



# City of Fernandina Beach

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

**UPDATE (August 23, 2011)**

## **Airport Tree (and Obstruction) Safety Evaluation Plan**

The City previously retained a qualified Airport consultant (Ron Price, QED) to analyze the Airport's compliance to Federal and State Regulations and advisory circulars regarding objects affecting navigable airspace (trees, etc.). The consultant along with a forestry company identified and inventoried the type, height, and condition of the trees on the Airport, the adjacent City-owned Golf Course, vacant City-owned land, and neighborhoods surrounding the Airport.

After compiling all of the data, the consultants prepared an ambitious "preliminary" plan which addressed the identified safety deficiencies, planned to remove obstructions, positioning the Airport to support improved instrument approaches being developed by the FAA, allowing it to operate more safely, efficiently, more quietly and generate revenue for the Airport and City. The well-meaning and well-intentioned plan was initially presented to the Airport Advisory Commission (AAC) for review and input. It attempted to accomplish many things but at a possible significant (and unacceptable) impact on the trees and wildlife currently living on and adjacent to the Airport, Golf Course, and surrounding neighborhoods.

The "preliminary" plan contains serious flaws (i.e., actions that are not likely acceptable to the City) and Will Not be implemented as proposed. The "preliminary" plan has not been present to, or accepted by, the City Commission.

The City will be re-evaluating the "preliminary" plan, revising the plan to minimize the amount of necessary tree removal, cutting, and maintenance primarily on Airport property, with minimal work at the City-owned Golf Course, and surrounding City-owned land only. There will be No Cutting of trees on private property. The City will also retain the services of a qualified arborist to assist the qualified airport consultant and staff in developing the most non-evasive plan and still meet the State and Federal regulations related to the Airport and its Instrument Approach Procedures.

The City acknowledges and values the importance of our environment, including the variety and inventory of trees on the island. We apologize for any undue notoriety the initial "preliminary" plan may have generated. The revised plan should be available for review and comment within the next sixty (60) days and will be available to the public once it is revised. Please contact me directly with any questions at 904-277-7300 or email at [mczymbor@fbfl.org](mailto:mczymbor@fbfl.org).

Sincerely,

Michael J. Czymbor  
City Manager

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