

Listen to our community: no new airport

The Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC) that is considering the construction of a new international airport in Thurston County talks a lot about their outreach efforts, which includes contacting 73 community-based organizations such as nonprofits and environmental justice groups.

However, only three of those groups are located in Thurston County. If the CACC's goal is to reach those who do not have a voice in a public process, then they should contact more organizations based in the location that would be most impacted: Thurston County.

However, the bigger issue is that the CACC is not taking responsibility for doing this outreach themselves. Instead, they're asking nonprofit leaders and volunteers who are already under-resourced to take time away from their essential work helping the homeless or working to protect our drinking water, and instead, advise the CACC on how to do outreach.

Let's be honest: Even if the CACC were to contact every environmental group in Thurston County, is there a single one that would support paving over 3,100 acres of our rural communities, farms, and wildlife habitats so that people 25 years from now will have cheaper flights?

Not likely. So is the goal to get confirmation that environmental groups and nonprofits are opposed to a new airport? Or is the goal to just check the box for "outreach"?

There's a difference between conducting outreach, and listening to what communities say. There's also a difference between listening, and taking action on the feedback you've been given.

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