SeaTac Airport Committee Agenda

Monday, August 8, 2016
6:00 PM
City Hall - Council Chambers

Council
Michael J. Siefkes, Chair
Peter Kwon
Erin Sitterley

Note: A quorum of the Council may be present.

Community Members
Craig Baker
Doris Cassan
Tom Dantzler
Douglas Hill
Roger McCracken
Joel Wachtel

Staff Coordinator
Joseph Scorcio
Acting City Manager

	TOPIC	PROCESS	WHO	TIME
1	Call to Order and Welcome		Chair	
2	Public Comment	Please sign-in if you'd like to speak so the Chair can call on you. Public comments are limited to 10 minutes total and three minutes per individual speaker. Time may be reduced for each speaker to stay within the 10-minute time limit.	Chair	10
3	Update: Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) training requirement **OPMA Training (16:40)** https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=n3B7_Xm3l8c E-mail cityclerk@ci.seatac.wa.us to notify of completion.	This mandatory training must be completed within 90 days of appointment. Two ways available: On-line video or Power Point Slide Presentation	Acting City Manager	5
4	Approval of July 25, 2016 Minutes	Action	Chair	5
5	Recap of prior meeting & additional materials provided	Review	Acting City Manager	5
5	Review and prioritizing of "issue list" from prior meeting	Discussion	All (Chair to facilitate)	15
6	Homework Assignment: "the one thing regarding the airport you would change today if you could?"	Discussion	All (Chair to facilitate)	15
7	Interlocal Agreement Primer (current ILA and schedule for new ILA)	Presentation	Acting City Manager	15
8	Building a vision of "working effectively with the airport" (to be continued at next meeting)	Initial Discussion	All (Chair to facilitate)	15
9	Topics for next meeting and homework (September 19, 2016, 6:00 PM)	Discussion	All	5
10	Adjourn	Action		

Packet:

Agenda
July 25, 2016 Summary Minutes
Revised Roster List
OPMA Training Power Point
Seattle Business Articles, August 2016, Ready for Takeoff/Sea-Tac is No.1!
PowerPoint: Airport revenue Diversion, Federal Aviation Administration

SeaTac Airport Committee
Summary Minutes
Monday, July 25, 2016
6:00 PM
City Hall - Council Chambers

Committee members present:
Michael J. Siefkes, Chair, Peter Kwon, Erin Sitterley, Craig Baker, Doris Cassan, Tom Dantzler, Douglas Hill, Roger McCracken, Joel Wachtel
Staff: Acting City Manager Joseph Scorcio, Asst. City Attorney Mark Johnsen, Exec. Assistant Lesa Ellis
Councilmembers in audience: Deputy Mayor Fernald, Councilmembers Campbell and Forschler

ITEM	TOPIC	ACTION
1	Call to Order and Welcome	Chair Siefkes called meeting to order at 6:00 PM
2	Public Comment	One speaker: Earl Gipson
3	General Purpose, Expectations & Role of Committee	Acting CM Scorcio went over some of the key points of the Resolution establishing the Committee. This Committee is advisory to the City Council and should function as a Committee, not as individuals. He recommended that any questions or requests for information be directed to city staff for efficiency. He explained the functions of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) as agreed to in the Port ILA. He also stated that Port and City staff will continue to hold regular meetings. It was recommended to the Port that they not attend this first meeting of the Committee. Chair Siefkes said if this Committee is successful, perhaps the formation of a Committee of all the affected cities may be the next step.
4	Individual Perspectives (issues and wishes for the Committee)	Chair Siefkes asked each Committee member to present the topics/issues of the highest concern to them: • SASA impacts/options • Desire to be a part of the discussion in the Port's decision making/not after the fact • Access and communication • EIS process • Traffic at the taxi and Uber parking lots • Traffic impacts citywide • Car rental VS Uber • Crime, theft • Port taking of property • Emergency Management scenarios, proximity to the Airport in case of disaster – impacts to the City • Port plan is too aggressive/overuse/too many planes for

		the square miles of the airport
		• Black soot on sidewalks in City-what's the source?
		• Airport impacts to property values
		• Negotiate the best deal with the Port/ILA
		• Greater say/voice in what the Port does
		• Lack of communication and representation of the community at the table with the Port
		• Imbalance in growth and infrastructure/benefits of growth
		• Airport associated with blight and traffic
		• New emerging issues – improve the Port's timing and communication to the City
		• Responsiveness to current (daily) impacts to City
		• Port's tactics to divide and conquer cities
		• Mitigation of impacts to the City
		• Health impacts
		• Mitigation of impacts through financial support for additional police and human services
5	Interlocal Agreement Primer (current ILA and schedule for new ILA)	ACM Scorcio stated an ILA is a mutually agreed upon document. The working principle on both sides should be an open and honest dialogue. He also referenced the RCW governing intergovernmental cooperation, commitment, and authority. He further noted that the agreement is with the Port of Seattle, not the Sea-Tac Airport. Certain fees collected by the Airport have restricted use, but city staff is looking into revenues collected by the Port of Seattle. It was noted that it is in our best interest to move forward from this point, rather than question what was agreed to in the past. The Executive Summary of the 1997 SeaTac Intl. Airport Mitigation Impact Study was distributed. The City of SeaTac was not included in the study due to the 1997 ILA being in place. Staff is drafting a scope of work to do a similar study now. ACM Scorcio stated the expiration of the extension of the Port ILA-2 occurs at about the same time as decision points for the SAMP and environmental documents. Staff will send the following documents to committee members: • SAMP presentation update for Port Commission – July 12 2016 • SAMP presentation for IB Business Community Discussion – June 29 2016 • ILA presentation for Council Retreat – January 2015 • 2005 Port ILA-2 plus exhibits and amendments Joel Wachtel provided Lesa with enplane, size in square miles, and passenger boardings ranking sheets for distribution to the Committee members. Craig Baker requested the FAA rules on residential and commercial property uses.

6	Initial Discussion – Building a vision of "working effectively with the airport" (to be continued at next meeting)	Item moved to next meeting agenda. Chair Siefkes assigned homework: For the next meeting, what is the one thing the Airport could do today that would have an immediate impact on you?
7	Future Meeting Schedule (frequency and day/time)	Meetings will take place monthly on the third Monday at 6:00 PM at City Hall. Exception is that the next meeting will take place on Monday, August 8. Meeting notices will be sent via Outlook. Materials will be sent electronically. One member requested electronic and a paper copy.
8	Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.

SEATAC AIRPORT COMMITTEE
(maximum of 9 Members/2 Year Terms for business and resident members)

Name	Date Appt'ed	End of Term	Address	Phone/Email	OPMA
Michael J. Siefkes, Chair	N/A	N/A	City Hall	C: 206-475-3110 msiefkes@ci.seatac.wa.us	Jan or Feb 2016 as part of City Council
Erin Sitterley	N/A	N/A	City Hall	C: 206-475-3113 esitterley@ci.seatac.wa.us	Jan or Feb 2016 as part of City Council
Peter Kwon	N/A	N/A	City Hall	206-418-8033 pkwon@ci.seatac.wa.us	Jan or Feb 2016 as part of City Council
Tom Dantzler	6/28/2016	6/30/2018	3321 204th Ave Ct. E. Lake Tapps, WA 98391	C: 253-826-1212 tomdantzler@hotmail.com	09/14 - PDF (as part of PC)
Doris Cassan	6/28/2016	6/30/2018	PO Box 68428 SeaTac, WA 98168	W: 206-433-6766 ext 214 dc@dollarseattle.com	
Roger McCracken	6/28/2016	6/30/2018	2003 Western Ave Suite 500 Seattle, WA 98121	W: 206-870-7050 RM@MCCRACKENPROPERTIES.NET	09/14 - PDF (as part of H/M Com)
Craig Baker	6/28/2016	6/30/2018	3734 S. 164th Street SeaTac, WA 98188	H: 206-599-9853 W: 800-327-8829 craigcbaker@gmail.com	
Joel Wachtel	6/28/2016	6/30/2018	3450 S. 176th Street SeaTac, WA 98188	C: 206-257-0372 jlwachtel@verizon.net	
Douglas Hill	6/28/2016	6/30/2018	19323 46th Ave S SeaTac, WA 98188	C: 206-930-6322 dougo53@comcast.net	

Annual Report to Council   **Staff Coordinator: CED Director Joe Scorcio**
Related Documents: 16-010

Revised: July 2016

The SeaTac Airport Committee is established to act in an advisory capacity to the City Council with the following purposes:

1. To discuss both the positive and negative impacts of the Sea-Tac International Airport in the City of SeaTac;
2. To discuss land use issues related to Sea-Tac Airport, including the impacts on the City of SeaTac, including but not limited to the South Aviation Support Area (SASA), the International Arrivals Facility, and Airport Access;
3. To discuss agreements between the City of SeaTac and the Port of Seattle related to Sea-Tac Airport including, but not limited, to any Interlocal Agreements;
4. To discuss mitigations of the Airport impacts including, but not limited, to traffic mitigation, surface water management, parking, and the payment of impact fees;
5. To make recommendations to the City Council regarding ways to protect residents and businesses from negative airport impacts;
6. To make recommendations to the City Council regarding ways for residents and businesses to take advantage of positive airport impacts;
7. To address other airport related issues as deemed appropriate by the Committee or the City Council.

