

## THE BRIEFING PROJECT EPISODE 13 The Lost Cause – November 13, 2018

Thank you. I'm Steve Edmiston for The Briefing Project. Today's comment is inspired by the "lost cause" speech from *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, for two reasons. First, no surprise, I'm often told this project is a lost cause because of the Port's economic growth ambitions and the disparity in our respective level of influence. Second, in film-speak, today reveals the list of actual project quests, meaning, here, the specific actions that will, "lost cause" or not, quantify success.

I've titled these actions the "Port of Seattle Airport Neighbor Community Accords." The Accords are designed to provide cities and citizens a simple, ongoing, public measurement – a gradebook, or scorecard, if you will, of how each of you act, or fail to act, respond or fail to respond, to the information provided and the actions requested. Any one of you can introduce these actions as policy, to be advocated for and implemented to the extent permitted by law, just as you did on immigration, and on climate change. They are legal. They are within your authority. They reflect choices. I have the full text for the Clerk; I'll read the Accord headings now.

**First:** The Health of Humans and the Environment is a Paramount Duty and Pre-Condition to Increased Frequency of Aircraft Operations (*requiring reversal of the Port's 2018 bylaw amendment deleting the commitment to community quality of life*).

**Second:** Transparency Is a Core Value Requiring Independent Audit of Historical Mitigation Expenditures.

**Third:** Trust is a Core Value Requiring Non-Interference with Independent Health and Environmental Studies.

**Fourth:** Tax Levy Funds Shall Be Prioritized for Airport Neighbor Community Mitigation.

**Fifth:** Establishing a Nighttime Curfew to Protect Human Health Shall Be a Policy Priority *Supported by Port Resources*.

**Sixth:** Fully Remediating the Failed Commitments for 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway Usage Shall be a Policy Priority.

**Seventh:** Establishing Increased Glide Slopes for All Runways to Reduce Noise and *Protect Human Health* Shall Be a Policy Priority *Supported by Port Resources*.

**Eighth:** Establishing a Regional Airport to *Preserve Statewide Economic Growth and Simultaneously* Reduce the Unfair Burden on Airport Neighbor Communities Shall be a Policy Priority *Supported by Port Resources*.

**Ninth:** Citizen Complaint Processes Shall be Reformed to Provide Meaningful Engagement and Solutions.

**Tenth:** A Moratorium Shall be Placed on Capital Projects That Expand Aircraft Operation Capacity Until a Comprehensive Plan *Developed in Collaboration with Airport Neighbor Communities* to Protect Health and the Environment is Achieved.

It's a big list. Perhaps certainly, a "lost cause" list. But as Jimmy Stewart's Mr. Smith said, "they're the only causes worth fighting for."

**PORT OF SEATTLE**  
**AIRPORT NEIGHBOR COMMUNITY ACCORDS [PROPOSED]**

November 13, 2018

**RECOGNIZING:**

That the Sea-Tac International Airport neighbor communities have been, and want to be, proud hosts and partners, working, living, and playing in harmony and collaboration with the Port of Seattle;

That human health and the environment in the airport neighbor communities remain unfairly burdened by aircraft operations when compared to the benefits these same operations generate for the entire region and State of Washington, and that this disparity has not been compensated;

That the World Health Organization 2018 Environmental Noise Guidelines recommend immediate substantial policy action reducing aircraft noise and providing increased mitigation for airport neighbor communities;

That the Port of Seattle Long Range Plan – Century Agenda does not include reducing the impact on human health or the environment of the airport neighbor communities as an objective, strategy, or priority;

That the Port of Seattle in 2018 deleted the requirement that it would “ensure a sustainable quality of life” for King County residents from its bylaws and mission statement;

That the Port of Seattle in 2018 amended its bylaws such that its mission is no longer dependent upon environmental stewardship, instead reducing environmental stewardship to a “commitment” to be “advanced;”

That the Port of Seattle in 2018 amended its bylaws to remove the requirement that its mission is dependent upon collaboration with neighboring communities, and instead reducing collaboration to a “commitment” to be “advanced;”

That trust must be restored with the airport neighbor communities negatively impacted by historic and current Port of Seattle airport operations;

That restored trust must be secured by adopting measures to restore Port of Seattle accountability to the citizens negatively impacted by Port of Seattle airport operations;

That the Port of Seattle culture must be reformed to (i) provide the citizens impacted by airport operations stakeholder status that is fully to equal to or greater than other industry and government stakeholders, and (ii) demonstrate a respect for preserving the quality of life, safety, and health of the families and the environment in the impacted communities.

That to achieve transparency, trust, accountability, and reform, there must be specific, measurable, and achievable actions, the completion of which can be objectively quantified and assessed;

Now therefore, a citizen offers to the Port of Seattle, and to all airport neighbor communities, for adoption and implementation, these,

### **ACCORDS**

#### **First: The Health and Welfare of Humans and the Environment is a Paramount Duty and Pre-Condition to Increasing Frequency of Aircraft Operations.**

Protecting the health of humans and the environment impacted by current and future Port of Seattle airport operations is a paramount duty and pre-condition to the increased frequency of aircraft operations, and must be reflected in (i) the Port of Seattle mission statement (which shall require reversing 2018 bylaw amendments deleting the commitment to quality of life, diluting the commitment to humans and the environment, and diluting the commitment to collaboration with the communities); (ii) inclusion in the Century Agenda; and (iii) inclusion in the Port of Seattle's 2019 federal and state legislative agendas.

