



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Office of the Deputy Administrator

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20591

March 24, 2022

Dear Santa Clara County Leaders and Community:

Thank you for meeting with leaders from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on Wednesday, March 9. It was a productive meeting, and we look forward to continuing the partnership as we seek to create a lead-free future in Santa Clara County and in aviation.

During our meeting, the FAA presented several paths forward to assist Reid-Hillview County Airport (RHV). One path is a pilot demonstration initiative to facilitate the most effective measures to address lead emissions, while keeping aviation accessible. The FAA is in early stages of this potential pilot demonstration initiative with a select number of airports. The specifics of such an initiative need to be carefully developed, but as mentioned in the meeting, we are actively pursuing this option.

In addition to the pilot demonstration initiative, we outlined other efforts underway at the FAA to achieve our shared goal. Those include: prioritizing the review of unleaded fuels that have the best potential for fleet-wide use; seeking input and advice from the EPA on air monitoring and supporting its endangerment finding process; and exploring operational steps that would lower the community's exposure to emissions, such as working with pilots to minimize idle time. These efforts would be designed to reduce emissions around Santa Clara ahead of the EAGLE Initiative.

During the coming days and weeks, the FAA will continue to engage with Santa Clara County leaders. This includes working on a potential way to put the informal investigation into abeyance if the County and general aviation partners enter into an agreement with the FAA to (i) address maintenance and safety issues at the airport, (ii) explore other aeronautical uses at RHV, and (iii) operate in good faith within the pilot demonstration initiative that the FAA is exploring.

Finally, the following DOT and FAA officials will serve as points of contact for the county: Maeve Bartlett (maeve.bartlett@dot.gov) and Tara McDaniel (Tara.B.McDaniel@faa.gov).

Every community deserves safe and equitable transportation, and we understand the need to mitigate impacts on economically disadvantaged communities. This is an environmental justice issue that requires us to act, and to act now. Aviation remains the last source of lead emissions in transportation, and we can and should move as quickly and as safely as we can to a better future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Bradley Mims" followed by a long horizontal flourish.

A. Bradley Mims
Deputy Administrator