Ready for Takeoff

OPPOSITION CONTINUES, BUT

PAINE FIELD INCHES CLOSER

TO COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS.

BY STEPHEN H. DUNPHY

WHEN PAINE FIELD WAS BUILT IN 1936, nearly a decade before Seattle-Tacoma International Airport was completed, the 604-acre, fog-free unpopulated site 23 miles north of Seattle was envisioned as being one of 10 commercial "super airports" around the country. Originally called Snohomish County Airport — its name was changed to Paine Field in 1941 — the airport was a Works Progress Administration project designed as part of the New Deal to create jobs, drive economic growth in the Pacific Northwest and support a nascent aviation sector. ❧ Shortly after opening, the airport was diverted for military operations during World War II, and again later for the Korean War. Snohomish County took over full management of the site and opened it for new commercial development in the mid-1960s, leading Boeing to establish a production facility for the 747 jetliner in 1966. By then, Sea-Tac had emerged as the region's primary airport. ❧ Now, 80 years after construction began, Paine Field is about to fulfill its original purpose as a commercial airport. Last year, Snohomish County approved plans for a commercial air terminal to be operated by Propeller Airports, a 5-year-old subsidiary of Propeller Investments, a private equity firm that invests exclusively in the aerospace and transportation sectors. When completed, the two-gate passenger terminal will be the first privately operated commercial air terminal in the country. ❧ "This is a win for residents and businesses in Everett and Snohomish County," says Everett Mayor Ray Stephanson. "Bringing a terminal of this quality to our community as a public-private partnership saves precious taxpayer dollars and offers considerable economic benefits." He says the county looks forward to "helping travelers avoid hours of traffic and headaches." ❧ Initial operations will be limited to two dozen flights a day. Any expansion beyond that, which will require Federal Aviation Administration approval, will likely be vigorously fought in court by community groups in nearby areas

TRAFFIC PATTERN.
Paine Field's main runway, left, handles big jetliners made at Boeing's Everett plant adjacent to the airport.

A LONG WAIT.
Eighty years ago, the federal government envisioned Paine Field becoming one of 10 "super airports" across the country.

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH *by* KEN DEJARLAIS / BOEING IMAGES

like Mukilteo and Edmonds concerned about traffic, noise and property values.

Mukilteo's mayor, Jennifer Gregerson, is pushing for a county charter amendment to create an airport commission to oversee Paine Field. While Mukilteo, whose eastern border abuts the airport, has no legal authority to stop passenger service, Gregerson wrote recently in a blog post, "We will use every tool at our disposal to ensure that the full impacts to our community are heard and addressed. We will not stop in that mission, and the fight is not over."

In that regard, the Port of Seattle's effort to build a third runway at Sea-Tac is a cautionary tale. First proposed in 1992, it faced opposition from cities and communities neighboring the airport and encountered long delays and rising costs. The third runway finally opened in November 2008 and cost $1 billion, more than four times the original estimate.

BUT THE FORCES arrayed in support of Paine Field are building. The FAA concluded in 2012 that commercial airplanes could use Paine Field without significantly affecting the neighborhood. Jet engines are much quieter today than they were two generations ago, and Paine Field officials say the noise level meets federal guidelines within the footprint of the airport itself. In fact, the noisier aircraft tend to be private planes that use the only runway that takes them over Mukilteo. An opposition group, Save Our Communities, and two individuals filed suit to block commercial service on environmental grounds, but a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in March rejected the argument.
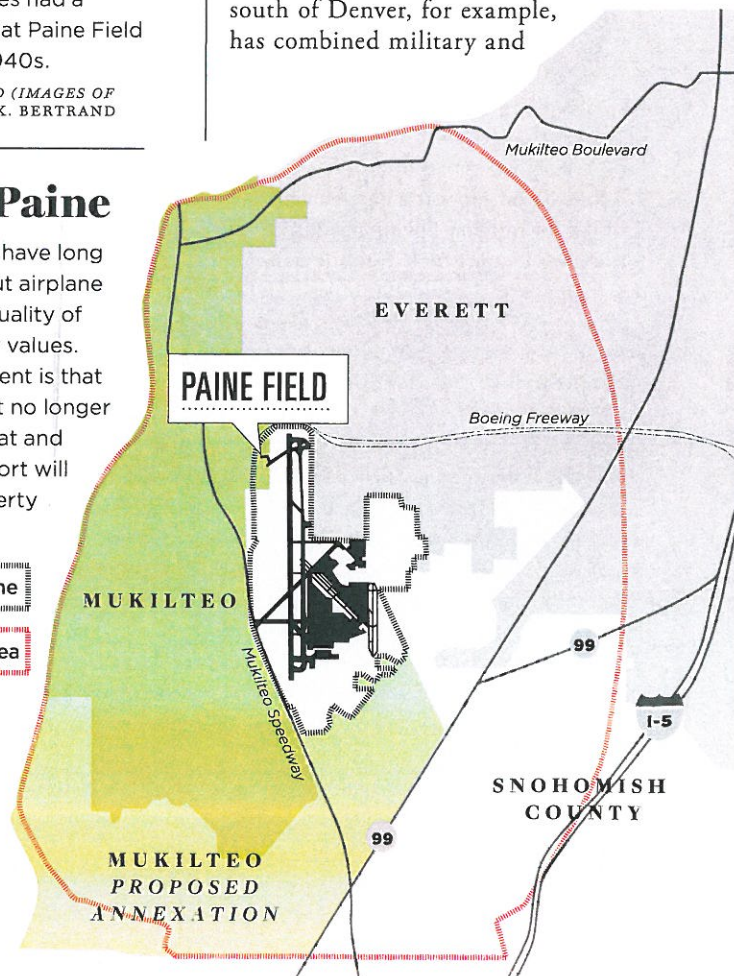
A Long Runway

1. A WPA project, Paine Field was one of 10 "super airports" intended to spur economic growth during the Great Depression.
2. The site required tree clearing and leveling to ready it for runways in 1936. **3.** Shortly after it opened, the airport was used by the military during World War II.
4. Alaska Airlines had a maintenance hangar at Paine Field in the late 1940s.

SOURCE: *PAINE FIELD (IMAGES OF AVIATION)* BY STEVE K. BERTRAND

Growing Paine

Neighboring cities have long had concerns about airplane noise affecting quality of life and property values. The counterargument is that modern-day aircraft no longer pose a noise threat and proximity to an airport will be a plus for property owners.

Airport Property Line

Airport Influence Area

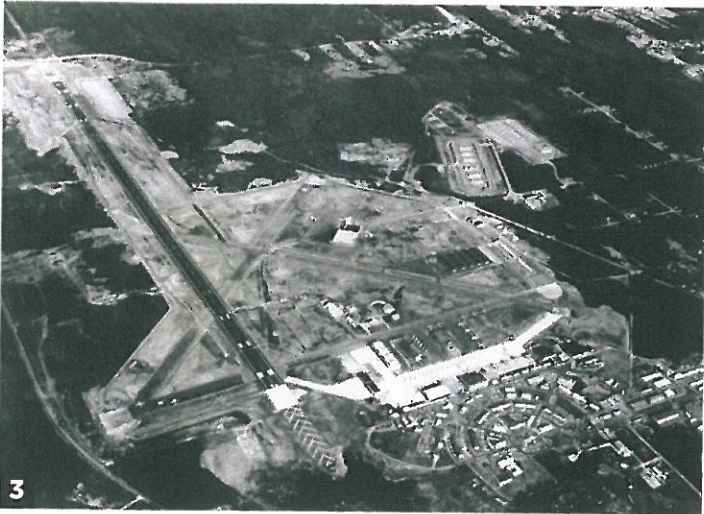SOURCE: SNOHOMISH COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

As Sea-Tac struggles to handle rapid growth (see story, page 41) and as vehicle traffic through Seattle faces gridlock much of the day, pressure to develop a second major airport in Washington state will continue to grow. Boeing Field — officially King County International Airport — is not a candidate as a relief airport because of conflict with the flight pattern into Sea-Tac. McChord Field, a military airport near Tacoma, is also mentioned as a possible option — Colorado Springs Airport south of Denver, for example, has combined military and

Mukilteo Boulevard

EVERETT

PAINE FIELD

Boeing Freeway

MUKILTEO

Mukilteo Speedway

99

I-5

SNOHOMISH COUNTY

99

MUKILTEO PROPOSED ANNEXATION

commercial operations. But McChord is a key component of Joint Base Lewis-McChord and there are no plans or initiatives afoot to use McChord for commercial flights.

