

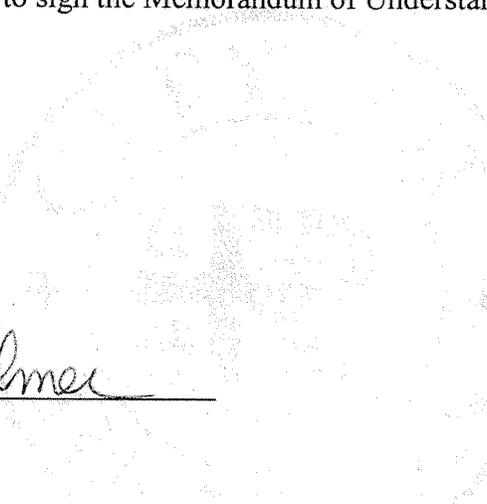
TRANSPORTATION/AVIATION COMMITTEE  
COMMITTEE REPORT

April 9, 2007

Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Airport Issues Between  
the Cities of Renton and Mercer Island

(Referred April 2, 2007)

The Transportation/Aviation Committee recommends Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Airport Issues Between the Cities of Renton and Mercer Island and authorizes the Mayor to sign the Memorandum of Understanding.



Marcie Palmer

Marcie Palmer, Chair

- Not in Attendance -

Randy Corman, Vice-Chair

Don Persson

Don Persson, Member

cc: Gregg Zimmerman, P/B/PW Administrator  
Peter Hahn, Deputy P/B/PW Administrator – Transportation  
Ryan Zulauf, Airport Manager  
Connie Brundage, Transportation Administrative Secretary  
Susan Campbell-Hehr/Carolyn Currie, Airport Secretary

## **Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Airport Issues Cities of Renton & Mercer Island**

**Background:** RENTON is preparing the Airport Layout Plan update to the 1997 Airport Master Plan. The City's contracted Airport planning consultant has included in the draft Master Plan an alternative to add a corporate aviation center to the businesses based at the Airport, which is consistent with the adopted 2005 Development Study Recommendations. Residents of Renton neighborhoods and of Mercer Island have expressed the need for more information and a more in-depth study of the potential impacts of the Airport Layout Plan alternatives to fully understand the options available for Airport development.

The cities of RENTON and MERCER ISLAND believe it is in their mutual interest to work cooperatively and amicably to ensure that both Cities' interests are thoroughly considered; that any future development at the Airport is designed to manage noise to the extent possible, is consistent with FAA requirements, is consistent with RENTON'S business plan, preserves the Airport as fiscally self-sustaining; and that residents of both Cities are appropriately informed about future development plans.

**Purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding:** Both Cities desire to build on their history of working cooperatively together to solve problems of mutual interest. To that end, the Cities agree on the following principles, and wish to express their intent to collaborate on tasks that will achieve these ends:

1. It is in each City's interest to act cooperatively with the other on potential Airport development plans.
2. Both Cities have a responsibility to their citizens to fully understand the options available for Airport development, and the potential impacts on residents and Airport businesses.
3. Both Cities believe the best path to the optimal Airport development plan is a process that is understood by the affected citizens and considers their input.
4. Renton and Mercer Island have complementary capabilities and resources, and the skills to apply these in a collaborative effort.
5. Each City can assist the other in ensuring that the Airport development plan that is ultimately approved meets, to the greatest extent possible, each City's objectives.

**Actions Already Taken:** The Cities have already made considerable progress working together to inform their communities of the options for Airport development, and to identify the issues of greatest concern.

- RENTON hosted informational meetings for MERCER ISLAND's Mayor, Deputy Mayor, executive staff and a community liaison.
- RENTON has provided copies of all Airport planning documents to Mercer Island elected officials, staff and community leaders.

- RENTON printed special informational inserts on the Airport and the master planning process in the *Renton Reporter* for broad public review.
- RENTON worked closely with local media channels to communicate with the public and had several articles and stories about the Airport and the master planning process featured in the Seattle Times, Puget Sound Business Journal, Daily Journal of Commerce, Renton Reporter and Q13 News.
- RENTON modified its ordinance establishing the Renton Airport Advisory Committee (RAAC) to add a voting member from Mercer Island who is appointed by the Mercer Island City Council and ratified by the Renton City Council.
- MERCER ISLAND appointed former Mayor Elliot Newman to represent the citizens of Mercer Island on the RAAC. He has actively participated in RAAC meetings and made timely reports to the Mercer Island City Council and residents.
- The MERCER ISLAND Mayor and RAAC representative have written guest columns in the *Mercer Island Reporter* to keep citizens informed of Airport planning activities and to express their appreciation for RENTON's cooperation.
- The MERCER ISLAND City Council stated its objective in regard to Renton Airport development plans: "to minimize any incremental increase in noise over Mercer Island and maximize the safety of Mercer Island citizens."
- MERCER ISLAND and RENTON co-hosted a Mercer Island-wide community meeting, and RENTON extended invitations to Mercer Island residents to attend open house and workshop events in Renton.
- RENTON broadcast the workshop presentations on its website and through the local government access channel.
- RENTON prepared and distributed an information folio, including answers to Frequently Asked Questions generated by Mercer Island residents.
- RENTON provided advance notice of Boeing Field closures that might affect Mercer Island residents.
- RENTON Airport staff has diligently and promptly responded to noise complaints from Mercer Island residents.
- Executive and management staff of BOTH CITIES have met many times to share residents' concerns, discuss the best methods to keep citizens informed, and determine the most productive approaches to continue RENTON's Airport master planning process.
- Staff of MERCER ISLAND and RENTON have jointly met with the FAA to discuss changes in flight patterns at the Airport that may help to achieve both Cities' objectives and minimize noise impacts.

