

**Re-envisioning Whiteman Airport Community Advisory Committee Meeting:
Public Comments, July 29, 2021**

Matthew:

My name is Matthew, and I am a pilot at Airport, and I think that makes me a member of community there. The comments on the testing have not assuaged my concerns about it. It sounds like there is very little chance for this testing to be scientific if you cannot determine the source of the pollution or these particles. If there's equipment on the east side of the Airport, near Air Park Way, near the Airport terminal, and there's a road between the instrumentation and the Airport, trucks pass through that area all the time. Those trucks are dirty, they'll have pollution. How is it that you guys can determine anything there if you got a truck between the Airport and that instrument? Very concerning, I don't believe there's much, from your comments, that you say can be done about it. It's casting serious doubt on the testing procedures and what validity they will have. Second of all, and this is a response to Mrs. Moulton's comments regarding pre-determined outcomes here. When I looked up Pacoima Beautiful's agenda and what their group aims for. It appears they have already decided on what they want for the Airport. If you look at their page, they have been very heavily advocating for shutdown. That includes as of today, this morning. It's hard to believe that their participation in this committee is in good faith if they've already decided these things and are not willing to consider other options. If you're continuously advocating shut down, it doesn't sound like you're participating in good faith. With that in mind, I have to wonder if it might not be a wise move for Ms. Padilla, Veronica Padilla, to resign from the committee given this problematic conflict her organization appears to have with the results of this committee, or rather the lack of pre-determined results of this committee. Third of all, the fact is the committee has a very serious issue with balance. I believe the number of representatives on this committee is 21, and the Airport only has two representatives. How can that possibly be regarded as fair? The Airport must have at least as many representatives representing it as the off-airport interests, it's just a matter of fairness. The Airport's community cannot be marginalized in this discussion. Thank you and have a good evening.

Craig:

I echo what Matthew is saying. The makeup of the committee, and I asked about this last month and inquired about what's necessary to get on the committee. The makeup of the committee really calls into questions the legitimacy of the output of the committee when so many members seem to have already made up their mind, pro-Airport closure as opposed to two Airport tenants that might be interested in keeping the Airport open. I really agree with him and echo those comments. The other thing Mr. Stone mentioned was the pollutant measurement. It's really hard to see science behind this when Airport

is ringed with very busy freeways, there's Metrolink, freight trains, diesel electric locomotives going up and down right next to the sensors and there's no way to discriminate amongst the sources of pollution. Somebody mentioned that leaded fuels are an issue, and they definitely are. But there's a lot of progress being made on that issue. First of all, many of the resident aircraft at the Airport would use unleaded fuel if it was available. It's just been an economic decision by the County and the Airport operator not to offer unleaded fuels. Believe me, you'd be welcome with open arms if an unleaded fuel truck was available at the airport. And also, there are unleaded, high-octane fuels coming online. Just this week the FAA approved the first drop-in replacement for low-lead gas called Chi 100. You're kind of cutting off nose to spite face saying this issue won't be solved outside of Whiteman Airport. That's all I have to say, thank you for your time.

Telephone:

This is James. I am kind of confused about the testing and everything because the legislature has actually in some areas around freeways, there's a freeway adjacent advisory notice saying that if you're close to these areas, within 500 feet to 1,000 feet, that you may get asthma, all kinds of bad health issues. But yet you don't have that around the Airport. You don't see that. So I'm thinking they've already probably tested the area and found it wasn't of any concern. If just when you're surrounded by freeways, that's where the concern is. And you also have a walk path right by the Airport. That was just recently put in. Why weren't those concerns brought up when that went in? I have more questions than I have answers. That's all I have. Thank you.

