

## Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC)

### Meeting Summary

Location: MS TEAMS Virtual Meeting

Date: July 22, 2020

Time: 8:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.

Attendees: Tony Bean, Joseph Braham, Jeffrey Brown, Josh Brown, Representative Tom Dent, Steve Edmiston, Mark Englizian, David Fleckenstein, Arif Ghouse, Andrea Goodpasture, Spencer Hansen, Warren Hendrickson, Robert Hodgman, Senator Jim Honeyford, Shane Jones, Senator Karen Keiser, Larry Krauter, Stroud Kunkle, Sabrina Minshall, Representative Tina Orwall, Robert Rodriguez, Rudy Rudolph, Robin Toth, Kerri Woehler, Bryce Yadon, Rita Brogan, Christina Crea, Max Platts, Terri Palumbo, and guests

#### Welcome:

Christina Crea, Public Information Officer, opened the meeting with introductions of the presenters: David Fleckenstein, Director, WSDOT Aviation and CACC Chair; Rita Brogan, CACC Assisting Consultant; and Rob Hodgman, Senior Aviation Planner, WSDOT Aviation. She then shared the virtual meeting ground rules.

David Fleckenstein welcomed everyone to the July meeting of the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC). David added that assisting with today's presentation are Warren Hendrickson, CACC Vice Chair and Terri Palumbo, WSDOT Aviation office manager. He thanked them, the presenters, the WSDOT Aviation Planners, Max Platts and John MacArthur, and the Commission members for all of their efforts and input since the Commission last met. Additionally, several ports and counties also met in the interim to discuss their interest as a potential sponsor and he appreciates the work they conducted in providing us feedback regarding their interest.

A formal roll call was forgone in the interest of time and David tracked Commission members joining the call. He presented the meeting's objectives, which includes a summary of the Commission's work for those members of the public joining for the first time and an update to Commission members on the staff work completed. Today's discussion also includes the individual input received from Commission members regarding their preferences on the strategic approach, screening criteria, potential sites derived from WSDOT and the Puget Sound Regional Council analysis, evaluation criteria, and finally the possible adjustment to the Commission's timeline given the impacts to aviation stemming from the pandemic.

#### Commission Work:

David Fleckenstein reviewed the Commission's work derived from the legislative mandate detailed in Substitute Senate Bill 5370, effective July 28, 2019. With the rapid increase seen at the time in air traffic operations and projections for demand to continue to climb coupled with growing concerns over the environment, health, social and the economic impacts, legislators decided a commission was necessary to address these mounting issues. Legislators also found it was important to develop a highly competitive statewide passenger and air cargo transportation system in order to advance Washington's position as a leader in national and international trade. As a result, the Legislature asks that the

Commission identify a location for a new primary commercial aviation facility taking into consideration not only all mentioned above but also any pertinent previous and ongoing studies.

Just as we were in the process of analyzing the data and studies, while building a road map to address the requirements, the pandemic hit. The truth of the matter is that no one can say with certainty how soon the aviation industry will recover from the pandemic and what the lasting impacts due to traveler preferences and likely economic damages around the globe will be. Thus, our discussion later will involve a potential request to adjust our timeline given the unknowns.

**Commission Charter:**

The charter details the Commission's basic requirements which are to: recommend a short list of no more than six airports by January 1, 2021; of those six, identify the top two by September 1, 2021; and finally recommend the single preferred location by January 1, 2022; by a 60% majority vote.

As part of the research conducted, the Commission must consider the feasibility of building an aviation facility in that location, and its potential environmental, community, and economic impacts. The Commission must also develop a timeline for developing and completing a facility that is functional by 2040. With that, the Commission will also make recommendations for long-range commercial facility needs across the state.

It is important to note that the recommendations may include expanding or modifying an existing airport as opposed to building a brand-new airport. The final report is due to the Legislators by January 1, 2022.

**Guiding Principles:**

The Commission's work is guided by four overarching principles including environmental responsibility, economic feasibility, social equity, and public benefit. As an example of what we are thinking about and discussing, we know that transportation is a key contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and within transportation, aviation is a growing contributor. So, by 2040, what are some of the things we can plan for in technological improvements or recommend being put in place to mitigate or even nullify the impacts on the environment?

Economically, and perhaps even more so now, can we afford to do something that is recommended? No matter how you look at it, this endeavor could end up being a big investment when you take into consideration everything required for a new commercial aviation facility to be constructed.

Socially, it is important that we ensure underrepresented groups have a voice and that we listen and consider those voices.

Finally, we need to make certain that the single preferred recommendation benefits the greater good over one single entity or group.

**Defining the Challenge - Passengers:**

The challenge we face is forecasted demand and a growing capacity gap over time. In 2018, SeaTac experienced just over 24 million enplanements. Even with planned improvements at SeaTac, the capacity gap is expected to be somewhere between 23 to 27 million enplanements by 2050. This equates to a need for the equivalent of another SeaTac size facility. That being said, as a result of the pandemic, SeaTac is currently experiencing a little over 25 percent of the enplanements as the same

time last year. So, you may be asking yourself, why do we have to address this now? The truth of the matter is that in general, it typically takes about 20 years to establish a new airport given the Commission's work, decisions yet to be made by Legislators, Federal Aviation Administration approval, funding, environmental work, etc., it is a long list. But again, what we don't know for sure is how the pandemic impacts commercial aviation demand and the forecasted capacity gap.

**Defining the Challenge – Growth Projections:**

The supporting staff and Commission are taking consideration of where people live and the projections for population growth. Four of the five fastest growing counties are in the Puget Sound Region. King County is expected to lead that growth with over 300,000 new residents by 2040 followed by Snohomish, Pierce, Clark, and Thurston Counties.

