

# Court order stalls VVEDA base lease

Adelanto goes to Los Angeles court to win temporary restraining order

By David Allen  
Daily Press

Adelanto won a court order Thursday barring its rival, the Victor Valley Economic Development Authority, from immediately signing a lease for George Air Force Base.

The decision almost certainly quashes the April 7 ceremony in which VVEDA and the U.S. Air Force were to sign a lease for about 2,300 acres of the closed base.

The temporary restraining order was issued by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Diane Wayne and is in force through April 14, when a hearing is set on whether to extend it. Wayne did not provide a rationale for her decision.

VVEDA attorney Edward Pilot said he doubted the joint powers authority would "risk" signing the lease until Wayne makes her determination in two weeks.

The order stems from a lawsuit filed in January by Adelanto against VVEDA over the authority's second environmental impact report, which assesses its plans to turn the base into a public airport. A trial date has not been set.

Adelanto requested the order

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Monday, the hearing was Wednesday, and Wayne announced her decision Thursday.

On April 14, Adelanto plans to seek a preliminary injunction, which would bar VVEDA from signing the lease until a decision in the trial — a date probably months away.

VVEDA contends the lease is not subject to environmental review, and Adelanto argues a valid environmental impact report is required, according to Adelanto attorney Laurie Zelon.

"We do not feel the environmental issues have been spoken to," Adelanto Mayor Mary Scarpa said. Consequently, she said, "We do not feel the government or VVEDA can accept or sign a

have cost the city its credibility and delayed the area's economic recovery.

"It sounds like an extension of Adelanto's scorched-earth policy and the kind of economic crippling they want to do in the Victor Valley. We're all suffering for it," said Kathy Davis, an Apple Valley councilwoman and vice chairwoman of VVEDA.

"I have heard from many people in the valley who have lost, I guess, respect for what Adelanto's doing now. I think they've worn out their welcome and their credibility," Davis said.

## Negotiations

VVEDA said it is negotiating with the U.S. Army, DynAir and CalNev for sub-leases and contracts that would bring about 275 aviation-related jobs to the base. While conceding the contracts could not be acted upon until an impact report is declared valid in court, officials said Thursday's court order could delay that process.

Adelanto is arguing in its lawsuit that the second impact report has the same flaws a judge found in the first, relating to air quality and cumulative impacts, as well as containing faulty data.

Los Angeles has been agreed upon as a neutral site for the bitter court battle.

VVEDA is composed of Apple Valley, Hesperia, Victorville and San Bernardino County.