



Renton Municipal Airport

CLAYTON SCOTT FIELD

MASTER PLAN UPDATE



Above: Educational tour at the Airport.

Historically, Renton Airport served as the major testing field for new Boeing aircraft. However, as Boeing became more efficient at building aircraft, the company needed less space on the Airport. Consequently, Renton needed to find new ways of maximizing the Airport as a valuable public asset.

To meet this challenge, a volunteer citizen committee, the Renton Airport Advisory Committee (RAAC) has worked since 2001 to examine ways in which Renton Airport can make improvements that sustain its economic value to the Renton community while minimizing the noise impacts of aircraft using Renton Airport. At the same time, Renton Airport is required to comply with the regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration.



Above: The Master Plan aims to support current employment at the Airport.

Currently, the Airport is in the process of updating the Airport Layout Plan which is a main component of the Airport Master Plan. The Airport Layout Plan has several alternatives, each with a different "mix" of aircraft types and approaches. Some of the issues addressed in the Airport Layout Plan are as follows:

- What type and how many aircraft should be based at the Airport in the future?
- What will happen to the Airport's noise contours - will the contours get bigger, smaller or stay the same?
- Where is the best location to create aircraft tiedown space at the Airport?
- What capital improvement projects are needed to meet our goals of community development, economic value and minimized noise impact?



Above: The Master Plan aims to support future employment at the Airport.

The RAAC evaluated alternatives for the revitalization of Renton Airport to ensure that its redevelopment would create economic value while minimizing noise impacts. The Airport is embarking on a noise study that is above and beyond the federal requirements for noise analysis to fully study the options available for airport development and to provide our community with updated, state-of-the-art information. An environmental analysis will also be completed to ensure that the necessary data supports the alternatives that eventually will be selected. During the past year, the Renton City Council and Mayor have also revisited the policies guiding the redevelopment of the Airport to ensure that those policies reflect the desires of the community to minimize noise.

To date, the City of Renton has held three informational open houses to provide the public with more details on the Airport Layout Plan update to the Master Plan. One was held on November 21, 2006, at Renton High School and the other was held on January 16, 2007, at Renton City Hall. A third meeting was held on January 29, 2007, on Mercer Island to get their input about the noise impact of aircraft landing at the Renton Airport. The City of Renton plans to continue its technical analyses as well as its outreach to Renton neighborhoods and surrounding communities in order to complete the Airport Layout Plan that can best meet the public's interest.

Below: Informational open house held at the Renton High School on Nov. 21, 2006.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Renton's vision for the Airport? What kind of aircraft and how many more will this attract? Renton's Airport Layout Plan aims to maximize employment and transportation options, while minimizing noise impact on the surrounding community. In developing the Airport Layout Plan alternatives, the Renton Airport Advisory Committee (RAAC) and elected officials looked at all potential aviation-related uses of the Airport, and examined the potential economic benefits and perceived noise impacts to the community. The RAAC concluded that uses such as aircraft production, aircraft retrofitting, aviation education, and aircraft maintenance and repair services should be encouraged.

2. What actions have been taken by City of Renton toward its development plan for the Airport? What are the next steps and about when will they happen? In 2001, the City established the Renton Airport Advisory Committee (RAAC) to act in an advisory capacity to the Renton Mayor and City Council on matters referred to the Airport Advisory Committee by the Renton City Council. RAAC has provided and will continue to provide a forum for members of the community to discuss their concerns directly with Airport operators and for collective problem solving and resolution of their issues. In 2002, the Airport Business Plan was adopted. Recommendations based on the Business Plan were implemented from 2002 to 2005. In 2005, the Airport Development Study was adopted, and in 2006, Airport Layout Plan alternatives were created, noise contour studies were completed, and public meetings were held in November 2006 and January 2007. In 2007, the City of Renton entered into an agreement with the City of Mercer Island to jointly fund an airport noise study and gather community input to further evaluate the options available for airport development. For more information and for updates, visit rentonwa.gov.

Three main alternative Airport Layout Plans have been analyzed. Prior to acceptance, the City needs to complete the formal environmental review process with a public comment period. The Renton Mayor and Council will approve the plan and it will be sent to the FAA for final approval.

The sequence of moving ahead with the Airport Layout Plan is as follows:

- A. Completion of an additional noise analysis study (September through December 2007).
- B. Selection of a preferred alternative by the Renton Mayor and Council.
- C. Initiation of the environmental review process (SEPA) with formal public comment.
- D. City Council approval of the recommended plan.
- E. Approval of the plan by the Renton Mayor and Council.
- F. Approval of the plan by the FAA.

3. What kinds of airplanes use the Airport now? What is the estimated traffic volume of the Airport in the future? Currently, Renton Airport serves single-engine piston aircraft, new Boeing 737 commercial transport aircraft, corporate and business charters, air taxis, recreational flyers, seaplanes, and helicopters. The Airport also relieves small aircraft congestion from Sea-Tac and King County International Airport (Boeing Field).

The Renton Airport forecasts a very gradual increase in the level of aircraft operations over the next twenty years. However, the projected level of operations does not exceed 116,000 per year and, depending on which alternative



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

is selected for development, could be less than that. While more aircraft operations are forecast due to the overall population increase in the Puget Sound region, some of the alternative airport layout plan options will actually reduce the number of based aircraft on the airport. Tables 1 and 2 compare the various Airport Layout Plan alternatives under consideration as part of the Airport Master Plan Update process currently underway.

4. Given the vision described in the Airport Development Study and the Airport Layout Plan, and the potential increase in air traffic, how will this affect noise levels? All alternatives from the Airport Layout Plan anticipate that overall Airport activity will not increase dramatically over today's levels. Instead, the anticipated change will be a slight increase in the number of jet and turboprop aircraft using the Airport instead of piston-powered aircraft. This will not raise the overall noise levels as the types of jet and turboprops forecast are the quietest in the fleet.