**Site Decision Process:**

The Commission is using a three-phase decision process that leads to the January 1, 2022, recommendation of a single preferred location. Phase I involves initial screening of airports and locations which you will hear more about along with staff recommendations. It includes basic requirements for consideration in putting a site on the possible list of six sites. Once that list of six sites is identified, the Commission will evaluate each of those sites under Phase II using evaluation criteria to get us to a list of two sites. Phase III involves further evaluations, comparing the advantages and disadvantages of each site, with the end state of one preferred recommended site. This phase also involves additional recommendations the Commission will make that may benefit the aviation system as a whole looking at commercial air service, air cargo and general aviation.

Important to note, there are opportunities for public input during each phase and that there will be additional work after the January 1, 2022 recommendation, with the state legislators and the process the Federal Aviation Administration will undertake.

**Airport Site Selection Factors:**

The screening criteria for Phase I is based on airport site selection factors that the Commission generally agreed upon during earlier meetings. The factors include available land, existing facilities, known environmental constraints, proximity to population centers, potential airport sponsors, and the availability of multimodal transportation.

**Informational Briefings:**

Since our January meeting, the process was started to provide informational briefings in attempts to reach out to potential airport sponsors as well as those just wanting to know more about the Commission's work. To date, briefings have been provided to Port of Olympia, Thurston County Commissioners, Lewis County Commissioners, Port of Bremerton, Port of Shelton, the Des Moines Normandy Park Rotary Club, and the Thurston County Regional Planning Council. Additional briefings are scheduled for both the Snohomish County Council and the Tumwater City Council. We also hope to provide a briefing to Pierce County, at a later date.

**Current Potential Sponsor Level of Interest:**

As part of the briefings provided to potential sponsors and through a follow up letter, potential sponsors were asked what their level of interest was in sponsoring a new airport or in the expansion of an existing airport to help meet the demand. Lewis County seriously encouraged the Commission to consider Ed Carlson Memorial Airport in Toledo as part of the solution. Port of Bremerton is interested in being part of the discussion and looking at what role Bremerton National Airport might play. Port of Olympia

expressed that they are not interested in a greenfield location or expansion of Olympia Regional Airport, but are interested in partnering with another port to meet future needs. Port of Shelton expressed an extreme level of interest in Sanderson Field being considered for future expansion. Thurston County Commissioners expressed that they are not interested in being listed as a potential sponsor in the development of a greenfield site in Thurston County. David has the feedback whether in emails or written and signed correspondence with more detail that can be provided to the Commission for those that would like to see them.

Communications Plan – Goals and Implementation:

One of the most important aspects of the Commission's work, David feels, is the ability to communicate with those interested or potentially impacted by the Commission's recommendations. While a lot of work has gone into developing the goals and plan to communicate, there are four key aspects to it. It entails listening to what people want, developing ways for people to participate, making information available to the public, and keeping major stakeholders informed. This process is now complicated by the pandemic, so it is something we plan to discuss in regards to adjusting the timeline.

Commission member questions and comments:

- Senator Keiser asked, the Olympia Airport is not interested in expanding but is interested in partnering with another Port Authority, did you explore that conversation?
- David responded, not any further as we just recently received that feedback from the Port. He thinks their interest would most likely be the Port of Shelton in Mason County given the proximity. Though he is speculating at this point.

Public Outreach:

Rita Brogan shared the Commission's commitment to public engagement. She mentioned the COVID crisis put a damper on our ability to engage with the larger community about this effort. We feel strongly that we need to have community engagement, but we did not anticipate the regulations and need for social distancing, nor were we able to predict how long it would last.

Our intention is to set aside a portion of each Commission meeting to allow for public comment and as soon as we figure out how we can make that happen, we will do so. So that members of the public can comment during real time.

In terms of recent public input that we have received, we have received a number of emails expressing support of the concept of the CACC; a number of emails requesting improvements at specific airports, or additional service to specific areas; We've heard support for airport expansion at a couple of airports, notably Bremerton in Everett. There have been suggestions about different types of transportation improvements that might be necessary to accompany airport expansion. Some questions about whether a new airport is going to be needed. As a result of recent media coverage, we have several emails expressing concerns about a new airport in Thurston County and some supporting that idea. The Aviation Division has responded to nearly all, if not all, of those inquiries clarifying the CACC decision process and the role of the CACC in making a recommendation related to the aviation system.

Moving Forward:

The Aviation Division has prepared a folio that more clearly outlines the Commission's decision process and encourages community engagement. We have also put together a Frequently Asked Questions document that answers some of the questions we have received to date from the public and that we

will continue to add to. Both of these documents are posted on the Commission's website. In coming months, we plan to sponsor electronic town-halls and online surveys. That is a compromise we've had to make in the time of COVID to inform and engage members of the public. We will continue to respond to questions from the public and the media, and the Commissioners will receive copies of all public comment.

Senator Keiser asked how many public comments we received. Christina Crea mentioned there were at least 20 comments.

David Fleckenstein stated that the Port of Olympia had received over 300 comments. A lot of those were in relation to the Black Lake area because we had mentioned that in one of our briefings as having been previously looked at. It was of concern to many citizens that live in that area.

Senator Keiser would like us to monitor the surge of comments from a particular location because that will tell us a lot of what is going on.

Joe asked if all the public input, up to this point, has been unsolicited feedback.

David said yes and no. We have made it known on our website and publications about the CACC's work where people could provide comments. Ports and counties are also receiving comments as they discuss potential sponsorship in their public meetings.

Representative Orwall asked, when gathering comments to please include public comments from the SeaTac area as well.

David replied that when public comments define the area or airport, we will group them.

#### Recent Staff Activities:

Rob Hodgman shared that staff activities have benefitted from input from Commission members. The staff have reviewed previous studies, conducted analysis, conducted outreach, and developed criteria. Starting with the Flight Plan Study, and consulting the WSDOT Long Term Air Transportation Study the team identified six initial sites, and then looked across the Puget Sound region and other areas across the state for other airport sites that could be considered.

The Puget Sound Regional Council is currently conducting an Aviation Baseline Study and has provided technical information and validated many of the factors the Aviation Division staff was applying. The PSRC 28-airport list was combined with the 20 sites WSDOT identified to conduct initial analysis and preliminary screening. The PSRC study also provided an informative overview of airspace factors and allowed the staff to conduct a rudimentary analysis of potential airport sites. Staff asked informal questions of airports about known environmental concerns. Wetlands and protected habitat were the main topics that surfaced.

