



For Immediate Release

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Renton and Mercer Island Unanimously Adopt Memorandum of Understanding On the Renton Airport

By unanimous approval, the City of Renton and the City of Mercer Island have entered into an agreement to wait on decisions about Renton airport development until more information is gathered and their residents are consulted about impacts on their neighborhoods. The memorandum of agreement (MOU) includes plans for a jointly funded noise study to determine the noise effects of several different development options. As laid out in the agreement, both cities commit to work together so that future airport operations are sensitive to neighborhood impacts and minimize those impacts.

"We are pleased to work together so that we can fully understand the options available for airport development and to inform our residents and businesses of the opportunities and impacts," said Renton Mayor Kathy Keolker. This MOU represents a culmination of many months of cooperative work between Renton and Mercer Island."

In the fall of 2006, the City of Renton was poised to consider the recommendation of their airport-planning consultant to add a corporate aviation center to the Renton Airport. But many residents of Mercer Island and some in Renton expressed concern about the impacts of aircraft noise in their neighborhoods. Over the past several months, the City of Renton has worked closely with the City of Mercer Island to better inform citizens and provide opportunities for public input. Community meetings and workshops, informational newsletters, postings on both cities' web sites, articles printed in local

papers, and cable TV communications have all helped to address residents' questions. Now this MOU more formally acknowledges that future decisions will take into account the residents' concerns and the data the cities will continue to collect and analyze together.

Mercer Island Mayor Bryan Cairns noted that public input has been important to this process, and in addition the cooperation between officials of both cities played a paramount role in reaching this agreement. "We applaud the City of Renton in concurring that more information is needed and for being willing to work with Mercer Island," he said.

Included in the MOU is the agreement that Renton and Mercer Island will collaborate on a noise study. Both cities will work together to solicit public input, draft the scope of work for the study, and share the results with residents. The MOU also outlines plans for both cities to work together with the Federal Aviation Administration to study and implement flight paths that lessen noise in residential neighborhoods.

In its discussion about the agreement, Mercer Island council members added that along with minimizing the noise impacts on residential neighborhoods, public safety and environmental protections need to figure into airport planning. Renton decision-makers concur that all three of these factors are essential in selecting any development option.

To view or read the MOU please go to <http://rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=212>, then click on Renton and Mercer Island Memorandum of Understanding.

The above information is provided by the City of Renton and the City of Mercer Island.