Imelda:

I've done a lot of work in Pacoima over the years, live very close to the Airport, grew up seeing the Airport, didn't get to ever walk into the Airport until I was maybe 21 years old and I found out that there was a bar on-site, to be quite honest, that was my first experience with Whiteman Airport. A bar that's no longer there. Based on everything I'm hearing, I just wanted to mention to the public and to the committee, the history that this region has had with Public Works hasn't always been the best. It took them 10 years to build out a positive project out here. Which is the Sun Valley Watershed project that is only this year finally getting some construction attention, where the construction project is going to fix the flooding that happens in Sun Valley. Ten years to get that done. Sometimes I wonder if it was ever going to get done place if voters hadn't said let's tax ourselves and pass Measure W. It took a whole generation to be able to get something positive built in this community by this department. I only wanted to bring up that story to create some cognizance and hopefully some empowerment to the community that process is very important when investments this big or changes can happen to the community, and I don't think the process has been too great thus far. I remember being

right out of college and finding out Whiteman Airport wanted to expand, and they did nothing for outreach except put an agenda up in their own cafeteria. So, I hope that what happened 10 years ago doesn't continue to happen today with whatever ends up happening with this Airport in the next 5-10 years. But I do hope that Public Works steps up to the plate and really invests in the necessary research and necessary community outreach to make sure that they reach a balance. I'm glad this committee put together in first place, because it's the first step to making sure that the process is getting started and being held accountable. And I really hope that agendas can start to include objectives per meeting, expected timelines, more thorough and more methodical and very honest with what's next. And the community engagement needs to be intentional. You have to talk to people who live there. People who deal with the noise every day. A lot of talk about pollution, let's talk about the noise. Let's talk about the lack of other infrastructure. Once upon a time there wasn't a sidewalk there and now there is and that sidewalk has lights and that sidewalk has trees. To my surprise, this is me complaining as a resident, the trees are dying because no one is invested in actually watering the trees. The neglect continues, even when investments are made. I hope everyone here continues to stay engaged and continues to push Public Works to be transparent. Let's also remember our current Board of Supervisor will not be running for re-election. We have to make sure whoever runs for the position of Supervisorial District 3 understands this is a big project in the area and we need to know where they stand.

Ceci:

My name is Ceci, and I've been affiliated with Whiteman Airport for 46 years. I learned to fly at Whiteman in 1975, and it totally changed my life for the better, it gave me a fulfilling and lifelong passion. And I've been heavily involved in the aviation community sharing that passion, particularly with young people. I even became a flight instructor so I could be a more effective mentor. I've been blessed to be able to help teenagers who want to learn how to fly, women and girls, and others pursue their dreams and win scholarships for college and flight training. A number are from the local community and are professionals now. This Airport is a valuable resource which provides opportunities, education and safety to the whole community of Pacoima and the whole Valley. And speaking to that community and to all who will be on your outreach activities, I invite you to sincerely please attend our open house on September 25 and so you can learn more about the Airport and the valuable and educational programs. Let me list some of the programs. You already know about the free Young Eagle flights. I have flown almost 900 children, I'd say half of them are from this community, from this area. The Aviation Explorer Program, there are two of them, we're lucky to have two at the Airport, is for teenagers and provides free ground instruction, low-cost flight training and career guidance. And many of our graduates, 37 of them in fact, got their pilots license. And there many who have very wonderful jobs, like air traffic controllers, airline pilots,

aircraft maintenance, avionics technician. Others fly for personal business or charitable activities. Do you know we have scouting merit badges here? We'd love you to bring your scout and other groups to have educational programs to learn about flying, learn about the Airport. The EA has the build a plane project which will be starting pretty soon. And girls, we want the girls to come meet the 99s. The 99s are women pilots. And we want to show them they too can reach their dreams through aviation. We have many female role models at Whiteman Airport. There's also the Civil Air Patrol Cadet program, and they have many, many learning programs. The Civil Air Patrol is the civilian branch of the Air Force. There are flight training schools and businesses. And I encourage you to take tours of the Airport, and I was happy to hear that a tour program is being set up. Visit the Fire Department, search and rescue helicopter base, aviation businesses, air traffic control tower, the Airport Administration offices and ask about jobs and career opportunities. There are thousands and thousands of jobs opening up around the world in aviation, and the Whiteman Airport can help your youth get to those jobs. Also, have your local high school look into the free STEM curriculum from the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA). This curriculum focuses on aviation and STEM (that's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in every subject. It's designed to educate students about these unlimited opportunities, which are all around the world. We'll let you when the Van Nuys Airport Career Day comes up next April that talks about a lot of jobs that are opening up. There will be Career Day in October at Camarillo Airport. Please help protect this valuable resource for you and your children. And I urge you to jump at the chance to help your youth meet the industry need for thousands of pilots and mechanics. Do note the industry welcomes more unrepresented people. Luckily, many of our Explorers are Hispanic. I have mentored a number of them. I'm so proud to know these kids and see how they focus and have changed their lives because of the Explorer Aviation program at the Airport. We welcome you wholeheartedly to participate in the Whiteman Airport and their amazing educational programs. Don't forget September 25 and help spread the word. Thank you.