#### **Second: Transparency Is a Core Value Requiring Independent Audit of Historical Mitigation Expenditures.**

Transparency must be a core value in relation to protecting the health of humans and the environment; this shall initially be manifested by the Port commissioning an independent audit of the over \$400 million historically claimed as Port-funded airport mitigation expenditures since 1985. The audit shall, among other things, segregate Port funds from federal funds; identify the purpose of claimed expenditures (buy out, mitigation package, etc.); segregate mitigation expenditures from transactions in which the Port or FAA acquired aviation easements; and identify the basis in recent public statements for the reduction in claimed mitigation expenditures to \$300 million.

**Third: Trust is a Core Value Requiring Non-Interference with Independent Health and Environmental Studies.**

In order to establish and maintain the trust required for meaningful engagement and collaboration with airport neighbor communities, and except in the context of a public meeting, the Port shall cease actions intended, or appearing, to influence the scope, oversight, or outcomes of pending independent scientific studies relating to the human health and the environmental impacts of airport operations, including but not limited to, the pending Ultrafine Particle Study, and Department of Commerce Airport Mitigation Study.

**Fourth: Tax Levy Funds Shall Be Prioritized for Airport Neighbor Community Mitigation.**

Protecting human health and the environment from Port of Seattle airport impacts requires increased mitigation now, beyond the lesser mitigation authorized by compliance with minimum federal regulatory requirements or tethered to federal funding. Accordingly, the Port's existing policy relating to usage of annual tax levy money must be revised to prioritize mitigation as the paramount usage of levy funds, particularly with respect to applying World Health Organization 2018 recommendations relating to aircraft noise.

**Fifth: Establishing a Nighttime Curfew to Protect Human Health Shall Be a Policy Priority and Supported by Port Resources.** Recognizing the newly established increased risk of harm to human health from night time operations, as most recently reported by the World Health Organization, the Port of Seattle shall commit undertake all available options under the law, and provide Port financial resources, to establish a curfew, including but not limited to (i) a permanent curfew executed voluntarily by airline and other necessary stakeholders, and/or (ii) a full, formal application under FAA guidelines for curfew relief.

**Sixth: Fully Remediating the Failed Historical Commitments Regarding 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway Usage Shall Be a Policy Priority and Supported by Port Resources.**

Recognizing in both the historical commitments and voluntary agreements relating to usage of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway, that full-time usage of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway was not contemplated at the time of development, construction or thereafter, and recognizing that the recent full-time usage places a new significant burdens on new neighborhoods, the Port shall adopt as policy and undertake all available options under the law to cause the reduction of usage of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway to pre-2012 levels, unless and until the mitigation commitments set forth herein are achieved.

**Seventh: Establishing Increased Glide Slopes for All Runways to Reduce Noise and Protect Human Health Shall Be a Policy Priority Supported by Port Resources.**

Recognizing the need for noise relief to protect human health, including as recommended by the World Health Organization, the Port shall adopt as policy and undertake all available options under the law to cause the increase in landing glide slopes for all runway usages to at minimum of 3.0 degrees, and to the maximum safe angle above 3.0 degrees.

**Eighth: Establishing a Regional Airport to Preserve Statewide Economic Growth While Simultaneously Reducing the Unfair Burden on Airport Neighbor Communities Shall be a Policy Priority Supported by Port Resources.**

The Port shall adopt as policy, and as a state and federal legislative priority goal, the siting a regional airport to ensure that the economic growth and development needs of the entire State of Washington can be met, while reducing the historic burdens and costs placed upon human health and the environment in the airport neighbor cities.

**Ninth: Reforming Citizen Complaint Processes to Provide Meaningful Engagement and Solutions.**

The Port recognizes that citizen frustration, anger, and disenfranchisement must be addressed, and that the current methodology to accept, track, and take action on citizen complaints relating to aircraft operations is inadequate and must be improved. The Port will (i) commission an independent audit the Port's historic handling of complaints to accurately assess the efficacy of the current system, including a review of tangible Port actions taken in response to complaints; (ii) commission an independent study of community attitudes, perceptions, and complaints about relating to aircraft operations; (iii) develop a complaint system and process that provides the community with useful and actionable responses intended to provide relief.

**Tenth: A Moratorium Shall be Placed on Capital Projects That Expand Aircraft Operation Capacity Until a Comprehensive Plan Developed in Collaboration with Airport Neighbor Communities to Protect Health and the Environment is Achieved.**

Because it is critical to human health and the environment that the commitments above are achieved, particularly before exacerbating the risks of harm by adding more community overflights, the Port will prepare and implement an enforceable remedial plan and, to the extent permitted by law, place a moratorium on capital projects that have, as their full or partial purpose, expansion of capacity for adding additional aircraft overflights.



# THE BRIEFING

**THE BRIEFING YOU ASKED FOR BUT DID NOT RECEIVE –  
IN TWO MINUTE PUBLIC COMMENTS**

PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 13, 2018  
STEVE EDMISTON

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# Episode 13 – The Lost Cause

1. Mr. Smith Goes to Washington and the “Lost Cause” speech.
2. Film theory – the “quest” is to compel Port Commissioner action.
3. **Port of Seattle Airport Neighbor Community Accords [PROPOSED]**

*First: Health of Humans and Protecting Environment a Paramount Duty*

*Second: Audit of Historical Mitigation Expenditures.*

*Third: Non-Interference with Independent Health and Environmental Studies.*

*Fourth: Tax Levy Funds Prioritized for Mitigation.*

*Fifth: Nighttime Curfew to Protect Human Health.*

*Sixth: Fully Remediate Failed Commitments for 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway.*

*Seventh: Establishing Increased Glide Slopes - All Runways.*

*Eighth: Regional Airport to Reduce the Unfair Burden.*

*Ninth: Citizen Complaint Processes Reformed.*

*Tenth: Moratorium on Capital Projects Expanding Aircraft Operations Until Comprehensive Plan to Meet Paramount Duty to Protect Health and the Environment.*