

---

## **Guide to the Collection on the Development of the El Toro Airport**

Processed by Joanna Lamb; machine-readable finding aid created by Joanna Lamb

Special Collections and Archives

The UCI Libraries

P.O. Box 19557

University of California, Irvine

Irvine, California 92623-9557

Phone: (949) 824-3947

Fax: (949) 824-2472

Email: [spcoll@uci.edu](mailto:spcoll@uci.edu)

URL: <http://special.lib.uci.edu>

© 2009

The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.

---

## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Collection on the development of the El Toro Airport

**Date:** 1992-2003

**Collection Number:** MS-R141

**Extent:** 1 linear foot, (3 boxes)

**Languages:** The collection is in English.

**Repository:** University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.  
Irvine, California 92623-9557

**Abstract:** This collection comprises records related to the development of the El Toro Airport in Irvine, California.

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Publication Rights**

Property rights reside with the University of California. Literary rights are retained by the creators of the records and their heirs. For permissions to reproduce or to publish, please contact the Head of Special Collections and Archives.

### **Preferred Citation**

Collection on El Toro Airport development. MS-R141. Special Collections and Archives, The UC Irvine Libraries, Irvine, California.

### **Acquisition Information**

Transferred from the UCI Libraries Government Documents Division, 2005.

### **Processing History**

Processed by Joanna Lamb, 2009.

### **Historical Background**

In November 1994, seventeen months after the decision to close Marine Core Air Station (MCAS) El Toro in Orange County, California, Measure A was passed by Orange County voters, designating MCAS El Toro for commercial aviation use. The Orange County Board of Supervisors, supported by the John Wayne Airport neighbors, hoped to develop a large commercial airport that would serve 38 million passengers annually, and eventually replace John Wayne as Orange County's airport. As plans for the El Toro airport project were made public, the communities surrounding El Toro organized to oppose it and developed a competing plan, the Orange County Central Park and Nature Initiative. The initiative supported the development of a 1,300 acre public space that would include a sports park, botanical garden, and cultural terrace.

After an intense grass-roots campaign, the initiative was placed on the ballot as Measure W and passed by a 58 percent to 42 percent vote on March 5, 2002. The next day, the U.S. Navy and the City of Irvine announced plans for the development of the Orange County Great Park. Lennar Corporation, a real estate developer, purchased the land from the U.S. Navy for \$649.5 million in 2005 and construction began on roads and utilities in Great Park in 2006.

### **Biography/Organization History**

1943 March Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) El Toro is commissioned.

1993 June 27 MCAS El Toro is placed on the Navy's base closure list.

1994 January The El Toro Reuse Planning Authority (ETRPA) is formed by Orange County and the cities of Irvine and Lake Forest.

1994 November Measure A passes in Orange County, designating MCAS El Toro for commercial aviation use.

1995 May ETRPA expands membership to include South County.

1996 March Voters reject Measure S, a South County initiative to overturn Measure A; thus upholding Measure A.

1996 December Orange County certifies the Environmental Impact report and Reuse plan, recommending that the airport be large enough to accommodate 38 million annual passengers.

1997 January ETRPA files a legal challenge to the Environmental Impact report.

1997 October Judge Judith McConnell rules in favor of ETRPA and finds that Orange County has "abused its discretion" in developing airport plans.

1999 February South County cities present Measure F, the "Safe and Healthy Communities Initiative", which calls for a 2/3 majority county vote to expand airports, toxic landfills, or jails near homes.

- 
- 1999 June The county runs a two-day demonstration flying commercial jets at MCAS El Toro, angering immediate neighbors and creating county-wide controversy.
- 1999 July 2 MCAS El Toro closes.
- 2000 March 7 Measure F passes with a 2-1 margin.
- 2000 December A Superior Court Judge S. James Otero rules Measure F to be "unconstitutionally vague" and illegal since it usurps the County Boards of Supervisors power.
- 2001 May Irvine unveils a citizen sponsored initiative to turn MCAS El Toro into Orange County Great Park, this initiative becomes Measure W.
- 2001 July Orange County launches \$3 million "Just the Facts" Public Relations campaign supporting the airport initiative.
- 2002 March 5 Voters pass Measure W 58 percent vote to 42 percent, eliminating planned airport uses at MCAS El Toro.
- 2002 March 6 The Navy announces that it will sell the property in auction instead of giving it to a city or county.
- 2002 September 18 Judge Phillip H. Hickok upholds Measure W, ruling that the people of Orange County, not the board of supervisors, have the right to decide how the former base is developed.
- 2005 February 16 Real Estate Developer Lennar Corporation purchases the bases for \$649.5 million to create Orange County Great Park.
- 2005 July 12 Lennar takes ownership of the base.
- Krasner, Leonard. 2002. *Internet for activists: A hands-on guide to internet tactics field tested in the fight against building El Toro Airport*. San Jose, California: Writers Club Press.
- Krasner, Leonard. 2005. The grounding of El Toro. *The Orange County Business Journal* (December 5-11), <http://www.eltoroairport.org/issues/grounding.html> (accessed January 8, 2009).
- Rowe, Jeff. 2006. The chronology of developments in the creation of The Great Park in Irvine. *The OC County Register*, January 6, 2006. <http://www.eltoroairport.org/issues/GP-timeline.html> (accessed January 8, 2009).

#### **Collection Scope and Content Summary**

This collection comprises records related to the development of the El Toro Airport in Irvine, California. The bulk of the collection includes local newspaper clippings and Irvine City Council agendas and memoranda. Additionally, the collection includes correspondence, newsletters, ephemera, and agendas from the El Toro Airport Citizens Advisory Commission, El Toro Reuse Planning Authority, and the Tustin Marine Corps Air Station.

#### **Collection Arrangement**

This collection is arranged alphabetically.

#### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

#### **Subjects**

- Marine Corps Air Station El Toro (Calif.) -- Archives
- Airports -- California -- Orange County -- Archives
- Airports -- Environmental Aspects -- California -- Orange County -- Archives
- Militatry base conversion -- Orange County -- Public Opinion -- Archives

---

Box : Folder 1:1	<b>El Toro Airport Citizens Advisory Commission agendas 1998-2002</b>
Box : Folder 1:2	<b>El Toro Reuse Planning Authority (ETRPA) agendas 1994-1995</b>
	<b>Irvine City Council agendas and memorandums 1993-2003, undated</b>
Box : Folder 1:3-9	<b>1993-2000 1993-2000</b>
Box : Folder 2:1-6	<b>2000-2003 and undated 2000-2003</b>
Box : Folder 2:7-9	<b>Irvine Planning Commission agendas 1996, 1999-2000</b>
Box : Folder 2:10	<b>Marine Core Air Station and El Toro Airport ephemera 1996, 1997, and undated</b>
Box : Folder 2:11	<b>Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) El Toro Local Redevelopment Authority newsletter 1996</b>
	<b>Newspaper clippings 1992-1994, undated</b>
Box : Folder 2:12-14	<b>1992-1994 1992-1994</b>

---

Box : Folder

**1995-2003 and undated 1995-2003, undated**

3:1-10

Box : Folder 3:11

**Tustin Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) agenda and correspondence 1996-1997**