**Actions to be Taken:** The Cities agree to move forward in a cooperative and collaborative fashion to examine Airport development options. To that end, the Cities agree to take the following actions:

- BOTH CITIES will publicly describe this partnership through a joint press release issued to the *Mercer Island Reporter*, the *Renton Reporter* and other news media, and explain that the noise study will include both Mercer Island and Renton neighborhoods.

- The Mayors of MERCER ISLAND and RENTON will prepare “op/ed” articles promoting this partnership and submit them for publication in their respective community newspapers.
- The MERCER ISLAND representative to the RAAC and the RENTON Councilmember who is also a voting member of the RAAC will discuss with the RAAC membership the substance of this Memo of Understanding and the Cities’ decision to proceed collaboratively.
- MERCER ISLAND will provide RENTON with a summary of issues of concern to its residents that were raised at the community meeting held on Mercer Island on January 29, 2007.
- MERCER ISLAND will identify key questions raised at the January 29 community meeting that remain unanswered and provide these to RENTON. Together the staffs of the Cities will determine which of these key questions can be satisfactorily answered at this time, and which require additional data.
- On or before April 30, 2007, with prior review and assistance from MERCER ISLAND on ways to disseminate, RENTON will provide answers to the questions that the staffs of the Cities deem appropriate to answer at this time.
- The RENTON City Council will direct the RAAC to refrain from making a formal recommendation on Airport development until after results of an aircraft noise study are delivered & vetted with BOTH CITIES. However, the process of vetting the additional noise information must be concluded at the earliest time possible.
- Staff of RENTON and MERCER ISLAND will develop a draft scope of work for a noise study to be conducted by a jointly-selected consulting firm. The cities will seek qualifications from consulting firms, including but not limited to the firm of Harris Miller Miller & Hanson, based on the article by the firm’s President Mary Ellen Eagan entitled, “Using Supplemental Metrics to Communicate Aircraft Noise Effects” (*Transportation Research Board*, Nov. 10, 2006).
- The cities may elect to solicit public input for the study scope and will share the information gathered from such public input.
- RENTON will provide the draft work scope to the RAAC and solicit the RAAC’s comments.
- BOTH CITIES’ staffs will propose an equitable cost-sharing arrangement for the noise study, and will submit to their City Councils a contract to retain the consultant.
- RENTON will manage the noise study contract.
- MERCER ISLAND will host an informational meeting for its residents, where the selected noise study consultant will describe the firm’s experience in analyzing noise impacts from airports similar to Renton’s, the proposed methodology for the noise study and the nature and utility of results of that study, and will solicit participants’ input on the scope of the noise study.
- Upon receipt of the noise study results, staff of BOTH CITIES will meet and collaborate on the best way to use those results and to disseminate the results to affected residents and decision makers.
- BOTH CITIES will host community meeting(s) at the conclusion of the noise study, at which time staffs of the CITIES will assist the noise consultant in presenting results and answering citizens’ questions.

- BOTH CITIES will work together with the FAA to study and implement modified flight paths (LVP/WAAS technology) in the current FAA work plan for Seattle-area airspace redesign that is due for publication in November 2008.
- BOTH CITIES will work with the FAA to determine how best to gain approval and funding (if appropriate) for flight tracks that use the East Channel of Lake Washington to the optimum extent feasible.
- Staff of BOTH CITIES will alert staff of the other if it appears that impediments have arisen or may arise that would interfere with the cooperation and collaboration contemplated by this Memorandum of Understanding and will work diligently to remove any such impediments.
- Staff of BOTH CITIES will report to their respective City Councils on a regular basis on issues that arise in staff-level discussions on topics including efforts to minimize noise, design and implementation of new flight tracks, securing FAA cooperation (and funding) for new flight track technology, and additional City-to-City cooperative efforts needed to fulfill the objectives laid out in this Memo of Understanding.

On behalf of the Mayors, Councils and staff of the cities of RENTON and MERCER ISLAND, the undersigned commit to collaborate on all of the above-described measures. We further agree to maintain the spirit of active assistance and cooperation as Airport planning moves forward, and to continuously identify steps that can be taken jointly to achieve the best result for both communities. This MOU has a "sunset" date of December 31, 2008.