As far as conducting analysis, SeaTac Airport is by far the biggest provider of both commercial passenger service and air cargo in Washington State. We thought it would be worthwhile to understand some of the dynamics of where those passengers come from, specifically East Cascades catchment area, and understand connecting flight information.

SeaTac airport provided Aviation Division staff with data collected by the airport on passengers outside of the Puget Sound area and connecting flights. Of roughly 2000 passengers surveyed, 688 were from Washington State, and of those 570 were from the Puget Sound region and 118 were from outside the Puget Sound region (80 from the east side of the Cascades). A little less than one third, or 29% of SeaTac flights are connecting passengers, meaning their origin/destination is not SeaTac. We do not yet know how many of those are international passengers.

For emerging technologies, WSDOT Aviation is in the second phase of an Electric Aircraft Working Group. The ongoing study has learned that electric or alternate propulsion aircraft that have the potential to provide lower cost flights and reduce noise and emissions once the technology is proven and certified by the FAA.

Studies show that aviation bio-fuel blends could reduce aircraft emissions. If production were to increase to a more affordable price per gallon, bio-jet fuel has the potential to reduce pollution caused by aircraft.

WSDOT Aviation examined current air carriers that may serve the Puget Sound region airports and the aircraft fleets they operate. Planners compared the performance characteristics of aircraft to understand what lengths and widths of runways would support various aircraft in terms of number of passengers and possible destinations. We have learned a runway length of 9,000 feet or more could open up many international and most domestic locations. At approximately 7,500 feet, we probably would not have very many international opportunities, most domestic locations would be possible. At approximately 5,500 to 6,000 foot long runway, it would be primarily regional destinations with possibly as far away as the Bay Area or Denver, but certainly not a nation-wide reach.

Delivering a complete solution for expanding an existing airport will need to address both the aircraft movement area (airside) on the airport and the non-movement area (landside) for supporting airport activities and functions. Existing infrastructure, and availability and accessibility of improved infrastructure all contribute to the cost and feasibility of an expansion effort.

As we will discuss in more detail, one of the objectives is to possibly build a large, SeaTac-size airport. We equate that to three runways, each at approximately 9,000 feet long to give us the international and domestic reach that is equivalent to what SeaTac is now providing. The Flight Plan Study in 1992 recommended 4,600 acres to do that. Finding 4,600 acres of undeveloped land in the Puget Sound Region is a pretty challenging endeavor. At this point we do not have a greenfield site that has been brought forward for planners to consider. However, we have heard from Lewis County that the Toledo Airport is a possible site for a large, SeaTac-size airport, so the staff templated a possible footprint to confirm the site could accommodate three runways each 9,000 foot long. It appears that with minor revisions this footprint will fit at that site.

Senator Keiser commented that most urban airports have two runways in the United States.

Finally, understanding that COVID-19 has and will likely continue to have a dramatic impact on air transportation and the associated Aviation Trust Fund revenue from fuel sales tax. We are cautious about how much funding could be available from the Trust Fund in the near term.

We have conducted outreach and one of the three primary deliverables of the charter was to address general aviation (GA). So, the Aviation staff have conducted two surveys of the GA community; GA

Pilots, and GA airports to understand the challenges the GA community is facing. The surveys revealed there is a significant hangar shortage across the state and in the Puget Sound Region, and hangar availability is by far the most important concern from pilots.

Staff has heard ideas about high-speed rail opening up other parts of the state for air transportation access, both Eastern Washington and south of Puget Sound. We consulted with our WSDOT Rail colleagues and learned that currently high-speed rail across the Cascades is not being considered and a rail program connecting Vancouver, B.C. to Eugene, Oregon may or may not become high-speed. At this point, we don't have high confidence that we can count on a high-speed rail solution as part of this multimodal solution.

As previously mentioned, the CACC planning team has had several conversations with local governments in the region and at other locations in the state, to understand their respective interest and capabilities of each location. Staff developed preliminary screening criteria based on the previously discussed airport site selection factors, and obtained Commission member input, and conducted preliminary screening, which we will present in subsequent slides. Staff also developed preliminary evaluation criteria and sought Commission member input, which we will also present later in this presentation.

#### Strategic Approaches:

In the January meeting staff proposed possible strategies to Commission members. The three basic strategies are; build one very large SeaTac-sized airport, expand or improve one or more existing airports, and a combination of both. We received very strong support for combining these strategies to meet near-term capacity needs from existing airports while conducting the processes necessary for a large new airport. The second option was to expand and/or improve one or more existing airports to provide commercial and freight service.

#### Discussion on Strategic Approaches:

Rita asked the Commission members for their comfort in going with option 3, combining these strategies to meet near-term capacity needs from existing airports while conducting the processes necessary for a large new airport, and if they would like to express to the other Commissioners their reason for going with this option.

Senator Keiser stated it was encouraging to see almost a consensus. Seeing 14 members agree is a strong sense of the body. The seven that want to stay at the buildout level of current airports, maybe they could explain if they are thinking of that as a 5, 10, 20-year approach or if they are thinking of that as a 50-year approach.

Shane Jones commented that looking at other examples of multi-airport metro areas, he thinks it is challenging to think about two equal size Sea-Tac airports that currently serve metro areas. You think about Dallas/Love Field (DFW) or O'Hare and Midway, there are numerous examples or San Francisco, a large international airport, with two supporting smaller airports. There are numerous examples of success with a single large airport supplemented by smaller airports. He has yet to see a lot of success except with unique examples where DCA [Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport] and IAD [Dulles International], but DCA is uniquely located. He is concerned about two things, one is the commercial viability with having two SeaTac-sized airports in the Puget Sound area, and secondly, the ability to locate a SeaTac-sized airport in a location that would be conducive to serving the demand. When we think about airport locations that are 100 miles from Seattle and 75 miles from Portland that is not a

viable location for commercial service. These are his concerns and why he prefers to build out one to two smaller existing airports.

