

July 11, 2014

Mr. Carl Nadela  
Regional Planner  
Department of Regional Planning  
County of Los Angeles  
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Nadela

**Subject: Los Angeles County Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan Update**

Northrop Grumman appreciates the opportunity provide comments on the Notice of Preparation related to the Draft Environmental Impact Report on the LA County Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan Update.

Northrop Grumman Corporation's operations in Southern California's Antelope Valley region include the Palmdale Aircraft Integration Center of Excellence at Air Force Plant 42, flight test support at Edwards Air Force Base and Scaled Composites in Mojave.

Northrop Grumman has operated in the Antelope Valley since the 1940s, when it supported flight testing at Muroc Army Air Field (now Edwards AFB). In 1986, Northrop Grumman moved into Plant 42's Site 4, which was built for production of the Air Force's B-2 Spirit stealth bomber.

Today, Northrop Grumman has about 3,500 employees working in the region, most of them in Palmdale. Northrop Grumman assembles in Palmdale the center fuselage of the F-35 Lightning II multirole fighter for Lockheed Martin, the prime contractor. Other activities include final assembly of the Air Force RQ-4 Global Hawk and Navy Triton unmanned reconnaissance systems. The company also built two X-47B air vehicles for the Navy Unmanned Combat Air System (UCAS) demonstration program, which completed the first at-sea carrier launch and recovery with a fixed-wing unmanned air system.

The Palmdale Aircraft Integration Center of Excellence also serves as headquarters for Northrop Grumman's work on the B-2 bomber. The plant was the site of the B-2's rollout in 1988 and its first flight the next year. Every B-2 was assembled there, and the aircraft come to Palmdale from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., for regular airframe maintenance. In addition, as the B-2 prime contractor, Northrop Grumman is working on a series of upgrades to improve the B-2's capabilities.

In 2007, Northrop Grumman acquired Scaled Composites in Mojave. Its world-class capabilities in innovative design, rapid prototyping and flight test complement Northrop

Grumman's own expertise in these areas. Scaled Composites continues to operate as a small, agile resource for advanced research and development.

All of the programs mentioned in this letter have a direct link to the manufacturing operations at Northrop Grumman's Palmdale Plant 42 site. Northrop Grumman would like to offer the enclosed flight path maps to be included in the environmental impact analysis to ensure that the current future land use and zoning regulations developed with the Antelope Valley Areawide Plan take into consideration sensitive military operations that require unrestricted air space separated from all future land use developments. In addition to manufacturing operations, Northrop Grumman conducts sensitive research and development and testing in the Antelope Valley to meet its military mission. It is vital that Northrop Grumman works with Los Angeles County to develop a balanced zoning plan that takes into consideration encroachment issues from a variety of incompatible land use sources including commercial, industrial, residential and recreational developments that may interfere with our current and future operations. Northrop Grumman looks forward to working with you and the County to develop the most sensible zoning plan that allows the Antelope Valley to remain the aerospace gem of California.

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

Sincerely,

*Joseph M. Ahn*

Joe Ahn  
Division Manager  
Government Relations and Public Affairs  
Aerospace Systems Sector