David:

My name's David. I'm a recent graduate from California State University Northridge, where I graduated with a degree in environmental and occupational health and a minor in Geographic and Information Systems. I also spent a lot of time at UCLA researching the molecular toxicology behind fine particulate matter inhalation and morbidity. I have a strong background in air pollution and air pollution dynamics, and I think it's really great that we're implementing this air research project within the Whiteman Airport. Recently I had the opportunity to do a research project with the National Institute of Health to research the impact the Whiteman Airport and various pollution sources have on the effect of air pollution on Pacoima. And I found out near the Whiteman Airport there's so much air pollution within that area. And I think it's really crazy how we're

talking about resources the Whiteman Airport provides. I think the only resource the Whiteman Airport provides I've seen is pollution and noise pollution. Doing this research project I got to work with the youth and it breaks my heart to see how these youth have just had to live with the Whiteman Airport and had to live with all these different sorts of pollution. That's something you all should consider. It's not just about resources our community hasn't had access to. We're talking about all these things, where were these things years ago? I think that's really interesting that we're just starting to bring it up now. I don't see how any of these resources are benefiting the residents of Pacoima. I don't know anyone who owns a plane in Pacoima, I don't know anyone who owns a plane. Who is this really benefitting? It's not benefitting us. As a result, we're plaguing our skies with air pollution and creating so much noise pollution. That's why I'm here to support the shutdown of Whiteman Airport.

Walter:

My name is Walter, and I'm a resident here in Pacoima, recently graduated from law school. I have several points I'd like to make starting off first and foremost by expressing my concern that at present, due to a number of factors, there isn't a vigorous enough debate in terms of representation from community members. Obviously, this is a very difficult situation seeing as how this is a working-class community and a lot of folks here are working well into the night so I think assumptions ought not to be made. Specifically, I know suggestions have been made in terms of putting up posters and that's good and all. Something to consider as well is some kind of door-knocking, canvassing specifically within the 2-3 mile radius of the Airport, those are the folks who are directly impacted by it. I live within that radius so I know if there were to be that sort of program, we'd have greater representation in terms of that perspective. I worry, seeing as somebody who is still relatively young and relatively media savvy, that at present, the folks who want the airport to stay, if you look at just about any post regarding Whiteman Airport, whether it's from Council Woman Monica Rodriguez or another elected official, and it seems to me that the folks from the Airport they have some kind of means of quickly notifying each other whenever it is a post is made about Whiteman Airport and really criticizing the elected official for the decision, for the post, or criticizing others who want it to be shut down. And that worries me, at the end of the day, what's happens on social media is not reflective of what's going on the ground, the impact that's felt here. I've had the privilege of living throughout the country, in many different places, and it's only here in my hometown of Pacoima where about every single hour there's a darn airplane flying over my head. It's unacceptable. Relatedly, I want to make the best out of my time here, there's been a couple of individuals who cast doubts on tests. Having worked with another environmental justice organization in Chicago, that's a common strategy. The fact there's some individuals attest to being a lot of pollution and not being able to tell what's coming from the Airport or not, that speaks volumes onto its own. Pacoima is, in

fact, an extraordinary forgotten and dumpster in terms of environmental pollutants and I think that's worth considering. The fact that these individuals claim that you might not be able to tell where it is the pollution comes from and that's telling on its own. At the end of the day, science is imperfect as we're learning right now through COVID. And I think it's important that we put our trust in this consultant, obviously with due measure but that's something I wanted to make sure to say.