Senator Keiser responded that what some of the folks may be thinking is SeaTac as it is now and having a duplicate size airport of SeaTac as it is now. She remembers when SeaTac had two runways, not three and when it was not the behemoth that it is now, even though its acreage is pretty small, it has (six months ago) the traffic of a behemoth. For instance, when San Francisco and Oakland are mentioned, it does not seem to be smaller airports because when she thinks about smaller airports she is thinking of Paine Field which is not an Oakland. That is where having a second larger airport would not mean a duplicate of an airport with three runways, 9,000 feet each, but would be something of the nature of a former SeaTac of 15-years ago capacity.

Rita got the sense of and asked if, there is an overall agreement that pursuing a larger airport would still need to be affordable and still need to be something that could be located before we can proceed with it. Is that correct?

David agreed, that is correct. The FAA has a lot to say in what ultimately gets decided. That is one benefit of having them involved in this conversation. He also agrees with what Shane is saying, it's very problematic to duplicate a SeaTac-sized facility. David believes the thought some of the members had and that he had, was choosing the third option was just that, it provides more options. We could start with something that has the land that could grow to a SeaTac-size facility, but that does not necessarily mean that it has to have three runways. It just provides options in the future if there is a facility like that to expand.

Steve answered why he chose option 3. He views it as a practical option and reading our legislative objective, which is primarily to find this primary commercial aviation airport, he understands it will take a very long time before it comes online. His view of option 3 is that it gives some ability to handle increased demand on the way to that 40-year airport. To him, that makes a lot of sense. It makes less sense, following our legislative objectives, to sort of substitute. With a primary commercial aviation airport, hard decisions will need to be made. He would not be an advocate for saying that is difficult and we have a lot of issues so we are going to switch it up and focus on smaller airports expanding. He thinks that also creates a huge risk 10 to 15 years down the road when we are kind of back to where we started; the only airport that can take this is SeaTac because we didn't pick that primary airport. That would be a mistake on our part as the Commission. Option 3 still delivers the goods on picking that site.

Robin agrees with Steve's assessment and she also preferred option 3. She thinks, especially now, the importance of phasing will be critical to the project.

Joe said looking over the notes from the last meeting, he looks at this like something we need to solve for in the short term with the short-term constraints as well as long-term. That is why he did not want to settle with one option. One of the notes from the last meeting was projecting that in the next seven years we will have approximately 2.5 million enplanements out of capacity. So that would be something we need to solve for with a short-term solution which could be resolved with option 2. Obviously, we are all looking at the year 2050 where the capacity constraints are that much greater, needing a different long-term solution. We spent a lot of time during the last meeting talking about all of the different variables and whether or not we're going to have a resilient solution to solve for all of them. We talked about emerging technologies but we also talked about all of the changes that could happen with technology, markets, and the environment. Solving for the short-term will allow us to also take



note and experience some of those changes with the current environment in consideration for the long-term solution. That is why he landed on option 3.

David commented that has been the discussion among the staff, that we are really faced with two problems. There is going to be a short-term problem that might be easier to help solve but we are still going to have a long-term issue in 2040-2050.

Rudy commented we tend to want to approach these solutions from those that are planners and airport people as subject matter professionals. One of the pieces he has been wanting to understand a little bit better is as it applies to either one of these two models, is the market side of this, the business model for the airlines. Using Olympia Airport as the example, it has not had an airline, due to the closeness to SeaTac, that has wanted to invest the money in the infrastructure to do some sort of commercial service facility. Whether it is turbo prop regional service or regional jet or whatever could fit the existing runways. He would like to hear a little bit more from the airline representatives. If the Commission picks an airport in the interim, over the next 20 years or the next 10 years to fill some role, is an airline going to want to invest millions of dollars in that kind of infrastructure for a short-term period of time? So, he would like to hear extra input from the business model side of the equation.

Rob replied that the WSDOT Aviation team is building a consultant technical advisory committee comprised of five nation-wide firms that are going to help us reach out to airports. One company in particular, has a planner on board that has worked for three different airlines and is an expert in scheduling and that type of thing. So we were already working on that. He also commented that based on the input we received from Commission members regarding this strategy, and the fact that we did not yet have a greenfield site that has emerged, the Aviation planning staff took a look at what we reasonably could expect. He expressed that the planners actually took a look at two-runway airports. Two different methodologies nationwide were examined at a variety of metropolitan regions that were used in the PSRC Baseline Study. Then we did a second methodology where we examined the Bay Area. Using a primary airport and then two or three satellite airports supporting that metropolitan area we did some analysis. What we found was that the two methods came out almost the same; a reasonable expectation for enplanements at each one of those satellite airports was somewhere around five to six million. That's not to say there aren't exceptions because there are many exceptions around the country where a second airport has a much higher volume of passenger throughput. In order to give Commission members somewhat of a realistic expectation about what we could maybe hope for, five to six million appears to be the number. So when you look at the capacity gap David spoke of earlier to somewhere between 22 to 27 million enplanements forecasted by 2050, simple math tells us how many airports we would have to expand in order to meet that threshold. It is also worthwhile to note that some of the site constraints at these various different airports are limiting factors for runway length and therefore destinations.

Shane responded to Rudy's comments. He states it is a great question and a couple considerations, 1) so long as SeaTac is not full, and in that environment, sometimes investing in a smaller airport may not make sense. That being said, Alaska invested in Propeller and Paine Field even with available capacity at SeaTac just thinking that longer-term there is going to be a need for additional airports supporting the region. He thinks there is evidence of that investment but it will be pressurized when SeaTac is truly full and the demand of the local market cannot be met, then places like Olympia or Paine Field or others would warrant investment. So SeaTac being full sort of forces the function a little bit.

Representative Orwall is glad to see the support for Option 3. It sticks to our mission which is also to go back to the Legislature with potential greenfield solutions as well as other expansions. It is a nice balance. Her assumption is there is a role for the state to play around infrastructure. We are going to need to step in, in addition to the private sector.

