



DATE: December, 2025
TO: Bel Aire City Council
FROM: City Attorney
SUBJECT: Adoption of Airport Hazard Preventative Zoning Requirements

Background: Obstructions to aircraft during landing or takeoff that exist in areas nearby airports can create hazards posing risks to lives and property. These hazards can impact current and future flight paths, maneuvering space, and overall airport operations. To address this problem, Kansas statute allows local governments to adopt and enforce airport zoning regulations which can prevent hazard development.

Wichita and Sedwick County have shared a joint Airport Hazard Zoning Code since 1995. Properties within the city limits of Bel Aire are not subject to this Code, as the Sedwick County jurisdiction only extends to unincorporated areas of the county. This situation presents a gap in airport safety coverage for Colonel James Jabara Airport (Jabara), as a portion of its footprint is adjacent to and located within the city limits of Bel Aire.

Jabara is a rapidly growing general aviation airport which is home base to approximately 150 jet and propeller-driven aircraft. It is also home for the National Center for Aviation Training and WSU Tech, which is currently building a \$30 million expansion. It is a significant economic driver located approximately a mile south of Sunflower Commerce Park. It is a valuable asset in the City's total economic development opportunity package, yet requires no financial contributions from the City.

Analysis: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a new Advisory Circular in September 2022 covering Airport Land Use Compatibility Planning intended to aid local jurisdictions developing airport land use compatibility plans. The Wichita Airport Authority (WAA) hired a consultant to review the Wichita-Sedgwick County Airport Hazard Zoning Code in light of this new FAA guidance and to propose necessary changes. After full review by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, both Wichita and Sedgwick County have repealed the old Code and adopted a comprehensive replacement Airport Hazard Zoning Code. This includes a new Airport Hazard Zoning Map covering all of Sedgwick County.

The ordinance proposed here incorporates the provisions of the 9-16-25 Wichita-Sedgwick County Airport Hazard Zoning Code which pertain to Jabara Airport, and therefore impact the nearby properties within the Bel Aire city limits. The provisions limit the height of structures, objects and natural vegetation, and other hazards to air navigation within areas nearby Jabara. This ordinance defines specific hazards, establishes boundaries and outlines procedures for modifying the restrictions for modifying the restrictions and boundaries of protection zones. It follows the land

use compatibility guidance from the FAA, ensuring that there will be no conflict with air service and airport development at Jabara.

Any applicant proposing any structure, object or natural vegetation that exceeds the height limits specified in the Airport Hazard Zoning Map or proposing any tower or structure of any height that transmits signals must use the FAA's web-based Notice Criteria Tool before submitting the proposal to the City's Director of Community Development.

Financial Considerations: Adoption of this ordinance will not create any financial obligations for the City.

Legal Considerations: The City Attorney has reviewed and approved the proposed ordinance amending the City's Zoning Code.

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the proposed ordinance modifying the City's Zoning Code, authorize the necessary signatures, and instruct the City Clerk to publish the ordinance as required by law.

Attachments:

Proposed ordinance

Sedgwick County Airport Hazard Zoning Map