Besides, since Sea-Tac is already situated between Seattle and Tacoma, Paine Field is far better positioned to serve the growing number of residents who live in Seattle and to the north. The state Office of Financial Management estimates that, by 2025, the population of Snohomish County alone will grow to 1 million, up from 870,000 today. About 4,700 travelers a day from Snohomish County depart from Sea-Tac, according to Port of Seattle passenger data from 2014 and 2015. Most presumably have to travel by highway through the center of Seattle to get there.

It's also difficult for communities in north Puget Sound to argue persuasively that Paine Field's growth should be limited when the airport was there before most of the communities were established, and when the region's economy has benefitted greatly from aerospace development around Paine Field.

It is now one of the largest manufacturing and service centers in the state, encompassing about 50,000 jobs. Boeing builds its largest planes at a Paine Field facility that is the largest building in the world. Other companies like Aviation Technical Services, which employs 1,500 workers doing commercial aircraft maintenance, also call Paine Field home and use its runways for their operations.

Although commercial flights will initially be limited to about 24 a day, Paine Field is already a busy airport. It handles roughly 300 flights daily, including large jetliners from the Boeing factory and small planes flown by private aircraft owners. The modern, FAA-operated control tower was built in 2003, more than doubling the size of the old

Who Was 'Top' Paine?

Paine Field is named for Topliff O. "Top" Paine, who was born in Ohio in 1893 and moved with his family to Everett in 1903. A graduate of Everett High School and the University of Washington, Paine was a ranger with the U.S. Forest Service when he joined the Army in 1917 upon the United States' entry into World War I. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1918 after completing flight school. He was discharged in 1919 and became a commercial pilot in California and Mexico. In 1920, he joined the Post Office Department's new Air Mail Service, becoming one of the top pilots in its Western Division. He died in 1922 when his revolver accidentally discharged. The Earl Faulkner Post of the American Legion suggested Snohomish County Airport be named in Paine's honor in April 1941.

tower, and it has the most advanced aviation technology in the industry.

Propeller Airports is moving ahead — it has submitted its application to comply with Washington's State Environmental Policy Act — and hopes to break ground on the new terminal by the end of this year. Flights could begin in late 2017.

WITH COMMERCIAL operations an apparent certainty, the issue now is growth. Asked to discuss the future, Propeller CEO Brett Smith is careful in his response. He says the company is "building its business model around a two-gate terminal, and beyond that, who knows?"

Opponents doubt Propeller's ability to operate a terminal, given its lack of a track record, but Smith insists Propeller will create a "world-class facility worthy of this airport."

Propeller expects to make a profit from parking, concession, service and airline facility fees.

Tom Hoban, CEO of the Coast Group of Companies, an Everett-based commercial real-estate and investment firm, is often described as the "father" of the effort to bring commercial service to Paine. He sees the two-gate operation as adequate for now. But, he adds, "If you think of the things the community could do to drive economic diversity and provide jobs for our kids, there is no better option than leveraging a public asset like Paine Field."

If Seattle-based Alaska Airlines is one of the airlines that operates from Paine, Hoban says the community could not have a better partner.

He also disagrees with residents of

communities opposing commercialization, predicting commercial operations at Paine Field will likely increase property values. He says commercial flights will provide businesses the ability to function in Snohomish County, attracting more demand. "The model is there," he notes. "San Jose to SFO [San Francisco], John Wayne to LAX [Los Angeles]. It's the low-hanging fruit."

Propeller's Smith agrees. "Is it going to be Sea-Tac north?" he asks. "No."

But he believes the operation will provide a new and welcome experience for passengers tired of the Sea-Tac hassle. Propeller's terminal will have a fireplace and comfortable seating areas. The nearby parking lot will offer valet service; arriving passengers will be able to send text messages to the lot and have their cars waiting in front of the terminal building.

Smith says Propeller will leverage what he calls "the incredible aviation infrastructure at Paine Field" to encourage further economic development and provide local travelers an airport option.

Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers says having a private company operate the airport not only provides substantial income for the county — the lease agreement calls for annual payments of about $450,000 — but also eliminates the risk of a publicly operated terminal. Under the 30-year lease, Propeller is responsible for building and maintaining a state-of-the-art, two-gate terminal, which would revert to county ownership at the end of the lease.

ALTHOUGH neighbors have expressed concern about airplane noise, Paine Field Airport Director Arif Ghouse says it should not be a concern. "We have shown that the noise level is contained within the airport itself," he says, meaning that noise levels above 65 decibels are not heard in neighboring communities. He notes that Paine Field already has many large commercial airplanes taking off each day as new planes come from the Boeing plant. The only difference between them and commercial flights, Ghouse says, is that "they're just empty."

There is room for expansion at Paine. The airport already has about 80 acres north of the main runway targeted for development. The aim is to market the land to "aerospace" uses, Ghouse says. Expanded airline operations would certainly qualify as an aerospace use.

Road access to the airport may be a more serious concern. There are two general access routes to Paine Field on crowded surface streets. Motorists trying to exit to Interstate 5 run into long lines when Boeing shifts end. Paine Field is scheduled to be on the Sound Transit 3 light rail expansion. An updated version announced in May indicates light rail would serve the airport (and Everett) by 2036.

No airline has publicly announced flights from Paine Field, but two have shown strong interest. Bobbie Egan, an Alaska Airlines spokeswoman, says there is a need for another commercial airport in the region. Asked about Propeller's lease and plans, Egan says, "If there is an airport built there, we would take a strong look at service there." In a 2013 proposal to the FAA, Alaska suggested operating 98 flights a week from Paine Field to Portland, Honolulu, Los Angeles,

Las Vegas and other West Coast destinations.

Las Vegas-based Allegiant Air, which operates flights from Bellingham to Oakland, Los Angeles, Palm Springs, Las Vegas and Phoenix, has also expressed interest with the FAA but says it has no immediate plan to fly from Paine Field.

PAINE FIELD has three runways, the longest more than 9,000 feet and used mostly by Boeing for its large, wide-body jets. The runway length means it can handle almost any size aircraft; the longest runway at Sea-Tac is about 12,000 feet. A second runway at Paine is much shorter, about 3,000 feet, and is used mostly by small private aircraft — about 650 private planes are based there. The third runway, 4,500 feet long, is used as a taxiway and for Boeing to park unsold aircraft.

Paine Field also is a major tourist destination. The Future of Flight Aviation Center and the associated Boeing factory tour attract 350,000 people a year. The Museum of Flight Restoration Center and Reserve Collection also call the airport home, along with Paul Allen's Flying Heritage Collection. Two community colleges operate facilities there, training students for jobs in aviation.

The question that's still hard to answer is how Paine Field can grow fast enough to help shoulder part of Sea-Tac's increasing load. "As part of our master planning, we have always recognized the region is going to eventually need a reliever airport," says Sea-Tac spokesman Perry Cooper. But 24 flights a day at Paine won't do much to relieve congestion at Sea-Tac, which currently averages more than 1,000 flights a day.

One pressing issue is the real challenge faced by the Port of Seattle at Sea-Tac. If it stumbles even slightly in its plan to enlarge the airport, the resulting bottleneck would affect the region's economic growth and send business elsewhere.

Another major regional airport would provide the answer. In 1936, Paine Field was envisioned as a "super airport" serving the region. It now seems as if fulfilling that vision is the only practical alternative to serving the area's growing transportation needs. **SB**

Future Destination

Propeller Airports, a private developer, is building a two-gate commercial terminal to serve Paine Field. It could open late next year.

