

LAFB ENCROACHMENT ISSUES EYED

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Committees studying land use affecting Del Rio and Laughlin Air Force Base are closing in on the most pressing of those issues.

Del Rio International Airport Director Joel Martinez, who serves as the program manager for the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) currently being conducted by the city, said, "Right now, we're still in the process of zeroing in on what we're going to study. This is such a broad area, Val Verde and Kinney counties, so right now we're still trying to determine where all the growth potential is."

The JLUS is expected to be complete in May 2008, Martinez said, and when it is complete, will address areas of potential conflict between Laughlin AFB, Del Rio and Val Verde County.

Martinez said a public hearing on the JLUS and meeting of the technical oversight committee were held at City Hall earlier this week.

According to the Del Rio Joint Land Use Study website, the technical oversight committee includes representatives of a number of different agencies as well as from the local development community. The technical oversight committee, along with the policy committee, guide the development of the JLUS, the web site says.

Information presented during the public forum and during the meeting of the technical oversight committee indicates that a number of key issues are already emerging.

Among the encroachment issues that will be examined in greater detail are those dealing with the city's municipal land fill, possible problems that may arise when the "Del Rio Loop" is constructed just west of the base, questions about a wastewater treatment plant west of the base and residential and commercial development on the city's southeast side.

Among other encroachment issues that will be discussed as the JLUS develops are potential growth of the Del Rio International Airport, flight path noise, potential towers at the ends of runways, the adequacy of local housing, planned widening of U.S. Highway 90 east of Laughlin, trespass onto the base by undocumented immigrants and dust from the land fill.

Martinez said, "The end result of the JLUS will be recommendations to the city to promote development in certain areas and to discourage development in other

areas.”

Martinez said a second public forum on the JLUS will be held as the study nears completion. He said the JLUS policy committee has scheduled a meeting for 5:30 p.m. Sept. 13 in council chambers at City Hall.

More information about the Del Rio Joint Land Use Study can be found on the project web site at www.westplanning.com/docs/delrio.