Larry does think it's important that we remain focused on that third option but his perspective is slightly different as to why. It is important that we do not distract other airports from pursuing their master plan objectives regarding airfield capacity at their facilities. There could be a possibility that people would begin saying, if we're going to go do this greenfield site you don't need to do these other projects. We need to point out that our efforts are not going to be at the expense of other airports pursuing their airfield capacity objectives. That is why he is very much in favor of that option and to underscore what Representative Orwall mentioned as well as Senator Keiser is that it really stays true to the legislative intent and our mission.

Robin agrees with Steve Edmiston's assessment for number three.

#### Screening Criteria –

Rob shared as previously mentioned, the Aviation Division planning team adopted the airport site selection factors as preliminary screening criteria and reached out to Commission members to hear their thoughts. The slide reflected that 95 percent said the screening criteria are suitable. He clarified that the screening criteria's primary purpose is to eliminate possible sites, where evaluation criteria are going to be used to evaluate various different sites comparing one attribute and another to various different airports. With that in mind, we did get some recommendations from Commission members for additional screening criteria and as the planners examined them, they look like they are probably a better fit for evaluation criteria. In other words, which site is better or worse using a variety of criteria. We already have 41 evaluation criteria but are flexible in continuing to add or remove evaluation criteria. We think that perhaps these recommendations [on the slide] may be a better fit for evaluation criteria.

Rita asked if this approach makes sense to the Commission. No comments.

Rob shared that staff also conducted analysis of potential sites. As mentioned before, the accommodation of the Aviation Division work and the PSRC Baseline Study work resulted in a list of 20. We wanted to hear from Commission members if there were other potential sites that should be considered as a primary commercial aviation facility and we heard, Tri-Cities (Pasco), Yakima (Air Terminal), and Spokane (Geiger Field). Rob went over part of what was stated in SSB 5370 and explained staff's interpretation is the legislature asked for recommendations to the Legislature on future Washington State long-range commercial aviation facility needs including possible additional aviation facilities or expansion of current aviation facilities to meet anticipated commercial passenger service, air cargo, and general aviation. It is our understanding that part of the Commission's work is to look at other airports besides just a primary commercial service airport that could help with capacity needs for commercial service, air cargo, or general aviation. With that in mind, we believe those fit within the parameters of a system airport and a system airport is part of the state's aviation system. It could be a satellite airport in the Puget Sound region that would provide support with SeaTac as the primary or if there is another primary airport or it could be outside the region and still add capacity in which case it would be an additional airport. We understand that there are many very vital airports across the state and many of them are already providing support and there is an opportunity for those airports and others to be considered for additional capacity in the air service, air cargo, or general aviation realm. So

with that, we are recommending to the Commission members that Tri-Cities, Yakima, and Spokane are probably system airports rather than a consideration for a primary airport.

Rita asked if the Commission members concur with the system approach for these airports.

Jeffery thinks the system airport works better and is more efficient when it comes to decision making. You won't be competing one airport against the next when it comes to making a decision of airline's passenger utilization. When it comes to efficiency the operation of the system airports works better.

David stated, as we look at the system of airports and other recommendations that the Commission will make, we need to hear from Commission members in terms of what they think needs to be done for the system as a whole. The staff already have some recommendations but we'd like to hear from Commission members as well. For instance, general aviation. We know that we have had some success with the loan program that we have for general aviation and starting to get some infrastructure projects in place. That is one of the suggestions David will make, that we carry on with that loan program because it has been such a success so far. Those are the types of things we would like to hear from the Commission members.

Shane thinks the system approach makes sense. What you are already seeing is this taking place from a market perspective. Spokane being a great example of getting more direct service to California destinations as opposed to connecting through SeaTac. As the demand both in California and Spokane area warrant it as well as congestion at SeaTac.

1:03:41

Steve asked if this creates a scenario where we will use a system rather than a recommendation of a single primary aviation site.

Rob replied. No, we are still pursuing the single preferred recommendation as stated in legislation, but we understand the legislation also asks for additional facilities and a more strategic long-term plan for the system. So, it is both.

#### Staff Analysis of Potential Sites

Rob shared a list/spreadsheet with 20 potential sites which staff developed in combination with input from the Puget Sound Regional Council. The list is in alphabetical order which staff have considered as potential for a primary commercial aviation facility. The information on this spreadsheet covers travel time, land, runway [length], agency lead [i.e., city, private, port], transit service, miles to an interstate exit, traffic congestion issues, concerns, WSDOT assessment, PSRC assessment, and if it has potential to be on a possible list. The six sites which have received a positive assessment have been offered by the staff for Commission member consideration.

Commission members were asked for concerns on these six sites. Some general concerns are multiple sites may not be desirable to airlines, multiple sites may not be financially feasible, and existing sites offer limited expansion due to potential encroachment. Some site specific concerns are Arlington is too close to Paine Field and is not a good choice, Toledo is too far from the population, JBLM is not supported by the military or congressional delegates, Bremerton is too far from the population and the Puget Sound is a barrier to access, Shelton is too far from the population, and Tacoma Narrows has strong community opposition and the Puget sound is a barrier to access.

Rita asked if the members had any other thoughts on these sites.

Senator Keiser commented about the issue of travel time being 90 minutes. She stated you need to factor in traffic congestion and 90 minutes is sometimes being in a traffic jam. That is one of the elements, not just the mileage, it is the actual on-time issue.

Rob commented that this information is at a very high level. A rudimentary tool was used so it did not address actual travel times based on congestion. He does have partners elsewhere, in the WSDOT multi-modal division and regions that have begun to help us work through this. As we get to a smaller list, we will begin to do a much greater analysis on specific travel times.

Jeffrey asked about the Toledo site. Do you think there will be any concerns raised by Oregon State or the Portland airport with an airport so close to them possibly taking passengers away from the Portland airport?

David stated we heard from the FAA early on there are examples other places within the country where you have had close proximity of big airports like that where they have had to actually place safeguards through different rules and regulations to protect those airports that had already been established.