PROPELLER AIRPORTS
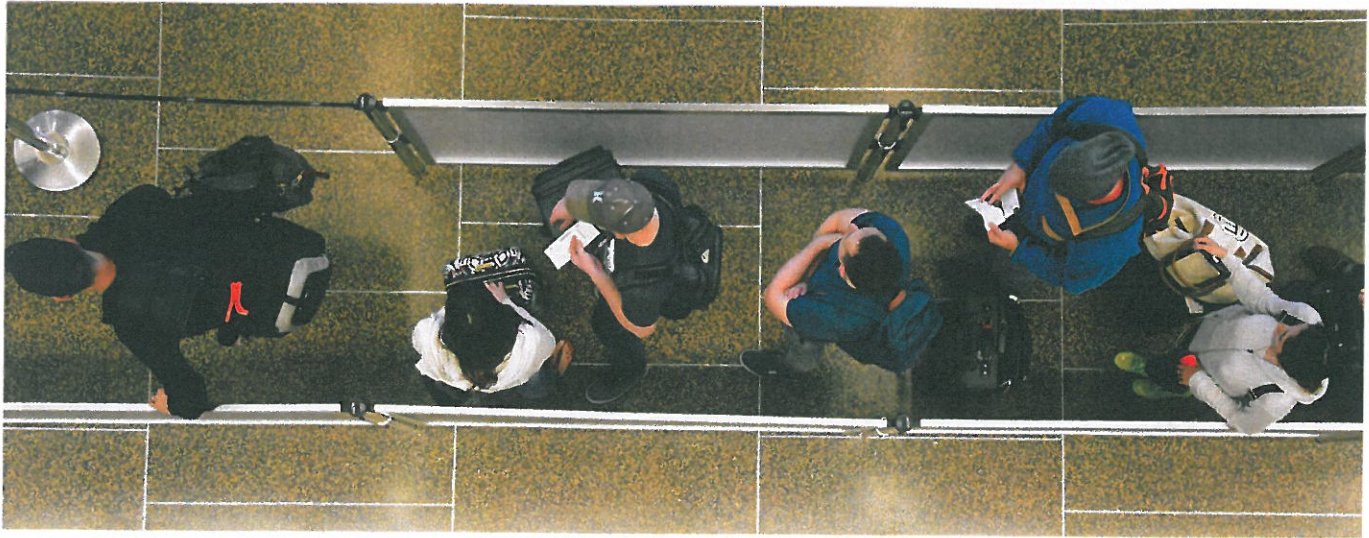
Sea-Tac is No. 1!

BUT RAPID GROWTH IS MAKING LIFE AT THE AIRPORT LESS THAN CELEBRATORY.

BY ELAINE PORTERFIELD

PASSENGER TRAFFIC is growing at airports across the country, but Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is at the top of the charts, the fastest-growing airport in the nation. Passenger traffic at Sea-Tac set a record for the fifth year in a row in 2015, according to the Port of Seattle, which oversees airport operations. About 42.3 million travelers arrived or departed last year — a 13 percent increase over the previous year (including a 14.5 percent increase in international passengers). That means roughly 115,000 travelers surge through Sea-Tac every day.

The airport's traffic growth has been tops in the nation for two years running. In 2014, about 37.5 million passengers passed through, a 7.7 percent increase over the previous year. By 2034, Sea-Tac traffic is expected to reach 66 million passengers annually. And those crazy numbers could come even sooner. "We've been outstripping projections like crazy," says Sea-Tac spokesman Perry Cooper.

Growth is coupled with this reality: Hemmed in by three suburban communities, Sea-Tac has one of the smallest footprints of any major airport in the nation: about 1,335 acres. The result: a lot of projects and improvements in the works at the airport, plus consideration of a second airport in the region to provide some relief.

Problems that are likely to spin out from Sea-Tac's growth include severe congestion along the taxiway in front of the terminal, caused by an ever growing number of jets coming and going from gates; delays for departing aircraft due to runway crossings by arriving aircraft; more circling by arriving aircraft as they wait for a runway; and longer delays on the ground because of the lack of gate availability.

Meanwhile, inside the terminal, ticket counters grow ever more crowded, restaurant lines lengthen for harried travelers trying to grab a bite and security checks can take so long that even careful passengers sometimes miss flights. Alaska Airlines recently advised its passengers to arrive two hours before a domestic flight at Sea-Tac and three hours for an international flight. In April, the Transportation Security Administration announced its intention to add more agents at Sea-Tac. Outside, roads leading to dropoff and pickup zones are frequently clogged, and airport parking grows ever scarcer.

Growth isn't all bad, of course. The airport

> **Security checks can take so long that even careful passengers sometimes miss their flights.**

is a critical regional asset, with more than 170,000 jobs attributable to airport activity, meaning $6.1 billion in total personal income and $16.3 billion in business revenue a year, according to port statistics. Every new international flight generates an estimated $75 million annually in direct and indirect economic impact to the region.

In the short term, the port has $2 billion in projects planned to resolve some of the growth issues. They include a $600 million arrival facility for international passengers and expansion of the north satellite from 12 gates to 20. The first phase is scheduled to open in mid-2018. A spanking new, high-speed baggage-handling system, at a cost of $321 million, is likewise being built to handle growth.

Last fall, Port of Seattle CEO Ted Fick told *The Seattle Times* editorial board that even with all this remodeling, Sea-Tac could reach its capacity in six to 10 years at its current rate of growth. The region needs to look at using other airports to absorb some of the growth, he says. It's only logical. Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York City and Washington, D.C., all have more than one major airport serving their metropolitan areas.

Whether it's Paine Field in Snohomish County or some other venue, whichever airport is the long-term solution to relieve Sea-Tac's overcrowding will need to be decided upon soon because it will likely take a long time to bring another airport up to speed, given environmental reviews and the regulatory and permitting processes.

And while the location of a reliever airport may be uncertain, it's not going to make the nearby communities happy, because there are at least two truths about airports: When we travel, we like them to be nearby and convenient; when we're at home, we'd rather they be far away. **SB**

Open Public Meetings Act
RCW 42.30

Washington's Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA)

- Passed in 1971
- Requires meetings to be open to the public, gavel to gavel
- RCW 42.30

Purpose

- "The people do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them."
- "The people, in delegating authority, do not give public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know."
- "The people insist on remaining informed so they may retain control over the instruments they have created."

~ RCW 42.30.010

3

Purpose (Cont.)

- Public commissions, boards, councils, etc. listed in OPMA are agencies of this state that exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business.
- Their actions are to be taken openly and deliberations conducted openly.

~ RCW 42.30.010

- Act is to be "liberally construed."

~ RCW 42.30.910

- The purpose of the OPMA is to allow the public to view the "decisonmaking process."

~ Washington State Supreme Court
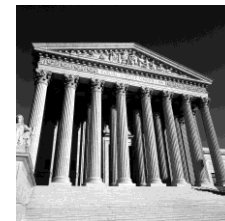
Open Government Laws Like the OPMA are Often Called "Transparency Laws" or "Sunshine Laws"

This is because they "shine light" on government. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis once famously said, "*Sunlight is the best disinfectant."*

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*Transparency builds public confidence in government.*

OPMA <u>Applies</u> To:

<u>Multi-member</u> public state and local agencies, such as boards and commissions, as follows:

• Any state board, commission, committee, department, educational institution, or other state agency which is created by or pursuant to statute, other than courts and the legislature.

• Any county, city, school district, special purpose district, or other municipal corporation or political subdivision of Washington.

• Any subagency of a public agency which is created by or pursuant to statute, ordinance, or other legislative act, including but not limited to planning commissions, library or park boards, commissions, and agencies.

• Any policy group whose membership includes representatives of publicly owned utilities formed by or pursuant to the laws of this state when meeting together as or on behalf of participants who have contracted for the output of generating plants being planned or built by an operating agency.