James:

I'm James, I'm the Deputy Commander of Squadron 137 of the Civil Air Patrol. I'm also the past Airport manager, and I'm the chair of the Airport open house committee. First, I wanted to say I look forward to working with all the nonprofits in the Pacoima area. Civil Air Patrol has been at the Whiteman Airport since it opened 75 years ago. And we've been providing services to the community throughout that time. Things like the '71 earthquake, we responded to it to help in the recovery from it, the '94 earthquake, we responded. We provide a lot of services, not just to local area but community-wide. Our squadron, Squadron 137, has been at the Airport for over 30 years. And, as was mentioned earlier, we're a leadership development program with a focus on aerospace education and we introduce young people to aviation, aerospace and the careers that are available. And we also provide them leadership training and, of late, within the last couple of years, we've been able to provide scholarships towards flight training as well. About 30% of my cadets are from the northeast San Fernando Valley area and that's a hard area to identify because if you go to LAUSD, you'll find Pacoima, the majority of it, is in the northwest district of LAUSD. I've been working with the northeast district which covers Arleta, Sun Valley, Lake View Terrace, sort of the area all around except for Pacoima, working with them trying to reach out to schools in the area. And I'm going to be working with the northwest district once the school year starts, reaching out to invite them to the Airport, I've provided in the past tours of the Airport. I have been working diligently to provide materials to the schools on aerospace education, about what the Airport has to offer them, what Civil Air Patrol has to offer them. Most of these are free of charge or extremely inexpensive. Our program is really dedicated to developing young people and turning them into aerospace leaders of tomorrow, that's our mandate from Congress. I listened to what was said about the open house for people talking about us reaching out to the community and we have. We've reached out to local restaurants to see if they'd be interested to coming to the open house and providing food to the community to be able to show what it is they have to offer to the community in the way of their foods and businesses. We're always looking for ways to get the community involved.

Jalon:

I'm a pilot with a plane at Whiteman Airport. Amongst all of the aircraft and various

business and services based at the Whiteman Airport, as was just mentioned by the previous speaker, the Civil Air Patrol is one located there. For those of you not familiar with the Civil Air Patrol, it was formally created in 1941 and is the auxiliary of the United States Air Force. It is assigned three missions: emergency services, which includes search and rescue and disaster relief, aerospace education for the public, and cadet programs for teenagers. It's 60,000 members are all volunteers. This committee has been formed around a call by LA City Councilman Monica Rodriguez to shut down Whiteman Airport because a Civil Air Patrol plane crashed last November 2020 resulting in the death of a Civil Air Patrolman only. I think it's reprehensible and downright disgusting, truthfully, for Monica Rodriguez, Pacoima Beautiful and anyone else on the CAC in favor of closing Whiteman Airport to seize on the death of a pilot serving the community as a rallying cry to shut down this Airport and furthermore to do so by falsely claiming shutting down the airport will economically benefit the community, beautify the area or make the area more environmentally secure. I would also suggest looking behind the claims from the City Councilwoman, Pacoima Beautiful or anyone else in favor of this action who may economically benefit from the closure and may be pandering to developers. I doubt their sincerity to the community when there are already a number of areas in Pacoima that should be evaluated for repurposing and redevelopment. For example, look at the numerous vacant retail spaces around the city already, such as the large lot on the northwest corner of Osborne and Laurel Canyon. It's a huge, abandoned, vacant, dilapidated retail space that's an eyesore in the Pacoima community, encouraging vagrants and gangs to loiter there. I see it every time I drive to Whiteman Airport. Why aren't areas like this looking to be improved by the CAC or why isn't Pacoima Beautiful concentrating on such spaces? How many used car lot businesses are in the area, which are known businesses for perpetrating deceptive and often unlawful practices on unsophisticated buyers? There are 13 in Pacoima and just over city limits in Arleta alone. In fact, there's one directly across from the Airport, off Osborne. Why isn't this land or those revenues being compared to Whiteman Airport as possibly being repurposed? How many check cashing businesses and lending businesses are in the Pacoima area? If you didn't know, there's 15, including one in a new retail space just built recently across the street from the entrance of Whiteman Airport. Does the Pacoima community really need more retail space that has such businesses? How many environmentally unfriendly industrial businesses are there in Pacoima? I know for a fact Pacoima Beautiful could provide statistics on how many there are.

