

Highline Forum 9/23/20 Meeting Comments

My comments are in regards to 2 of the agenda items for the meeting today.

For the PSRC Aviation Baseline Study:

“The objectives of the Regional Aviation Baseline Study are to:

- Identify the roles of each airport and the aviation activities within the region.
- Provide a regional perspective on how aviation activities at airports in the study area interact with each other, the community and the broader economy.
- Obtain input from stakeholders about their needs and build a common understanding about aviation and airspace constraints.
- Identify future aviation needs within the central Puget Sound region and set the stage for future planning.”

Aviation does not exist in a vacuum. There are inputs and outputs, actions and consequences, which should be considered. Hearing from stakeholders is a good start, as objective 3 states, but the realities of effects need to be defined upfront.

There is nothing here about social equity – who benefits and who pays - or environmental justice and the communities most affected adversely. There is nothing here about carbon emissions and the effect on increased climate change. There is nothing here about non-aviation transportation, which serves or is affected by the air travel activity.

Related but separately, I was listening to the presentation by SAFE Cities yesterday, <https://www.climateweeknyc.org/event/cities-lead-phasing-out-fossil-fuels>, where City Council Members from across the nation (and our own King County Councilmember, Dave Upthegrove) were discussing “meeting their climate goals while improving local air quality, tackling environmental inequity, and accelerating the green recovery at the same time.” These are the goals and objectives we should expect of our regional government agencies.

For the StART Committee:

Environmental Excellence Awards: If the Port is going to recognize that inflight operations have any emissions and laud those noted as waste reductions, such as:

Reduced inflight waste by eliminating 22 million plastic waste items (straws and stirrsticks), and recycled other inflight waste; • Promoted reusable bottles through “Fill Before You Fly” campaign, reducing passenger use of single use plastic cups.

then it also needs to address other emissions that are being created during flights, including the use of jet fuel. Reducing plastic waste and emissions, is desirable but will not get us anywhere close to the carbon emissions reduction and the harm they cause, short and long term, that we need to effect for our planet’s sustainability. These awards for reductions are inconsequential while the world around us goes up in flames. Please think about making relevant awards towards addressing our real world problems when you next consider environmental excellence.