

City Councils - Should We Save Time and Replace Them? - Santa Monica, Torrance, Whiteman, Banning. and now Los Alamitos Army Airfield, not to mention attacks on Hawthorne, Van Nuys, and others. These locations all have airports that are under attack from City Councils that seem to favor land developers over the very possible greater public good that airports provide.

Do City Councils foresee emergencies?

Who predicted the huge snowfall that Big Bear endured and the airlift that assisted the community? Who predicted the soon-to-arrive hurricane "Hillary," projected to make landfall? Will flooding stop transportation? Will wind create damaging effects? Will airlift relievers be necessary? Medivac potential? Food shortages? Elder adults trapped? How about the earthquakes that destroy our normal way of life and the wildfire disasters that require air support from Cal-Fire, and the airports necessary to stage necessary equipment? One neighborhood advocate at KWHP cited on record the County Fire Helicopters as responsible for saving his home, and then voted in the "CAC" process to close the airport, even after being told on record by the residing fire chief that KWHP remaining open is needed.

Easy Targets.

I suspect many folks who haven't had the time to detail the facts, believe the negative assertions that include leaded fuel talk, noise, lack of area benefit for those non-pilots who live nearby, and other criticisms that can be spun by publicists as far-reaching and dangerous. They overlook recent surveys, noise mitigation, and community benefits (monetary, community safety, and educational) that airports offer. They overlook the importance of the airports themselves as traffic relievers and that the National Airspace System requires them for optimal performance.

One can easily cite examples of these misgivings. At Whiteman Airport the recent modeled noise report revealed there really isn't any significant airplane noise, and that the "incompatibilities" present were only with those residences permitted by City Zoning as safe but are located only yards away from the runway. No noise study was conducted that measured decibel levels created by the Union Pacific train whose tracks parallel the runway nearby. Nor was there a pollution study done that would reveal a comparison between the greater amount of pollution that the heavy diesel trucks that travel on San Fernando Road emit when compared to the significantly much lesser amount emitted by small general aviation planes. Some will denounce the airport because many who live nearby aren't pilots, but few City Councils criticize bowling alleys because nearby residents might not be bowlers, or golf courses, as many nearby residents might not be golfers, not to mention the private courses that require huge membership fees that many neighbors probably don't belong to.

Why Waste Time? - Replace City Council members with Real Estate Developers. - Eliminate the middle people.

If City Council members persist and refuse to innovate and properly assess the economic, public safety potential, and community value of our valuable resources, and prefer a development much like that on the land that was once Howard Hughes Airport, then save time, replace the Council Members with developers, and after all of our current public use airports are closed and are replaced with real estate developments that don't provide for community safety benefit, then when disaster surfaces, the developers can be blamed more readily for irresponsible government decisions, and voted out of office, and replaced with folks who are of a different mindset. But, disaster relief, ignored transportation necessity, community benefit, and needed economic potential, as well as infrastructure systems will all have to be recreated. Perhaps it will be too late, What scary thoughts! - *Webmaster*