Tina:

I am a newer pilot at Whiteman Airport, and I am a flight instructor. I am very proud to say that my current group of flight students are all folks who otherwise would not have ever expected to be pilots, they're all in their 20s. Mr. Carrillo has aspirations to be a bush pilot and to serve remote areas with supplies. He grew up near El Monte Airport

and never dreamed he could be a pilot. Mr. Patron wants to be a cargo pilot and as we saw in the pandemic, cargo services were key in bringing not only items for those trapped indoors during the pandemic but also servicing all sorts of cargo flying far and wide all over the world. Mr. Gutierrez wants to be a lifelong educator in aeronautics and Ms. Jimenez, who is currently a flight attendant for Sky West, wants to someday become a captain for Sky West. I'm so proud to see these young people coming up through the ranks. And yet, small airport after small airport continues to be under threat, many times when they were long-standing airports, 75 years, 100 years, etc., and we can't keep closing their classroom. One of the things I'm looking forward to that was brought up the last meeting especially, was indeed the lack of outreach and the need to communicate to the community much more. So I think that we will be able to affect some positive change and also if anyone likes fire suppression, EMS support, going to see family, whether it be for pleasure or urgent needs, family emergencies, or for that matter just likes to take vacations, we have to train these people somewhere. And I would just implore these attendees to just consider that even though often times we don't often share what's it is going on with these flights many times, as our battalion chief will attest to, he is one of the key folks who is putting out fires potentially for the surrounding hill areas in our community. Thank you all for the ability to speak and also encourage that we press on with the educational needs of the surrounding community. Glendale Community College is also one of those schools that provides low-cost training to some of these young people. I hope we can meet some happy medium and be able to serve both the needs of the community as well as the needs of the pilot community. Thank you very much.

Paul:

I live on Gain Street, a cul de sac, and from my backyard I oversee the Airport, that little private back road that we all use. And I work in my studio at the house. And I don't feel that there's this great noise pollution or air pollution. I mean, I'm out in my backyard working out, it's all very clear. I don't see a lot of activity going in and out of the airport. I just feel there's something going on here that strikes me as a little bit nasty. I see what's happening with people on your committee that want to close down the Airport as a land grab to make money for some developer to put in Starbucks and all this other stuff. I also see, just recently in Germany, near the Belgium border, they had those horrible floods and where those people had to go during those floods, if you saw any of that footage, it was incredibly nasty and terrible. Where they had to go for triage and safety was a car racing track, where people went to get some sort of relief. And I also believe, that here we are in California, and we've been very lucky here in Los Angeles to not have a big earthquake since 1992, 1993. I'm feeling that if the roads get shut down on San Fernando or Osborne or wherever, we're going to need that space at the airport for people to survive. We're seeing across the country all sorts of tragic events happening.

And I feel that it's only a matter of time before something nasty like that happens here, it's just the way the world is going. And we can do so much at Hansen Dam and that's great but I think that if we're really in trouble we'll need aircraft, like helicopters and such, to bring supplies in and out. And I just feel that this whole thing about the air pollution and such just doesn't ring true to me. If that's the case, why doesn't somebody shut down Burbank Airport or Van Nuys? They have more traffic than here. I mean, I live here, and I'm telling you, I don't see these problems. And I do go to the Airport when they have open house, and they do have signs up there, and I do not own an airplane.