Jeffrey stated he is familiar with those safeguards and asked David to share with the other Commissioners what those safeguards are because it could limit the potential growth of the Toledo airport. When he read one of the documents it stated that we could potentially draw passengers from Oregon, and there may be some limitations to that.

David stated he believed that information came from the FAA Regional Administrators Office and he will get back with them, and provide the information to the Commission.

Representative Dent would like to think about that we are looking at changing what we are doing here. If we put things in the box that the travel time is too far or it is too far away from the population we are not going to solve the problem. DIA [Denver International Airport] was built a long way from town but it has worked fairly well. We may have to look at that if we want to reduce congestion and reduce the issue around population, but if we want to make travel time, ease of access, and all of these things, the way they are now, it will really limit our opportunities to make a difference in 20 to 40 years. We may have to get out of our comfort zone to see if some of these other sites will work.

Representative Orwall added that looking at some of these things around transit service or other things, that potentially we could improve. She hopes we do challenge some of these things which look restricted.

Warren commented that this is a difficult and challenging situation. It occurred to him that based upon the survey, we need to have a satellite of existing airports but look to the future for that single large facility, stands out clearly as the overwhelming response from the Commission members. Also, as we look at the demand and forecast, and we have no reason to believe the forecast will not come true, PSRC has record of producing accurate forecasts going back 30 years, so we can see the demand is going to be there. The question is then, where is that single large facility? Even if we look at a number of satellite facilities existing today, ultimately they will not be able to provide all of the demand that will be required. So, where do you site that greenfield site? This needs to be in the Puget Sound area because

statistics show clearly that the originating traffic comes from Puget Sound as opposed to the east side of the Cascades. Warren then commented that ultimately, we have taken JBLM off the list because the military has said that in our existing configuration, for the lack of congressional support, as well as the military's need, this is not something they will entertain as a joint use field. When we think 40 to 50 years down the road and you look around the Puget Sound area and based upon community and airport support and sponsor support, where can you go. JBLM provides the acreage and the space, so we move JBLM. If you move the base, in its entirety, to the east side, Grant County International, Moses Lake is the perfect solution for a number of different reasons. The biggest issue is you do not need to go to a green site where you displace local farmland, rural uses, and the population base. There would be a tremendous environmental constraint that would have to be met but ultimately, if you are looking 40 to 50 years down the road, if that support could be gathered and you can build that new facility on JBLM you could move the military. They would still have the strategic response, we would still have the economic impact of the military in this state, and then you would create that field that would then support long-term demand that the satellite airports will not meet.

Joe appreciates the analysis and the ability to narrow it down as it streamlines the information received so far. One comment regarding the capacity issue we are solving for, in recognition that we are not only solving for passenger but also air cargo and general aviation. It would appear that it is not built into the analysis but we have to take into consideration some of the constraints around air cargo, such as the need for sorting facilities and aircraft parking, and he does not see that built into the considerations. He brings this up because we have seen a significant surge in e-commerce just in the last four months with stay-at-home restrictions but also the convenience factor that consumers want out of e-commerce and the original projections were that air cargo was going to double in growth alongside the passenger enplanements as well. Those projections may be understated now with some of the differences and some of the changes in consumer behavior. Will we consider the air cargo constraints built into this analysis in the future?

Rob stated that we are looking at air cargo though it may not appear so. WSDOT Aviation was heavily involved in the joint transportation committee air cargo movement study and we have consulted that at great length. Rob is aware of the doubling of demand for air cargo. We have chosen to try to streamline this approach so it is simplified for the widest audience but behind the scenes, we are looking at air cargo.

Rudy commented that in our last Commission meeting, his subgroup chatted about what Warren brought up regarding JBLM. When you look at this new airport we are being asked to look at, is a monumental task. But, it is not any more monumental than the idea of relocating Joint Base Lewis McChord. He thinks it is worthy of the discussion. It is foreign to those who have not thought about it before but give it a little bit of time to say, what if we were to consider that as one of the possibilities. What does relocating a military base look like, how could that be phased over the 20-year period, and what would that look like.

Larry stated that Warren's comment is very important for us to consider. He does not believe it would require the base to be relocated. He thinks there are many examples in the domestic U.S. of very successful joint use facilities where there is a civilian function that have been incorporated with a military function on the airfield. In fact, those types of partnerships can be very cost effective for communities. We have to recognize that this capacity and the location of that particular facility is very complimentary to incorporation into a regional capacity conversation like we are having now.

Josh appreciates the visionary thinking that is being put on the table, but it makes him nervous. When he hears the idea of simply relocating what is, what he believes is Washington's second largest employer, we cannot be flippant about such a recommendation. We cannot take for granted the military facility employing over 50,000 people would even stay in Washington State. We have to be very careful with our public statements as it pertains to Joint Base Lewis McChord. He agrees that as part of our recommendations, one of the gaps we have is a need in the long-term to provide for some type of commercial facility in the south sound. Pierce county is the second largest county by population in Washington State and in this planning horizon it will very quickly be a county of over one million people. As part of our planning effort, we do need to identify that we have a gap in the south sound.

Representative Orwall asked that more be said about the Puyallup area.

Rob stated that we did look at that area. We talked about the 1992 Flight Plan study and there was a greenfield site in central Pierce County that was proposed as part of that study. However, the satellite view shows that site is now fully built up as a neighborhood. That could be problematic as far as doing a greenfield site there. We have looked at the existing Thun Field. There are some limitations to that site and it is on the list of potential sites. There is quite a bit of development around it so that is why staff looked at East Pierce County. There may be some space in East Pierce County but that is up to East Pierce County to decide and we have not had any feedback from them. We don't have a site in the Puyallup vicinity or east of there that staff can analyze.