~ RCW 42.30.020

These are the "public agencies" subject to the OPMA.
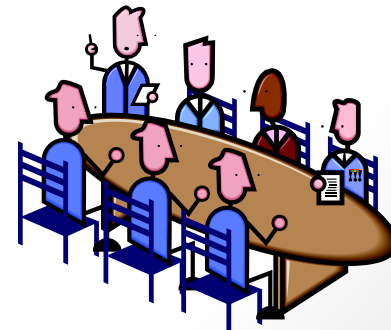
OPMA Does <u>Not</u> Apply To:

- These entities:
  - ❑ Courts
  - ❑ Legislature
  - ❑ Agencies not defined as "public agency" in OPMA, such as agencies governed by a single individual
  - ❑ Private organizations

- These activities:
  - ❑ Licensing/permitting for businesses, occupations or professions or their disciplinary proceedings (or proceedings to receive a license for a sports activity, or to operate a mechanical device or motor vehicle)
  - ❑ Quasi-judicial matters
  - ❑ Matters governed by the Washington Administrative Procedure Act, RCW 34.05
  - ❑ Collective bargaining

~ RCW 42.30.020(1), RCW 42.30.140

Governing Body

- All meetings of the ***governing body*** of a public agency shall be open and public and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the governing body of a public agency, except as otherwise provided in RCW 42.30.
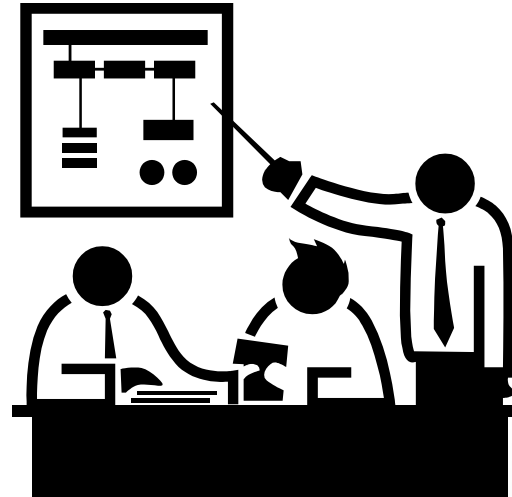
~ RCW 42.30.030

8

What is a Governing Body?

- The **multimember board or other policy or rule-making body**

OR

- Any **committee** of such public agency *when:*
    - the committee acts on behalf of the governing body,
    - conducts hearings, or
    - takes testimony or public comment

    ~ RCW 42.30.020

9

What is a Meeting?

- "**Meeting**" means meetings at which the public agency takes "**action**" ~ *RCW 42.30.020*

- Physical presence not required – can occur by phone or email

  An exchange of e-mail could constitute a meeting if, for example, a quorum of the members participate in the e-mail exchange & discuss agency business. Simply receiving information without comment is not a meeting.

- Does not need to be titled "meeting" – OPMA also applies to "retreats," "workshops," "study sessions," etc.

- No meeting occurs if the governing body lacks a quorum.

10

Action

- "**Action**" means the transaction of the official business of the public agency and includes but is not limited to:
  - Public testimony
  - All deliberations
  - Discussions
  - Considerations
  - Reviews
  - Evaluations
  - Final actions

  The requirements of the OPMA are triggered whether or not "final" action is taken.

  ~ RCW 42.30.020

Final Action

- "**Final action**" is a collective positive or negative decision, or an actual vote, by a majority of the governing body, or by the "committee thereof"

- Must be taken in public, even if deliberations were in closed session

- Secret ballots are not allowed

~ RCW 42.30.060, RCW 42.30.020

Travel and Gathering

- A majority of the members of a governing body may travel together or gather for purposes other than a regular meeting or a special meeting, so long as no action is taken.

- Discussion or consideration of official business would be action, triggering the requirements of the OPMA.

~ RCW 42.30.070

"Regular" Meetings

- **"Regular meetings"** are recurring meetings held in accordance with a periodic schedule by ordinance, resolution, bylaws or other rule.
- A <u>state</u> public agency must:
  - Yearly, file with Code Reviser a schedule of regular meetings, including time and place
  - Publish changes to regular meeting schedule in state register at least 20 days prior to rescheduled date
- On June 12, 2014, new agenda notice requirements apply to regular meetings under OPMA (see next slide). (These requirements are in addition to those that may be applicable in other laws outside the OPMA for particular agencies.)

  ~ RCW 42.30.070, RCW 42.30.075; Chap. 61, 2014 Laws

14

"Regular" Meetings (Cont.)

- On June 12, 2014, new agenda notice requirements apply to regular meetings.
- Chapter 61, 2014 Laws (SHB 2105) amends the OPMA to require governing bodies to make the <u>agenda</u> of each regular meeting of the governing body <u>available online</u> no later than <u>24 hours</u> in advance of the published start time of the meeting.

- The new law <u>does not</u>:
  - *Apply to agencies that do not have websites.*
  - *Apply to agencies that employ fewer than 10 full-time employees.*
  - Restrict agencies from later modifying an agenda.
  - Invalidate otherwise legal actions taken at a regular meeting where agenda was not posted 24 hours in advance.
  - Satisfy public notice requirements established under other laws.
  - Provide a basis to award attorneys fees or seek court order under OPMA if agenda is not posted in accordance with the new law.

"Special" Meetings

- A **"special meeting"** is a meeting that is not a regular meeting (not a regularly scheduled meeting).
- Called by presiding officer or majority of the members
- <u>Notice - timing</u>: <u>24 hours</u> before the special meeting, <u>written</u> notice must be:

  - Given to each **member** of the governing body (unless waived)
  - Given to each **local newspaper of general circulation, radio, and TV station** which has a notice request on file
  - Posted on the **agency's website** --- with certain exceptions in RCW 42.30.080(2)(b), if the agency (i) does not have a website, (ii) employs fewer than ten full-time equivalent employees; or (iii) does not employ personnel whose duty, as defined by a job description or existing contract, is to maintain or update the web site
  - Prominently **displayed at the main entrance** of the agency's principal location and the meeting site (if not that same location)

  ~ RCW 42.30.080

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"Special" Meetings (Cont.)

- <u>Notice - contents</u>: The special meeting notice must specify:
  - Time
  - Place
  - Business to be transacted (agenda)
    - Final disposition shall not be taken on any other matter at such meeting

~ RCW 42.30.080

Emergency Special Meetings

- Notice is not required when special meeting called to deal with an emergency
  - Emergency involves injury or damage to persons or property or the likelihood of such injury or damage
  - Where time requirements of notice make notice impractical and increase likelihood of such injury or damage

  ~ RCW 42.30.080(4)

Public Attendance

- A public agency can't place conditions on public to attend meeting subject to OPMA:

  - For proceedings governed by OPMA, cannot require people to register their names or other information, complete a questionnaire, or otherwise fulfill any condition precedent to attendance

    ~ RCW 42.30.040

- Reasonable rules of conduct can be set

- Cameras and tape recorders are permitted unless disruptive
  ~ AGO 1998 No. 15

- No "public comment" period required by OPMA

Interruptions and Disruptions

- The OPMA provides a procedure for dealing with situations where a meeting is being interrupted so the orderly conduct of the meeting is unfeasible, and order cannot be restored by removal of the disruptive persons.

- Meeting room can be cleared and meeting can continue, or meeting can be moved to another location, but final disposition can occur only on matters appearing on the agenda. More details set out in the OPMA.

~ RCW 42.30.050

Executive Session

- Part of a regular or special meeting that is closed to the public
- Limited to specific purposes set out in the OPMA
- Purpose of the executive session and the time it will end must be announced by the presiding officer before it begins; time may be extended by further announcement

~ RCW 42.30.110

Executive Sessions
Specified purposes set out in OPMA.
Includes, for example:

- National security
- Real estate
  - Site selection or acquisition of real estate
    - Lease or purchase
    - Public knowledge would likely increase price
  - Sale or lease
    - Public knowledge would likely decrease price
    - Final action selling or leasing public property must be take at open meeting

- Publicly bid contracts
  - Review negotiations on performance
  - Public knowledge would like increase costs
- Evaluate qualifications of applicant for public employment
- Meet with legal counsel regarding enforcement actions, litigation or potential litigation
- Other purposes listed in RCW 42.30.110

~ RCW 42.30.110

22

Executive Session to Discuss Agency Enforcement Actions, Litigation or Potential Litigation

- This executive session is not permitted just because legal counsel is present
- This executive session must address:
  - Agency enforcement action
  - Agency litigation or
  - Potential litigation

  ~ RCW 42.30.110

23

Executive Session to Discuss Agency Enforcement Actions, Litigation, or Potential Litigation: Three Requirements

- Legal counsel representing the agency is present
- Purpose is to discuss agency enforcement action, litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, governing body, or a member acting in official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party
- Public knowledge regarding discussion likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency

~ RCW 42.30.110

24

Penalties for Violating the OPMA

- A court can impose a $100 civil penalty against each member (personal liability)
- Court will award costs and attorney fees to a successful party seeking the remedy
- Action taken at meeting can be declared null and void

~ RCW 42.30.120; RCW 42.30.130; RCW 42.30.060
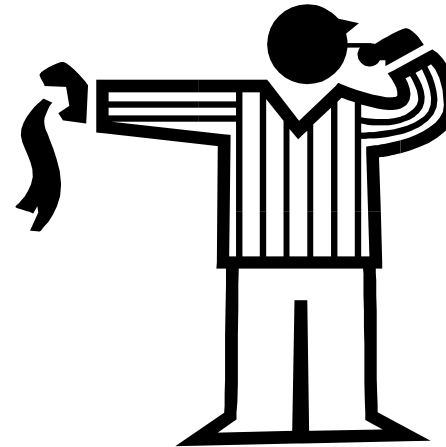
Minutes – RCW 42.32.030

- Minutes of public meetings must be promptly recorded and open to public inspection
- Minutes of an executive session are not required
- No format specified in law

~ RCW 42.32.030

OPMA Training

- A new law effective July 1, 2014 amends the OPMA to require members of governing bodies to receive OPMA training. Chapter 66, 2014 Laws (ESB 5964) ("Open Government Trainings Act"). They can take training sooner than July 1. Refresher training occurs no later than every 4 years.

