

Burien Airport Advisory Committee White Paper—September 19, 2017

Sea-Tac Airport was built in 1949 and by the late 1980's it was clear that increasing air traffic was having and would continue to have significant negative impacts on health and quality of life in surrounding communities. Archival research reveals that since 1992 South King County cities have diligently worked with state and regional governments to identify a location for a new airport. Unrestrained air traffic growth at this single, major-hub airport is not sustainable in terms of increasing noise and air pollution or economic development in Washington State.

Despite millions of dollars spent on sound mitigating ***some*** homes and schools, and purchase of ***some*** close-in residences, the Port has not embraced any effective remedy that reduces higher levels of aircraft noise or dangerous levels of air pollution that compromise health of at-risk children and adults. These impacts are suffered daily within a concentrated area of South King County and parts of Seattle. Adoption of their new multi-billion dollar expansion plan demonstrates that the Port continues to prioritize the comfort and ease of the flying public, at the expense of increased numbers of cancer and asthma victims on the ground.

Is it reasonable to expect that continued expansion at Sea-Tac Airport is really sustainable from any perspective? Can one large hub airport--with limited access and egress--really meet the demands of Western Washington travelers into mid-21st century, never mind considering the health and environmental impacts? Given lack of input by voters on airport expansion plans and lax oversight by Port Commissioners, King County taxpayers can ***expect increased property taxes*** due to ***extensive renovations***. ***The Port's Sea-Tac expansion financial and capacity plans should be subject to voter approval just as another special purpose district's plans were (i.e. Sound Transit)***. Irresponsible decisions by the Port have fostered growing hostility among King County taxpayers whose concerns are continuously disregarded. ***Is it fair that King County taxpayers alone should shoulder the burden of paying for services and facilities that benefit the whole state and many individual businesses?*** Who should pay, when airport activities contribute to poor academic performance by children subject to constant noise and air pollution, and a growing number of adults coping with respiratory illnesses, headaches, high blood pressure, loss of sleep, and mental health issues?

There is a need for regional and state leadership willing to address Sea-Tac's ***faulty forecasted flight operations that currently underestimate the true impacts of noise and air pollution!*** Sea-Tac operations are likely to be nearing capacity before the mid 2020's.

Burien's Airport Committee recommends to the Burien City Council that the Council speak up to the Puget Sound Regional Council, the State Legislature, and the Governor's Office on the need for aviation capacity planning coordination. While "economic demand" is the excuse used to expand Sea-Tac passenger facilities, and it is clear that this demand will exceed capacity within less than 10 years ***there is no corresponding response to the human costs of poor health, lowered property values, and environmental ills borne by nearby residents, workers, and their families.***