David commented that Josh's points are well taken. In one of David's former jobs as the 1<sup>st</sup> Corp Aviation Officer, these discussions took place at Joint Base Lewis McChord before. Two things, when you use the term JBLM, that is inclusive of what is McChord Air Force Base as well as what was formerly known as Fort Lewis. It really changes the flavor of things when you start talking about relocating JBLM as opposed to McChord. Second, there is a strategic reason why the base is there, and he would expect that we will hear more from the military leadership as to that reason. Deep water ports play a big role in what our military does and how we send troops, equipment, and supplies overseas so it is something we should not overlook. David agrees with Josh, we have to be very careful about being flippant, and he is not sure people are being flippant, but this is a comment we will take it back and continue to delve into it. What David is hearing from the Commission members is to not take it off the table and continue to keep it as a possible solution as a joint operation.

Rob stated that many months ago we did examine the possibility of joint use. Across the country there are 10 air force bases, 10 army airfields, and one navy airfield that are joint use. So a precedence has been set. Under Tacoma/McChord field, agency lead is one of the challenges that will need to be overcome. We are looking for either a civil government or a private industry sponsor who is willing to take that on and that has not materialized.

Rita read a couple of member comments in the chat agreeing that as a long-term solution for joint use that JBLM should be considered.

Steve kept thinking back on our legislation and they recognize that we are going to see substantial governance issues and funding decisions that are going to have to be made at a state level. He thinks it is a mistake for us to remove a site because we think it is too expensive.

Robert Rodriguez stated that in their current state, on the former Fort Lewis side and on the McChord air force side, joint use does not lend itself well. McChord airfield is landlocked with one runway, and

does not have enough ramp space for the existing aircraft so it wouldn't function as that. If you move someone, then maybe it would be a viable solution but right now Command has been very clear there is no interest from the Army side, which is the lead agency for JBLM.

Mark commented that he would like us to consider one possible location east of the Cascade Mountains which would be in our best interest to ensure we are considering the entire state. There are ready facilities and partners wanting to be a part of a solution, and we should consider at least one possible location on our short list of six to be east of the Cascades.

Larry stated he understands the comment about potential population shifts/migration outside of the immediate Puget Sound area. However, he would suggest the population growth models are not going to increase at an order of magnitude which would drive a justification for construction of a new airport. Most of the airports that were being considered on the system-basis, which he thinks is a sound philosophy to consider, all have their own master plans that are driven by demand factors that are specific to that particular region or community. It would be a distraction to consider airports on the other side of the Cascades as a viable solution for the problem statement we have been tasked with resolving.

Rob stated, what he is hearing from Commission members is that there is some interest in having another look at McChord field. There has already been a fair amount of work in that area so the planning team will get together and explore what opportunities we might have to revisit as a possible option.

Rob redirected the members to the staff analysis of potential sites slide and stated the staff have reduced the list that is being recommended to the Commission, down to six. We want to hear more from Commission members if there is something else to be considered here.

David thanked Senator Keiser for her comment, then stated that McChord will be added back on the list as a possible site.

Representative Orwall asked if Puyallup was in the six sites.

Rob stated it is not a likely candidate, the acreage and development around the airport are limiting factors along with other items. Both the WSDOT and PSRC assessments recommend that Puyallup/Thun Field is probably not a good potential to be a primary commercial airport.

Jeffrey had a question about adding JBLM to the list. Is there any additional community engagement that needs to happen in light of this decision?

David said, absolutely and we would need to hear back from Pierce County and others about this.

Josh thinks we have some interest from the Commission on identifying some type of solution in the South Sound. His recommendation, as part of these potential sites, is identifying some type of greenfield site in Pierce County. If there is some type of partnership, long-term at JBLM, or another site we have evaluated over the last 40-years or a new location, so be it.

David said we kind of started that process. He sent a letter to Pierce County asking them to open up some dialogue and he is hoping to provide a briefing with them, and working with the planners, to discuss the possibility of a greenfield site.

Tony looked at the list and the only greenfield site on the list that has proximity and capability is Black Lake and he would like to see more studied on it. It was not considered in the PSRC study.

David doesn't know that it is the only viable greenfield site, but it may be the only one on the list which is why we are hoping to hear back from Pierce County. The public spoke out very quickly to the County Commissioners and they do not want an airport in Black Lake.

Larry thinks we have to anticipate that public opposition is likely for just about any solution we are going to pursue, whether it is expansion of existing airports or a greenfield site. It should not deter us from properly evaluating the technical merits of any particular site.

David added that in some instances there may be one voice that is the loudest, but that voice may not be reflective of what the majority of the people in that area actually want.

#### Evaluation Criteria

Rob clarified that evaluation criteria does not include or eliminate a site, it compares sites against each other. There are eight different categories (operational suitability, site suitability, partners/sponsors/community support, market factors, public benefit, economic feasibility, environmental stewardship, social equity) and the criteria fall within them. Commission member input listed these categories as most important; operational suitability, site suitability, partners/sponsors/community that should be considered, market factors, economic feasibility, and environmental stewardship. Additional evaluation criteria within the categories was also suggested by Commission members.

Rita asked the members how we should be factoring in the issue of support.

David responded that for him, sponsor/community support are important factors that we need to evaluate at all the different phases. He does not think we should discard whether or not there is community support in any given phase. It is important to hear from people and what they have to say.

Jeffrey commented that a change on criteria slide under Phase III, jet fuel storage, should include jet fuel storage and delivery.

Larry stated local support is helpful to us in terms of understanding the environment at whichever site that we think is best for a new facility. However, he does not want it to take on a disproportional weighting in the analysis of what we need to do. It would be preferable to have a community or several communities that would invite that kind of economic development and a facility. However, he does agree it needs to be present and part of the dialogue.

Senator Keiser spoke about the need and services in the South Puget Sound and maybe the Pierce County area. If we think beyond the constructs of Pierce County, we have some very viable and active tribal governance jurisdictions in East Pierce County, the Muckleshoots for instance. She wonders if we should incorporate tribal voices in this process. It could be that there are tribal lands that might be appropriate and something that might be of interest to the tribes.



Rob responded that we have sought collaboration with our WSDOT tribal staff. We have not been able to connect yet. We agree and are trying to include tribes. Not just the Muckleshoot tribe but all the tribes that could potentially be impacted or could have a contribution.