- Training can be taken online, in person, or by other means.

- Training resources, videos, and more information about the Act (a "Q & A") are available on the Attorney General's Office Open Government Training Web Page: http://www.atg.wa.gov/OpenGovernmentTraining.aspx

OPMA Assistance

- The Washington State Attorney General's Office may provide information, technical assistance, and training on the OPMA. Contact Assistant Attorney General for Open Government.

- The Attorney General's Office may issue formal opinions about the OPMA for qualified requesters.

- The Attorney General's Office has helpful materials about the OPMA, and other open government topics and resources, on its website at www.atg.wa.gov.

- The Attorney General's Office Open Government Training Web Page with training resources, videos and other materials is at: http://www.atg.wa.gov/OpenGovernmentTraining.aspx

  ~ RCW 42.30.210

Federal Aviation Administration

Airport Revenue Diversion

Presented to: Texas Aviation Conference

By: Mike Nicely, Manager Texas ADO

Date: March 30, 2012

Agenda – Diversion of Airport Revenue

- **Grant Obligations**
- **FAA Guidance**
- **What is Airport Revenue?**
- **What are Permitted Uses?**
- **What are Prohibited Uses?**
- **Did you know?**
- **Revenue Diversion is --**
- **Most Common Misuses of Airport Revenue**

Grant Obligations

Grant Assurance 24, Fee and Rental Structure

*It (the airport sponsor) will **maintain a fee and rental structure** for the facilities and services at the airport which will make the **airport as self-sustaining as possible** under the circumstances existing at the particular airport, taking into account such factors as the volume of traffic and economy of collection.*

Guidance/Resources – Rates & Charges

- **FAA Policy Regarding Airport Rates & Charges**
  - June 21, 1996 & July 14, 2008

- **FAA Order 5190.6B, FAA Airport Compliance Manual, Chapter 17**

  These materials may be found on the web at:

  http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_compliance/

Grant Obligations

Grant Assurance 25, **Airport Revenues**

All revenues generated by the airport and any local taxes on aviation fuel established after December 30, 1987, *will be expended by it (airport) for the capital or operating costs of the airport*; the local airport system; or other local facilities which are owned or operated by the owner or operator of the airport and which are directly and substantially related to the actual air transportation of passengers or property; or for noise mitigation purposes on or off the airport.

Guidance/Resources – Use of Airport Revenue

- **Policy and Procedures Concerning the Use of Airport Revenue**
  - February 16, 1999

- **FAA Order 5190.6B, FAA Airport Compliance Manual, Chapter 15**

These materials may be found on the web at:

http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_compliance/

# In all airport business matters, you should ask yourself…


What is the benefit
to the airport?

What is Airport Revenue?

- **Nearly all revenue generated at the airport –**
  - Fees, charges, rents or other payments from air carriers, tenants, purchasers of property, etc.
  - Examples
    - Lease/rental income from airport property, fuel flowage fees
    - Sale of airport property
    - **Sale/Lease of sponsor owned mineral, natural, or agricultural products or water taken from airport proper**ty
    - Etc., Etc., Etc.
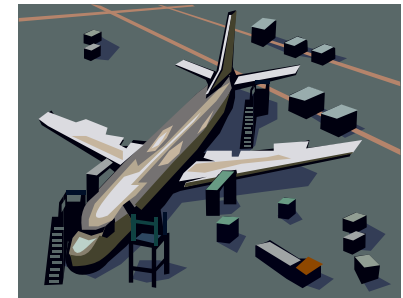
What are Permitted Uses of Airport Revenue?

- **Capital or operating cost of the airport**
  - May include
    - Reimburse state or local agencies for the cost of services actually received (direct and indirect costs).
    - Cost of promoting competition at the airport and airport services
   - Reimbursement of contributed funds from airport sponsor, subject to 6 year limitation.
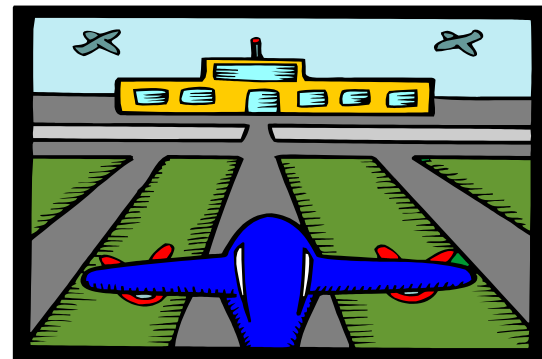
What are Prohibited Uses of Airport Revenue?

- **Constructing city streets, paying city manager's salary, purchasing police cars or fire trucks, etc.**

- **Use of airport revenue for purposes other than the capital and operating costs of the airport.**

- **Land rental or use of land by airport sponsor for non-aeronautical purposes for less than fair market value, except as permitted by FAA Policy.**

- **Sponsor use of airport land for aeronautical purposes rent-free or at nominal rental rates, except as permitted by FAA Policy.**

(More) Prohibited Uses of Airport Revenue

- **Direct or indirect payments exceeding the fair and reasonable value of services and facilities provided to the airport.**

- **Payment of impact fees assessed by a Government body exceeding the value of services or facilities provided.**

- **Direct of indirect payments based on a cost allocation formula calculated inconsistently for the airport and other compatible units of government.**
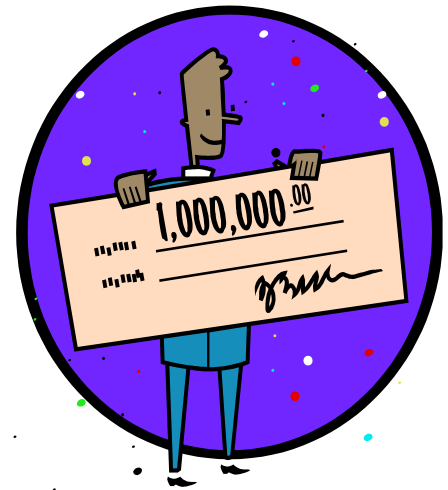
Did you know?

- **FMV does not apply to aeronautical uses, only to non-aeronautical uses/activities.**
  - Rates for aeronautical uses – Airport required to maintain rates, fees, & charges to be as self-sustaining as possible under circumstances existing at the airport.
- **Non-aeronautical leases must have escalation clauses.**
  - Typically adjusted every five years and linked to consumer price index (or some other index).
- **Term of leases must be limited to useful life of the improvement.**
  - Some exceptions – significant investment/benefit to the airport. Improvement maintained in good condition for duration of lease term.
- **Improvement should revert to airport or be removed at expiration of lease term.**

Revenue Diversion is -----

- **Sale of airport land at less than FMV.**
- **Use of airport land by airport sponsor (city/county) for non-aviation purposes at less than FMV.**
  - Fire station (for community not airport)
  - Storage of city equipment (not airport related)
  - Office space (non-airport personnel)
- **Use of airport revenue from natural resources (oil, gas water, timber) by airport sponsor for non-airport purposes.**
  - Can setup loan program to other city/county departments (must be actual loan document with terms and conditions, including interest rate and repayment schedule).

