thought the topics selected for discussion and the background information and daily newsletters provided by the dialogue team were useful. While respondents highlighted a number of concerns as problematic the vast majority (94%) said they cared some or a lot about what was happening in their groups and the majority (60%) felt that their views had been affected by their involvement.

Participants from every group expressed their sincere appreciation at having the opportunity to hear so many different perspectives and be a part of a process that can have an impact on such an important decision.

“This has been an exceptionally rewarding experience. It has remained a dialogue with a remarkable group of individuals. In case you don’t read to the end – I have learned much from everyone here, and enjoyed the chance to participate in this experience. The next thing I want to do is to second (the prior) suggestion that you join a town council, planning group, or other community organization. As we have each taken time to help with the airport process, our communities also need our time and commitment to grow in the most positive way possible.” – Group #9

“The discussion has been thought provoking. Many items were mentioned that I had not thought about. ... I have enjoyed this format and the exchange of ideas. It is always exciting to get into a debate where people are free to express their own ideas. Thanks for the time and the ideas.” – Group #8

⁴ Response rate in the survey was about 30% of all participants, and more than 50% of active posters. Feedback survey results are available at www.viewpointlearning.com/vlpubs/FITFfeedback.pdf.

"The most important thing I learned was how informed and knowledgeable this random group of people was. It was very educational to hear from ordinary people like me who really know what they're talking about. There was many comments that opened my eyes to new possibilities, like the tunnel from LF to North Island. My one message to the decision-makers is be strategic. We can't afford a short-term solution to a long-term problem. Thanks for the opportunity to be part of this exercise." – Group #1

"Thank you for the opportunity to vent and state my concerns and wishes for the future of San Diego Air Transportation. I would like to say that this forum though bulky to digest sometimes is an excellent vehicle for the cities to use to get creative input on other issues facing San Diego. i.e. the Mission Valley Charger Stadium proposal... Downtown's Public Library... Pension Plan solutions... Thank You again!!" – Group #3

"This has been a very stimulating experience. I think there's a future in this cyber-townhall business." – Group #2

"What I noticed as the 'dialogue' progressed, was that it became more involved and complex as new ideas and concerns were raised...Though each of us stands firmly behind our decisions and we have not reached agreement as to a single solution being the best, we have all been made to think more. We are better informed not only of the situation at hand and its possible solutions, or the many variables that need to be taken into consideration, making a decision more difficult to arrive at, but most importantly, how the different options affects others, the community, and the future of San Diego." – Group #10

In an interesting development, a number of participants wanted to continue the dialogue after the official end date, and the dialogue team created a "Supergroup" known as group 15. This group, made up of interested participants from all 14 FITF groups, continued to post for another month. Recently, they began meeting in person, and they have gone on to create a web site and contact major media outlets as a new airport advocacy group.

Conclusion

The participants in the FITF dialogue brought a great deal of commitment and intensity to this process. These county residents and likely voters were well informed, attentive, thoughtful and articulate, and they have given this issue a great deal of thought. It is safe to assume that FITF participants will continue to be powerfully engaged in the site selection process, many visibly so. Their concerns and questions merit a serious response as the site selection process unfolds. Top of the list for the FITF community will be:

- Updated and accurate projections of economic and population growth.
- Public and transparent assessment of Miramar's potential as an airport site, and active pursuit of the Marines' departure
- Investigation of joint use of military facilities
- Transit solutions that work for the region as a whole
- Making sure Lindbergh Field is maintained and improved in the years before a new airport can be built
- Accessible locations that make sense for most county residents
- Smart, accountable decision making
- Strong leadership

These points are all clear messages that emerged from the dialogue. To move forward, the Airport Authority must understand these points, reflect this conversation and respond to them all. This does not mean that the eventual solution proposed must follow these lines, but that a transparent process that openly addresses these concerns will be essential to build trust and public support.

ChoiceDialogue and FITF participants want their collective “voice” heard. They want authentic public engagement. In practice, real public engagement means their concerns are taken seriously, that the Authority continues to listen and solicit public input, and does not fall back on spin and persuasion.

This process was an important and unprecedented opportunity for a group of county residents to engage in a thoughtful, complex dialogue about a pressing public policy concern in full view of the general public. By continuing to offer opportunities such as FITF and by listening to the results, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority will be well on its way to creating the kind of accountable, transparent process demanded by the participants of the FITF dialogue.