Larry added that we may want to recommend the Legislature fund some initial environmental work because that will help accelerate the process and identify early issues of concern that may need to be mitigated. We may have some slightly different environmental goals and objectives than what you would get in a typical FAA checklist in terms of how we want to do that. There is also a need for further dialogue around a governance structure of an airport of this magnitude.

Rita shared that she was seeing in the chat box some conversation about some high-level screening process. She suggested to David and Rob that we spend some time thinking about how we would manage that to come up with a recommendation for the Commission.

#### Discussion on Evaluation Criteria

Rita stated that we have heard general support for the categories of evaluation criteria and discussed the possibility of how we would think about some of the measures for environmental responsibility. She then asked for any other items for discussion on the evaluation criteria.

#### Adjustment to CACC timeline

Rita stated there has been concerns expressed about the current timeline which was established prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The social distancing requirements have made it difficult for the Commission to do its business, much less to be able to have conversations with the public for input. The options we have are to either stay the course or request the Legislature delay recommendations by one year to provide more time for additional analysis and outreach. She then asked for discussion.

Rita asked if there is concurrence that we should request the Legislature to approve a delay of the Commission's work by one year.

Representative Dent stated he is currently working on that on how we can extend that out and what the legal requirements may be, whether we need legislation or not. He does not have an answer, and he will have one soon.

Senator Keiser will be happy to work with Representative Dent on this.

Shane said that we are all hopeful that life returns to normal. There is uncertainty, they see a return to leisure travel certainly. He thinks business travel is a bit of a question mark. There could be a fundamental long-term shift in air travel demand. While not necessarily recommending a delay, as time goes on and we see how the recovery is going, we will be better informed about that.

Larry thinks it is premature to make a decision like this right now. The circumstances we are facing are too dynamic for us to make good decisions regarding the schedule. He is in favor of having a sense of urgency to get the work done. We might want to get to a point where we go back to the Legislature and say, here is the work we have done and we want to do additional work to advance this issue so we would like to see the additional work funded and the timelines extended associated with the additional work. So he would like to postpone this decision.

David said that he is hearing the group say, stay the course but keep our options open especially as we come to some conclusions and recommendations. He thinks it is helpful for Representative Dent and Senator Keiser to look at some options we do have to make some adjustments should that be necessary.

Bryce wants us to make sure as we do this work, we are doing adequate public outreach. During this time, it has made it more difficult to do adequate public outreach. If we do stay the course, we build in the flexibility to continue to do the correct type of outreach, getting the correct type of feedback to make these decisions and to adequately make sure the public is involved.

David said that was one of the catalysts that started this discussion in the first place, was during the pandemic and what we are all doing the 'be safe', can we have an adequate public process that facilitates everything that should be done involving the public. That is one of the reasons we had initially brought up this discussion about, do we need to look at our timeline so we can ensure the public can get comments in and have face to face interaction with sponsors and our team.

Rob commented about the timelines it will take to deliver on some of these things. It is roughly a 20-year process to deliver a new airport, from the ground up and roughly a 10-year process from the green light until we have substantial completion on construction for the expansion of an existing airport. When the Legislature first came out, we did some quick math and realized the timing to deliver to the Legislature in January 2022, both the single preferred location and the possible expanded sites; while the single preferred location is still attainable, we were feeling a pinch in the time available for expanding the sites. With the understanding that perhaps the downturn in the airline industry could push things out a few years, that is actually beneficial for the timeline for expanding existing airports.

Steve said that the short list is due January 1, 2022, and we have had only one commissioner meeting since our January meeting, or whenever that last one was, and probably only have one scheduled, that would be in October. His concern was, is that a powerful argument that, as far as substantial participation by Commissioners, we have lost the bulk of the year. It is hard for him to think that with one more meeting for four hours, we can be doing our jobs to support staff to be ready for picking six on January 1. It seems like a really big lift.

Rob replied that we have thought about that. We recognize that this is a very dynamic situation. Hopefully staff have been able to connect with Commission members often enough with relevant data to keep the thinking moving forward and the clarity of what is being accomplished. The feedback from today's meeting has been beneficial. We have recognized that there may need to be another meeting, so we have templated perhaps early in December, if it is needed depending on how things evolve. We are open to expanding the number of meetings, not only the frequency but the time, if that's necessary to accomplish the work.

David said we should still work towards that January goal and we will see what we get back from the legislators on what we can do. We can also look at a supplemental meeting in addition to the October meeting.

Next Steps:

- Community/sponsor engagement on potential primary aviation facility sites
- Develop a broader understanding of public and industry preferences
- Explore and develop possible *System Airport* roles/contribution to capacity
- Revise and update evaluation criteria

## CACC Meeting Summary (continued)

- Conduct research to support evaluation criteria
- October 2020 CACC meeting potential dates (to be sent out in a Doodle Poll)
  - 13<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday
  - 19<sup>th</sup>, Monday
  - 20<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday
  - 21<sup>st</sup>, Wednesday
  - 22<sup>nd</sup>, Thursday
  - 26<sup>th</sup>, Monday

We will look at potential dates for another meeting.

David opened the meeting for member comments.

Rudy wanted to suggest after our meeting today we reach out directly to the public with a press release that summarizes the high points of our meeting. This might help to shape some of the dialogue moving forward that would help as well with those doing articles of this.

David stated Christina will work on a press release for us.

Due to additional time left in our meeting, David opened the meeting for the public to make comments for the Commission members.

Steve wrote a comment that we should have an actual comment period established. We need to hear, as a collective, what the public has to say.

David confirmed, that is our plan for the next meeting. This meeting had some challenges, we had initially intended to do this over Microsoft Teams Live event but the format is not as robust as we were initially led to believe so we had to come back to this format. For the next meeting we are looking at expanding the capability to have more people on the call. With a Microsoft Teams Live event you can only have 300 and we want to go beyond that and receive the public comments.

Adjourned 11:03 a.m.