Most Common Misuses of Airport Revenue

- **Improper Uses of Airport Property**
- **Cost Allocation Issues**
  - Direct vs. Indirect
  - Unallowable Costs
- **Misuse of Marketing Funds (for region not airport)**

Consequences of Unlawful Diversion of Airport Revenue

- **Higher Rates and Charges – reducing competitiveness**

- **Financial Impact for Airport**

- **Noncompliance with Grant Assurances**

- **Possible Suspension of Federal (AIP) Funding.**

Thank you!

Questions?

Mike Nicely
Manager, Texas Airports Development Office
(817) 222-5650
mike.nicely@faa.gov

Federal Aviation Administration

![City of SeaTac logo — CITY OF SEATAC, EST. 1990]

4800 South 188th Street
SeaTac, WA 98188-8605

City Hall: 206.973.4800
Fax: 206.973.4809
TDD: 206.973.4808

August 4, 2016

Elizabeth Leavitt, SEPA Responsible Official
Senior Director, Environment and Sustainability
Port of Seattle
P.O. Box 1209
Seattle, WA 98111

Steve Rybolt
Environment and Sustainability Dept.
Port of Seattle
P.O. Box 68727
Seattle, WA 98168

Re: MDNS for Sea-Tac Airport Flight Corridor Safety Program – Phase 1

Ms. Leavitt and Mr. Rybolt:

City of SeaTac staff has reviewed the July 15, 2016 SEPA Mitigated Determination of Non-significance for Phase 1 of the Flight Corridor Safety Program, together with the accompanying SEPA checklist and supporting documentation. We appreciate past communications and materials that have been provided regarding this project, as that allowed us to more quickly perform our review of the environmental documents that are currently provided.

We have several comments, as follows:

1. Both information that has been previously provided and the SEPA checklist itself indicate that the Port has determined the full scope of this project, which will be implemented in three phases. However, this MDNS only reflects the initial phase ("Phase 1") of tree removal and replanting.

    The State SEPA guidelines (WAC 197-11-055(2)) indicate that "the lead agency shall prepare its threshold determination......at the earliest possible point in the planning and decision-making process, when the principal features of a proposal and its environmental impacts can be reasonably identified." Since the Port is fully aware of the overall scope of the Flight Corridor Safety Program, it is appropriate that the entire project be evaluated in its totality, rather than in a phase-by-phase manner. In fact, the environmental checklist makes reference to the upcoming phases and information provided in the checklist indicates that the scope of the future phases are known to a sufficient degree of specificity to allow SEPA analysis to occur at this time. For example, the response to Section A.7 states that approx. "2,750 trees....will be removed in the next three years ending in 2019." Therefore, the environmental impact of removing 2,750 trees should be evaluated at this time, not just the 1,800 trees proposed for removal in Phase 1.

2. The threshold determination is identified as a Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance; however, no mitigation measures are listed. Please clarify what mitigation measures are being proposed for this action.

Mayor
Michael J. Siefkes

Deputy Mayor
Pam Fernald

Councilmembers
Rick Forschler
Kathryn Campbell
Peter Kwon
Tony Anderson
Erin Sitterley

Acting City Manager
Joseph Scorcio

City Attorney
Mary Mirante Bartolo

City Clerk
Kristina Gregg

3. In Section A.8 of the checklist, various staff briefings with outside agencies are listed. While these are admirable outreach efforts regarding the project, they do not qualify as "environmental information.....that has been prepared....related to this proposal" and should be removed from this section.

4. Please clarify what approval or permit is referenced in RCW 14.12.020 and also in the Port's Interlocal Agreement with the City of SeaTac.

5. Section B.4.d states that re-planting will occur at a minimum ratio of 1:1, but also states approx. 2,400 native trees will be re-planted in Phase 1 (a 1.5:1 ratio). Please clarify what standard will be used. Also, are the species of native trees to be planted known at this time? They are described as "low-height" species in B.4.b. Small caliper trees that grow at slower rate will exacerbate temporal impacts of the loss of tree canopy; the Port should consider planting trees at variable calipers to help minimize the lost tree canopy. Finally, we assume the Port's concerns with potential avian-airplane conflicts must also limit the species types under consideration.

6. Section B.8.e lists a number of City of SeaTac zoning classifications that do not apply to airport properties and therefore, Phase 1.

7. Section B.8.f states that the comprehensive plan "land use" is the same as the current zoning classification. The City's comprehensive plan designation for the airport is "Airport," while the zoning designation is "Aviation Operations." This should be corrected.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to reviewing how these issues are addressed in the final SEPA determination.

Sincerely,

Steve Pilcher
Acting SEPA Responsible Official
Planning Manager

cc: Joseph Scorcio, Acting City Manager
        Jeff Robinson, Acting Community & Economic Development Director
        Al Torrico, Senior Planner
        Don Robinett, Stormwater Manager
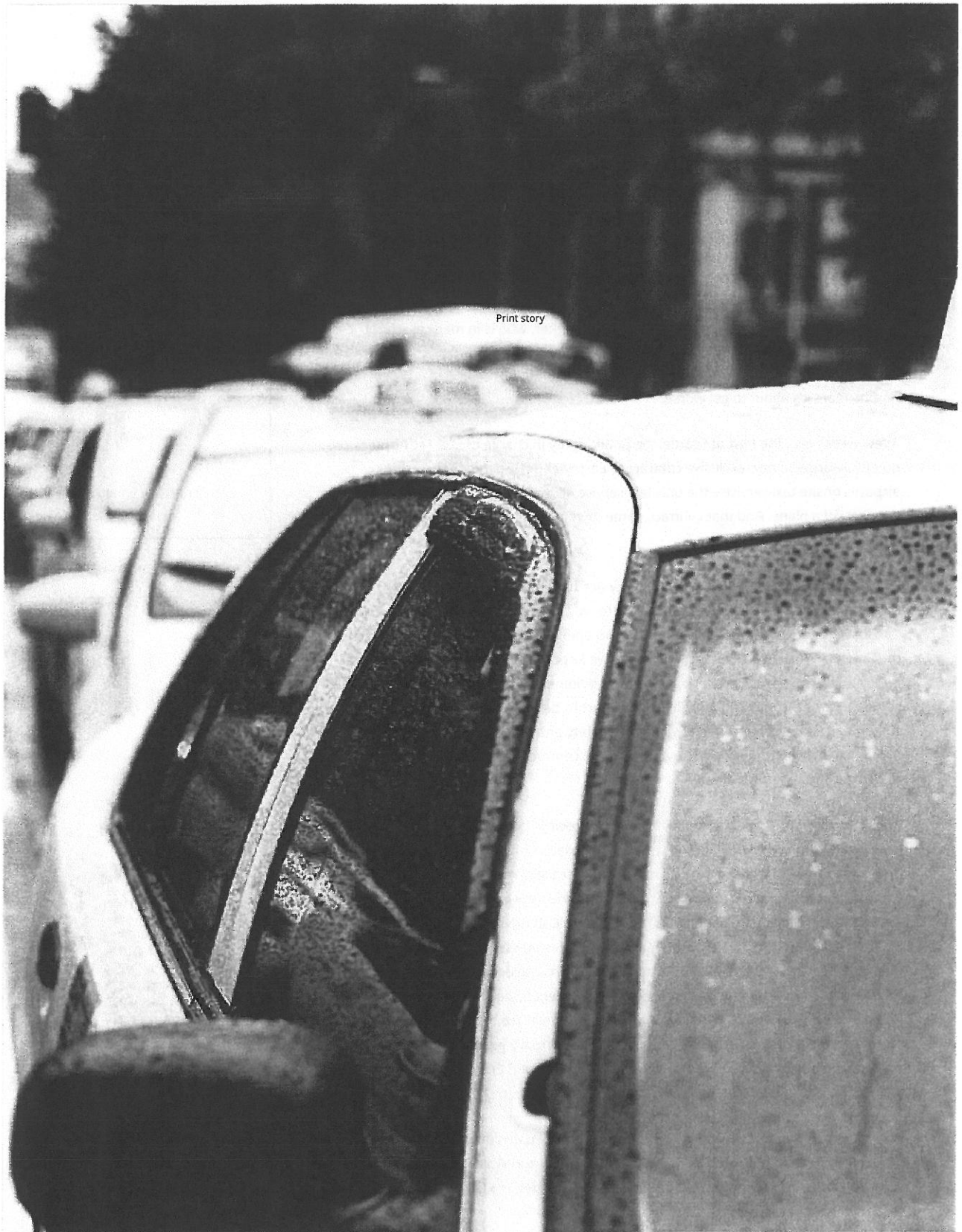
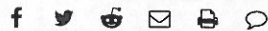Print story

Photo by Tegra Nuess

A New Airport Contract Puts Taxi Drivers in a Tough Spot

In the bidding war for an exclusive contract with the Port of Seattle, the money comes

out of drivers' pockets.