5. What is the difference between Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 and (anticipated) Stage 4 aircraft? Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3, and Stage 4 are measures of the noise level generated by a particular kind of aircraft. The noisiest are the older Stage 1 jets, e.g., Boeing 707s and older 727s. The next generation of aircraft, e.g., newer 727s and 737s, fall into the quieter Stage 2 classification, and the current generation of aircraft fall into the quietest category, Stage 3. The FAA is proposing a new noise standard for subsonic jet airplanes and subsonic transport category large airplanes, Stage 4. Stage 4 would ensure that the latest available noise reduction technology is incorporated into new aircraft designs.

6. What is the IFR “non-precision” approach that passes over Mercer Island according to the current flight pattern? Renton Airport has two non-precision approaches (NPA) to Runway 15 (coming in over the lake). Both non-precision approaches are straight to the runway and align somewhat with Island Crest Way. Non-precision means that during inclement weather or when visibility is poor, arriving aircraft can only descend to a specific altitude before they have to “give up” on the approach and try again or ultimately, go elsewhere. The approaches are under control of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which has sole responsibility for the airspace. One of the two non-precision approaches at Renton (known as the RNAV/GPS approach) brings aircraft directly over Mercer Island (when landing to the south). This approach uses a navigational beam transmitted from Paine Field that is used to follow the path down to the runway at Renton. The other NPA is known as a Non-Directional Beacon (NDB) approach and is less preferred by pilots because it is less “precise” than the RNAV/GPS approach.

7. Is there another option to the current flight pattern? Presently, all non-precision instrument approaches to the Airport must use Runway 15. These are the only published approaches to the Airport. During visual (known as VFR) conditions, approaches may be made to either Runway 15 or 33, depending on the flight pattern in use, which is largely dictated by the prevailing wind. For future operations, the city is evaluating the implementation of a curved approach (RNP) that would permit aircraft with the appropriate onboard technology to fly a new approach over the East Channel which should reduce some of the overflights of Mercer Island.

8. What is the voluntary noise-abatement program? Noise abatement procedures at the Renton Municipal Airport are voluntary measures created and adopted by pilots to “fly friendly” and be good neighbors to the citizens who live under aircraft flight paths. Pilots of large or turbine-powered aircraft must comply with the provisions of FAR 91.129(e), rather than these aforementioned procedures. For specifications as to which noise abatement measure(s) each type of aircraft is encouraged to follow, visit rentonwa.gov and enter “airport noise” in the search function.



ALTERNATIVE LAYOUT PLANS

TABLE 1 – Comparison of Alternatives - Based Aircraft and Operations

	Existing	Alternative 1 "Recreational Flying"	Alternative 2 "Recreational and Business Aircraft Storage"	Alternative 3a "Corporate Aviation Center - Option A"	Alternative 3b "Corporate Aviation Center - Option B"	Hybrid 3a/3b Alternative "Corporate Aviation Center"
BASED AIRCRAFT	291	335	289	243	275	250
ANNUAL OPERATIONS	87,266	116,900	100,000	84,100	95,200	86,500

TABLE 2 – Comparison of Alternatives - Aircraft Storage

	Existing	Alternative 1 "Recreational Flying"	Alternative 2 "Recreational and Business Aircraft Storage"	Alternative 3a "Corporate Aviation Center - Option A"	Alternative 3b "Corporate Aviation Center - Option B"	Hybrid 3a/3b Alternative "Corporate Aviation Center"
TIEDOWNS	167	156	90	94	125	101
STANDARD HANGARS	77	172	172	131	132	131
CORPORATE HANGARS	2	2	19	10	10	10
TOTAL AIRCRAFT STORAGE*	246	330	281	235	267	242

*Aircraft storage does not include calculations for rotorcraft and other types that might be stored on the Airport.

GLOSSARY OF AVIATION TERMS

<i>Aircraft Operations</i>	One completed takeoff or landing per aircraft
<i>Aircraft Parking</i>	Temporary parking for aircraft
<i>ALP</i>	Airport Layout Plan
<i>Based Aircraft</i>	Aircraft that are based at Renton Airport
<i>East Channel Approach</i>	Visual flight approach path that takes aircraft from the East Channel Bridge over the water to final approach onto Runway 15
<i>FBOs</i>	Fixed Base Operator / Operations
<i>GA</i>	General Aviation – covers all civil aviation other than commercial airlines to include air charters and air ambulance
<i>GPS</i>	Global Positioning System
<i>IFR</i>	Instrument Flight Rules – When the weather and visibility is below the minimums to safely fly visually (see VFR below), instrument rated pilots must navigate using aircraft flight instruments, and specific instrument approach procedures for each airport
<i>Minimums</i>	Minimum allowable flight and/or approach altitudes
<i>NDB</i>	Non-Directional (Radio) Beacon – an instrument approach using a surface-based radio beam that provides an approach path into NDB qualified airports
<i>NPA</i>	Non Precision Approach
<i>RNP</i>	Required Navigation Performance-- proposed instrument approach over East Channel for noise abatement
<i>RNT</i>	(Renton) – three-letter FAA airport identifier
<i>Stage I – IV Engines</i>	Stages of noise emitted from jet engines, Stage I being the loudest & oldest, (no longer allowed), to Stage IV as currently the least noisy. Most commercial jets today are Stage III
<i>Tiedowns</i>	Specified outdoor areas to tie down aircraft
<i>VFR</i>	Visual Flight Rules – Rules that govern flight procedures in visual conditions when the surrounding terrain and airport are in clear view and minimum distances from clouds are maintained.
<i>VLJ</i>	Very Light Jet – carries pilot plus 4-5 passengers