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October 16, 2017

Burien City Council
400 SW 152nd St, Suite 300
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Dear Mayor Krakowiak and Members of the Burien City Council,

I have reviewed the September 19th draft copy of the Burien Airport Committee (BAC) white paper currently under development. My colleagues and I commend the BAC for undertaking this work and using the form of a white paper as a way to articulate facts and existing policy to build common understanding and lay a path for ongoing constructive engagement. The Seattle Port Commission embraces this approach and looks forward to continuing our work together.

The draft white paper does a good job laying out some of the areas of work ahead, but contains a number of inaccuracies that should be addressed in subsequent drafts. I'm providing clarification so these elements can be updated as part of the BAC's white paper refinement process – and inform any proposed resolution that may follow.

Specifically, the following elements of the September 19th draft white paper were described less than accurately and are worthy of clarification as the white paper is finalized:

Sea-Tac Airport Capital Funding Sources *Confusing & contradictory stmts:*

As we move forward with our investments in renovations and new infrastructure to accommodate increased regional air travel demand, it is important for our local residents to understand that in addition to airport revenues, a major funding source for airport infrastructure is the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC). The PFC is a fee set by Congress and charged to departing passengers as part of their ticket purchase. Property tax collected by the Port of Seattle is not used for improvements at the airport. King County residents pay the PFC for their airline tickets similar to any other passenger. By way of clarification, the Port's tax levy has not traditionally been used for projects at the airport, other than specific community benefit projects such as noise mitigation improvements in the Highline School District. To the BAC's point, we do not expect airport communities to bear the funding burden for this regional and statewide asset – which is also why Congress authorizes airport authorities to set the PFC rate for airline tickets and then use these revenues and other user fees, to pay operating costs and make infrastructure investment decisions that balance the needs of a broader set of stakeholders.

used for airport purposes

Port Noise Mitigation/Abatement

The white paper states that the Port has not embraced remedies for aircraft noise. In fact, the Port's Noise Mitigation Program is one of the most comprehensive in the country. About 10,000 single-family homes were eligible for insulation when the program began in 1985. Today, approximately 96% of the eligible homes have been completed. The Port has spent approximately \$400 million in noise mitigation programs, including property acquisition/relocation and sound insulation of condominium complexes, Highline Public Schools buildings, Highline College buildings, three private schools, two churches, and one convalescent center.

Sea-Tac Airport has implemented a number of noise abatement initiatives to reduce noise produced by aircraft while on the ground, during takeoffs and landings and during flights over populated areas. Developed through joint airport and community planning efforts, these include Sea-Tac Airport's Noise Abatement Procedures, aircraft engine maintenance run-ups rules and regulations and the Fly Quiet Incentive Program.

Aviation Health Impacts

The white paper states that the Port hasn't embraced effective remedies for air pollution; however the Port is a champion at the state and federal level of efforts that will study ultrafine particulate emissions from aviation activities. The Port is one of the funders of this study. There is a current lack of data and peer-reviewed academic literature on ultrafine particulate emissions and their relationship to human health outcomes, and so we welcome state and federal legislation as an essential step toward deepening our understanding of this important topic.

Environmental sustainability is at the core of the Port of Seattle's mission, as is our commitment to protecting the health of all Washingtonians. The Port of Seattle relies on industry professionals in the science and health fields to guide the continued discussion around airport impacts - a discussion that takes place on a global, national and community level all around the world. We have participated for many years in policy work on aircraft emissions, and lead the nation on issues like air quality, water quality, sustainable aviation fuels -- and we will continue to do so. As a public agency, we respect the work of other agency professionals, and are committed to following the science toward consistent outcomes in the health impacts discussion.

Regional Aviation Capacity

Sea-Tac Airport is a tremendously efficient and valuable gateway for Washington State. As my colleagues and I have stated previously, we recognize the interest in the question of regional capacity. While it's not appropriate that we lead the discussion for the entire state, we look forward to being a part of the conversation with other regional and state leadership. At the same time, we will continue our planning at Sea-Tac to respond to the continued dependency and growing demand for air travel in our state and build on the public and private investment made at the airport, even as possible alternatives to Sea-Tac may be explored.

The continued demand for commercial air service in this state reflects positive trends -- from the strengthening economic health of our region to the maturity of different economic sectors. However, it is these positives that create increased transportation and community impacts throughout central Puget Sound, whether on our roadway system, in our communities, or in our open spaces.

*Plan, then
do it.
-
Historic
cost.*

*related to
2024 traffic
memo*

*Why should
address*

*"How
"throughly"
of them?"*


*We can't
control
growth, we will
only respond to it!*

*How about
entirety of
about the comm.
flyers?*

Let me close by reaffirming the Port's commitment to building awareness, engagement and cooperation with area communities and local jurisdictions. Our Highline Forum has long been a table around which we can gather to discuss these topics, and the formation of our new airport stakeholder advisory roundtable will be another way for community members, cities, airlines, the FAA and the Port to discuss and provide feedback related to airport-related operations, capital planning and development. I hope Burien will consider participating in this effort.

Thank you again for your commitment to advancing airport-related discussions in your community, and I look forward to ongoing partnership opportunities.

Sincerely,



Tom Albro
President, Port of Seattle Commission

cc: Brian Wilson, City Manager

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