

**TO:** Airport Vision Committee

**FROM:** The Airport Community Character Working Group (CCWG)

**RE:** ADDITIONAL DOCUMENT BASED ON REVIEW OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT THROUGH THE LENS OF THE CCWG REPORT

**DATE:** December 27, 2019

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**BACKGROUND:** On December 27, 2019 the CCWG met to review the Technical Committee Report (TCWG) through the lens of the CCWG report. Due to lack of time the committee did not have time to review the Focus Committee or the Experience Committee reports. Our lack of comments is not indicative of our comfort or discomfort of the recommendations and conclusions of those reports.

1. **AIR QUALITY:** The Community Character Working Group adopted the goal of a 30% reduction in overall airport emissions by aircraft and facilities (emphasis added). The TCWG proposes to measure emission reductions primarily by monitoring fuel sales, with the goal of a 30% reduction in that area. In the event fuel sales do not decrease by 30%, the TCWG recommends that the County participate in a carbon offset program. Since a carbon offset program will have no effect on local emissions from airport operations, it is entirely inconsistent with the recommendations of the CCWG. Given the fact that larger aircraft have larger engines, and require more fuel, regardless of the number of passengers carried, and that the probable increase in general aviation operations that will occur when larger aircraft open slots currently taken by the CRJ700 aircraft will doubtlessly result in greater fuel sales, the proposed reliance on a carbon offset program will do nothing to mitigate the serious concerns the CCWG has with current emissions and odors at the airport.
2. **NOISE:** The CCWG adopted the goal of a 30% drop in noise intensity from airport operations. The TCWG relies on "quieter aircraft", virtually exclusively, to achieve the noise reduction goal. The TCWG believes the County can proceed with a "phased" approach to airside development, believing that some of the larger mainline aircraft potentially capable of operating at ASE could be prohibited from landing by building a runway that would not be capable of handling the weight of these aircraft. The analysis by the TCWG does conclude that building a runway below the specifications necessary to accommodate all aircraft with a wingspan not greater than 118 feet "might be preempted by the FAA". The CCWG finds it unlikely that the FAA would commit to the expenditure of at least tens of millions of dollars to build an under-spec runway; therefore the CCWG concludes that our goal of a 30% reduction in noise intensity cannot be met by the TCWG's plan. Some of the aircraft potentially capable of operating at ASE under full airside development without the current 95' wingspan limitation and no weight limit restrictions have significantly higher noise profiles than the CRJ700. Specifically, the Airbus A319-100 Sharklet, which has a full power noise level of 91.4 decibels, vs. the 89.5 decibel level of the CRJ700. The perception of noise is based on a logarithmic scale, meaning that a 3-decibel increase is perceived at twice the

level of the underlying figure. The Embraer E190 E2 has a full power noise level of 92.3 decibels, consequently that aircraft will have a perceived noise level of nearly twice the CRJ 700. The 737-700 with winglets has a decibel level of 93,1 decibels, an increase of 3.6 decibels which will be perceived at more than twice the noise level of the CRJ700. It is unlikely that the FAA would allow the County to build a runway below the weight standards necessary to accommodate all aircraft with a wingspan of 118 feet or less, and acknowledging the fact that the County cannot discriminate against specific aircraft in a design category, the TCWG's approach is deeply flawed and most likely unattainable, making it inconsistent with the CCWG's stated goal.

3. **AIRCRAFT:** The TCWG's recommendations are inconsistent with the CCWG's recommendation that the County maintain service with scope-compliant aircraft as long as possible, which are required to have 76 or fewer seats. There is a superficial analysis of the proposed Mitsubishi M100 scope-compliant regional aircraft. While the aircraft is a prototype, the specifications for it are available and could have been addressed. Mesa and SkyWest airlines have placed contingent orders for the M100, which is due for delivery in 2023. The M100 will comply with the current 95' wingspan restriction.
4. **CCWG COMMENT ON GENERAL AVIATION:** To date no thorough analysis or investigation, due to lack of baseline data, has addressed the impacts of GA. there is no baseline data available to the committees to comment on the impact of 48% of the airport operations

#### **SUMMARY**

While the CCWG struggled with precise language, and we were unable to complete an addendum addressing concerns regarding the role of the airport in a broad discussion of the impacts of growth, we nevertheless clearly stated: "Fast track data collection to create a baseline understanding of community impacts of current airport configuration for air quality, local emissions, noise levels, vehicle trips, light pollution. Proceed with airside improvements only after the community has determined a baseline (to include air quality, local emissions, noise levels, vehicle trips), discussed their impacts, both positive and negative, and confirm targets. In addition, the CCWG incorporated the recommendations of the 2012 AACP plan, specifically item IX.1.: Ensure that enough clear and understandable data is gathered and compiled for the purposes of well-informed public decision making".

The TCWG did not address this critical issue, particularly the process proposed by the CCWG. Instead the TCWG attempted to address a portion of the recommendation by looking at fuel burn per passenger, rather than the more generally accepted standard of total fuel burn per operation, and addressed the noise impacts of only the aircraft they generally favored, rather than those that could potentially operate at ASE. The TCWG's report further states that "Growth should be a community conversation, but not a limiting factor in developing an implementation plan for the working group's recommendations". The CCWG strongly disagrees with that

statement given the conversations around .8% growth and the related impacts such as the baseline data for noise and air quality. The TCWG's recommendations could exacerbate the current problematic air quality and noise impacts of existing airport operations.

The TCWG report implies that the community is in danger of losing commercial service to ASE. The fact is that this is an extraordinarily lucrative market, and each time the community was told that we were in imminent danger of losing our commercial service, the airlines have miraculously responded. In the early 90's we were told we were losing the BAE 146, which actually flew until 2006. We are now being told that we will lose the CRJ700, likely by the late 2030's. It is the conclusion of the CCWG that it is far more important for the community to take the time necessary to identify and address the current impacts of airport operations on air quality, noise, existing infrastructure and growth, among many other topics, than it is to be rushed into a decision based on fear, rather than one that history and logic dictate. The Board of County Commissioners has indicated that in 2020 it intends to start a discussion of the impacts of growth. We encourage that discussion and trust that the future of the airport be included in that discussion, and that the County commits the resources necessary to collect and analyze the baseline data we have requested, particularly for air quality and noise impacts. We share your goal of "getting it right" and we believe it would not be "right" to proceed with airside development for the foreseeable future until and unless we have a better understanding of what a much larger airport will mean for the character of the community.

**MEMEBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Agreeing with the above statements: Wayne Ethridge; Barbara Conviser; Sandra Simpson; Bill Dinsmoor; Bob Sirkus

Abstaining: Michael Miracle

Other Attendees: Ellen Anderson and Bill Tomcich

Staff: Cindy Houben

**MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

Debbie Braun, Frieda Wallison, Sara Garton, Jasmine Tygre, Kirk Hinderberger, Rose Abello, Suzanne Caskey, Lisa Hancock