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Gurminder Kahlon has been driving a taxi in Seattle and to and from Sea-Tac Airport for almost 25 years.

Unlike many taxi drivers, he owns his cab outright; he bought the car and its licenses—which allow him to drive professionally in both Seattle and King County—in 2001 for $100,000. Today, in exchange for the hefty investment, he works 12-hour shifts most days of the week, and figures he brings home about $10 or $11 per hour. It's not nearly enough to support his wife and daughter, who is in medical school. It's not nearly enough to get by, as a family, anywhere near Seattle.

And he fears it's about to get worse.

A few weeks ago, the Port of Seattle, the public entity in charge of Sea-Tac Airport, quietly awarded a new exclusive contract to Eastside for Hire to operate as the airport's onsite taxi service—the only taxi service allowed to pick up passengers as they get off a plane. And that contract, some drivers contend, leaves them precious little to live on.

For the past five and a half years, airport service has been the purview of Puget Sound Dispatch, also known as Yellow Cab, for whom Kahlon currently works. Yellow Cab lost the contract to Eastside for Hire in an open bidding process through which the Port essentially auctions access to lucrative airport business. Port of Seattle public-affairs manager Perry Cooper says the bidding process, launched in 2010 per a state auditor's recommendation, allows the Port to better factor in things like customer service, environmental standards, safety and background checks, and the overall reliability of the taxis when awarding the contract. That said, money plays a big role in determining who wins.

Public documents show Eastside for Hire guaranteeing the Port a minimum of $22.5 million over the five-year life of the contract—the second-highest of all bidders—and projecting actual revenues to the Port to be at least $36.2 million. That money will come directly out of fares—starting at at least $7 and growing to $9 per trip from Sea-Tac to Seattle, which runs about $42. Today, Yellow Cab drivers pay the Port about $5.70 per trip, which is stacked atop many other taxes and fees that work out to nearly 45 percent of their income. Eastside for Hire manager Samatar Guled says $5.70 is just a calculation, though, based on the current system (Yellow Cab pays the Port a percentage of gross revenues, not a flat fee); a flat fee might work out better for drivers because they're on the hook only if they actually get a trip. "If you don't pick up, you don't pay," he says. "That's a major distinction." Compared to the other bidders, he adds, "We bid reasonably."

Still, research suggests that the Port of Seattle is unusual in the $7–$9 flat fee per trip it plans to charge drivers. In Phoenix, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., according to a report that the Port commissioned, that fee is $1, $1.50, and $2.55, respectively.

But at Sea-Tac, this new contract is business as usual, insists the Port of Seattle's Cooper. It's not a requirement; it's the open market. The Port says, "'Here's the opportunity. You tell us what you wanna bid for.'" He adds that higher bids might seem "a fair price in [bidders'] eyes" given the massive amount of growth Seattle and its airport have seen in a few short years. Nearly 44 million passengers came through

the airport in 2015—a 13 percent increase (https://www.portseattle.org/About/Publications/Statistics/Airport-Statistics/Pages/default.aspx) from the year before.

However, dispatch companies are the ones who make the bids, not drivers. Given that the airport is one of the few places where taxi drivers can still make any money—with Uber and Lyft having significantly cut into their business within Seattle—the new contract may feel, to some beleaguered drivers, like the final blow. When he looks at the numbers, says driver Aamar Khan, "It doesn't even make sense to work at the airport ... or be in the cab business anymore."

"What this [bid] does, essentially, is it rewards somebody by taking money out of drivers' pockets" and delivering it to the Port, says Leonard Smith, organizing director at Teamsters Local 117, which represents local taxi drivers, primarily Yellow Cab drivers. "I definitely believe drivers' wages are not going to be anywhere near what they are now," adds Sheila Stickel, a consultant for Yellow Cab who's been crunching the numbers for months.

Guled begs to differ. "We're a driver-owned company," he says. "We care about drivers' income. Most of us drive on a daily basis. We literally walk the walk the drivers walk every day. Whatever they are paying right now ... it's not going to be more than that."

Like Uber and Lyft drivers, taxi drivers are independent contractors. A new contract doesn't mean, therefore, that Eastside for Hire drivers will move in to the airport and push out Yellow Cab drivers; it means the individuals who've made investments in the cars and licenses necessary to work at the airport will have to make the choice to repaint their vehicles and switch over to Eastside—or stop driving at the airport.

Smith compares the whole situation to indentured servitude. Taxi drivers, he notes, are not a class of workers for whom it's easy to find another job. Many have made huge investments—in car leases, in dispatch-fleet participation fees, in city and county licenses—and are in colossal amounts of debt that they expect the work will return to them over a number of years. To turn around and just "get another job" is, for many taxi drivers, to go broke.

"They're not getting another job," says Smith. "This is their business ... the business they invested in." The Port of Seattle, he argues, has "created an environment where [drivers] have to go bankrupt. When you start to look at it that way, it's criminal."

Paying more money for access to the airport might pencil out if taxi riders there were expected to grow. According to the Port, they are: With airport traffic at an all-time high, the Port projects that more people will be taking taxis to the city, and required bidders to submit proposals with bigger fleets than currently operate at Sea-Tac. Yet since April, when transportation network companies—aka Uber and Lyft—got the green light (http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/uber-gets-ok-to-fetch-passengers-at-airport-starting-thursday/) to work at Sea-Tac, business for traditional taxis has plummeted (it dropped almost 10 percent in the first two months).

"It just doesn't add up," says a longtime taxi driver who asked his name not be used lest it impact his job prospects. "They're really squeezing us. [These are] just like real, poverty-wage jobs. I don't know what people [at the Port] are thinking ... they're driving us to the bottom."

Samatar Guled says he's well aware of the Uber effect and is factoring that into the equation. Eastside is working out partnerships with Uber and with local hotels to help bolster drivers' income. "It's very clear that if we don't change as an industry," he says, "we're not going to survive."

Strangely, during the bidding process, the Port did make a concerted effort to gather specific information from various bidders regarding driver income. The effort was made "to ensure Port priorities related to driver equity and small-business opportunities were addressed," wrote Cooper via e-mail. But that information was explicitly not used to evaluate bids; it "was informational only. It was not used for any scoring of the bidders. The Port was comfortable with the range of responses and continued with the RFP process."

Granted, there are still many unknowns. Eastside for Hire won the bid, but the specifics of a contract won't be inked until shortly before October 1, the day the company is expected to begin service at Sea-Tac. Guled says he can't go into details while Eastside is in negotiations, but assures drivers that the rumors they've been hearing aren't true; the "overall cost [to drivers] is going to be less than what Yellow is charging."

In the face of all this uncertainty, though, drivers are nervous—and may be gearing up for a fight. "They are part of our public transportation system in the City of Seattle and they are tired of getting screwed," Smith says. "I don't think they're gonna sit by and let themselves get screwed further."

sbernard@seattleweekly.com

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VIEW COMMENTS 💬 (HTTP://WWW.SEATTLEWEEKLY.COM/NEWS/A-NEW-AIRPORT-CONTRACT-PUTS-TAXI-DRIVERS-IN-A-TOUGH-SPOT/COMMENTS/)

item	Category
EIS process	??????
Airport impacts to property values.	City Value
Desire to be a part of the discussion in the ports decision-making/not after-the-fact.	Communication
Access and communication.	Communication
New emerging issues – improved the ports time in communication to the city.	Communication
Responsiveness to current (daily) impacts of the city.	Communication
crime, theft.	Crime
Black soot on sidewalks in city – what's the source.	Health
Health impacts.	Health
SASA impacts/options.	Plan
Port taking of property.	Port's bad Behavior
Ports tactics to divide and conquer cities.	Port's bad Behavior
Mitigation of impacts to the city.	Port's bad Behavior
Mitigation of impacts through financial support for additional police and human services.	Port's bad Behavior
Emergency management scenarios, proximity to the airport in case of disaster – impacts to the city.	Safety
Airport plan is to aggressive/overuse/2,000,000 claims for the square miles of the airport.	Safety
Traffic at the taxi and ~~Healbough~~ UBER, parking lots.	Traffic
Traffic impacts citywide.	Traffic
Car rental reverse Uber	Traffic

JLW