



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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RON ROBERTS
SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: September 24, 2013
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBJECT: SUPPORTING JOB GROWTH IN SAN DIEGO'S INNOVATION ECONOMY
(DISTRICTS: ALL)

Overview

The San Diego region is on the front lines of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) development, thanks to the prominence of San Diego based companies and a strong military presence. An economic impact study showed that in 2011 the industry accounted for 7,200 jobs and \$1.3 billion of economic activity. Supporting the industry's growth in San Diego is necessary to retain maximum benefit and new jobs.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has begun a process to designate six regions throughout the United States as test sites for UAV/UAS development. It has done so by issuing a Survey Information Request (SIR), similar to a request for proposals. In response, a proposal has been submitted by a coalition of Southern California entities, including the San Diego Military Advisory Council, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, and San Diego North Chamber of Commerce, with Indian Wells Valley Airport District as the proposal lead.

Per the proposal, there will be no impacts to San Diego County Airports. Additionally, UAV/UAS testing will be banned in Class B airspace, which encompasses the county's larger airports. A majority of UAV/UAS testing is anticipated in unpopulated areas, while the companies and jobs are based in San Diego County, maximizing economic benefit with the least amount of airspace impacts.

Receiving one of the FAA designations will allow for streamlined UAV/UAS development and permitting, while not receiving a designation would incentivize an historically San Diego industry to vacate the region for other jurisdictions, taking its economic growth and jobs to other states.

Today's board letter directs the Chief Administrative Officer to support the FAA test site designation proposal and the future economic growth that benefits the county through UAV/UAS development.

Recommendation(s)

SUBJECT: SUPPORTING JOB GROWTH IN SAN DIEGO'S INNOVATION ECONOMY

SUPERVISOR RON ROBERTS

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a letter for the Chairman's signature to James Williams, Manager of Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration for the Federal Aviation Administration, in support of the Southern California UAV/UAS test site designation proposal.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to have County Airports staff monitor the ongoing status of the proposal and designation. Additionally, staff should be directed to monitor the state of UAV/UAS operations in San Diego County and to return to the board with a report one year from this board action.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact with this action.

Business Impact Statement

There is no business impact statement with this action.

Advisory Board Statement

There is no advisory board statement with this action.

Background

On February 14, 2012, President Obama signed the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, which directed the FAA to integrate UAV/UAS into the National Airspace System (NAS) and identify six UAV/UAS test sites. Test sites will allow for streamlined permitting during UAV/UAS development that will not be available in non-test site areas.

In February 2013, the FAA issued a Survey Information Request (SIR), similar to a request for proposals, for regions that wish to receive a test site designation. Proposals must be submitted by public entities. The proposal deadline was May 6, 2013 and an anticipated decision on test sites is expected for December 2013.

A proposal has been submitted by a coalition of Southern California entities, including the San Diego Military Advisory Council, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, and San Diego North Chamber of Commerce, with Indian Wells Valley Airport District as the proposal lead.

The proposal area extends south to the Mexico border, east to the eastern California boarder, approximately 100 miles west into the Pacific Ocean and north to the Bridgeport area, excluding Los Angeles.

Per the proposal, there will be no impacts to San Diego County Airports. Additionally, UAV/UAS testing will be banned in Class B airspace, which encompasses the county's larger airports. A majority of UAV/UAS testing is anticipated in unpopulated areas, while the companies and jobs are based in San Diego County, maximizing economic benefit with the least amount of airspace impacts.

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Fostering the UAV/UAS industry's growth in San Diego is necessary to retain maximum benefit and new jobs. A San Diego North Chamber of Commerce economic impact study showed that in 2011 the industry accounted for 7,200 jobs and \$1.3 billion of economic activity. According to a nationwide study on the impact of the test sites, by the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), UAV/UAS development is expected to grow into a \$90 billion industry in the next ten years, producing more than 170,000 jobs nationwide by 2025.

Additionally, studies show that agriculture and public safety constitute the majority of uses for commercial UAV/UAS. As the implementation of the Next Generation Incident Command System (NICS) and Operational Downlink Information Network (ODIN) systems have identified, the infrared camera technology can be combined with UAV/UAS technology to maximize fire safety, firefighting and emergency response capabilities for San Diego residents.

We have had meetings with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding the use of UAV/UAS for major emergencies and it appears likely we will have an agreement in the near future.

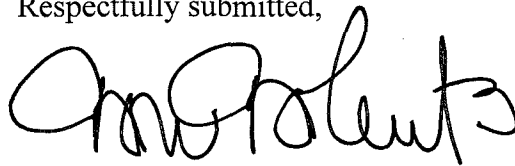
Receiving one of the FAA designations will allow for streamlined development and permitting, while not receiving a designation would incentivize an historically San Diego industry to vacate our region for other jurisdictions, taking its economic growth and jobs to other states.

With approval of today's action, the County will support the FAA test site designation proposal for Southern California and the future economic growth that benefits the county through UAV/UAS development.

Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan

There is no linkage to the strategic plan for this action.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Roberts', written in a cursive style.

RON ROBERTS
Supervisor, Fourth District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED

Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

N/A

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: District 4, Board of Supervisors

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): N/A

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Sterling McHale

Name

(619) 531-5544

Phone

Sterling.McHale@sdcounty.ca.gov

E-mail

N/A

Name

Phone

E-mail