

**Re-envisioning Whiteman Airport Community Advisory Committee Meeting:
Public Comments, November 18, 2022**

Matthew Stone:

Good evening everyone. I'm Matthew, a pilot long familiar with Whiteman's operations and opportunities. The effort to close the airport is a terrible idea that only hurts the community. Closing it would take its first responders and educators away stripping the community of the safety and schools they provide. Community support for keeping the airport in public forums like this has been tremendous. Earlier this month, the Sun Valley area neighborhood council even voted to praise the airport for all its benefits. Even so, the airport does have its detractors with the Pacoima Beautiful seeming to be the most vocal. Looking at news reports on last year's tragedy and research for this meeting, I did find an interesting piece of history. In LA Times news article dated 11-20-2020, Veronica Padilla reported that Pacoima Beautiful had opposed changes proposed to the airport a decade ago, including something called Alternative 3. Alternative 3 was a proposed change that would enhance safety by building runway safety areas.

And as it happens, the site of last year's tragedy where that poor civil air patrol pilot was cut down on his return flight of a mission, that was inside one of those areas. Now, circling back to something that came up in the very beginning of this meeting, I wanted to say something very clear. Public criticism of public figures, public activities is not character assassination. CAC members seated here act as public officials, criticism should be expected and respected. It is a freedom of speech matter. Criticism is par for the course here and going through your records is not character assassination. If you feel that going through your record is character assassination perhaps you regret what you have done in the past, but you shouldn't complain about critics in this manner, it's rather silly. As far as Mr. Arias' inquiries on the other proposed uses for the land, here's two I found. Calling it the most developable piece of property in the valley. Pacoima Beautiful proposed a 1000 affordable homes, as well as industrial use. Now, if an environmental justice group suggests this, what must developers think of the land? What do the Real Estate Boys think of a land piece that is valued at something like \$55 million in the middle of the valley with... it's rather silly to even suggest that other uses of the land will be Parkland. Does anyone actually believe that the land will be left alone by real estate developers? Come on. We all know that's not going to happen.

Now online, if you look at public comments from the public. The fact is, is that many people in the neighborhood fear that they will be gentrified out of their homes, if the airport is gotten rid of. And considering all this development, and the potential for it, is a very reasonable fear on their part. I just don't understand how the people professing that these alternate uses can look past the many things that the airport does for the community, from firefighting, to flight training, to education, to disaster preparedness. How you guys can think that an alternate

use like a Burger King or a Taco Bell being put there, is a better use for the land than the airport is.

As for the suggestion of affordable homes. How do you figure that's going to work out with pollution? Why do you think that the community will be accepting of such things, when they already are deeply critical of the incumbent Councilwoman over her handling the homeless crisis? What makes you believe that the community is on your side when there is so much opposition to close your efforts, and so much support for keeping the airport? Do you honestly think that the community supports closure when so many, obviously oppose it? There's been hardly any support evidence for closure in meetings like this, except from certain groups like Pacoima Beautiful.

Mark:

Thank you for letting me speak. I feel the term Reimagine Whiteman Airport is a bit of a misnomer. It seems to me, the people behind that phrase are imagining the Whiteman Airport being closed, and something else being put in its place. Now, I agree that there are many things that Pacoima could benefit from. Theaters were mentioned, parks were mentioned. That's all great. But to destroy an airport and imply that that's the only way that Pacoima can get such things. It's true and misleading. This airport is not just for Pacoima, this is a county airport. And I don't want to go over, the gentleman before me spoke very eloquently about the benefits of the airport. I've been there many times. I've seen young children literally building an airplane.

I've seen people go up in planes. I met an 18 year old, Hispanic pilot. I could go on and on. But to suggest that the airport should be closed because they are not skilled at outreach, is a little like throwing the baby out with the bath water. Do they need to practice better outreach? Sure they do. But that's not grounds for even discussing the closing of a community airport. So in closing, I would just like to know, who picked this community advisory committee? Was this half county and half District 7? What are the numbers of the people that are on there? I just would like to know if any of these people have stated their opposition to the airport, or their desire to close the airport publicly, before this whole discussion has even been completed.

That seems a little biased to me. I have heard some people talking about it on social media, I've heard them in person. So let's really do have a discussion. Let's really do have a respectful discussion based on real statistics, real studies. Not studies that haven't been completed yet, or even begun. And really talk about the Whiteman Airport and it's right to remain where it is. And let's also talk about open space, and what our communities need. Thank you very much.

X5417:

Well, I'd like to say that safety is the paramount issue here. This is what the community should be concerned about. And they're rightfully so if an accident happened, they need to know why it

happened, and what mistake were made. So they can be rectified. And also they need to be investigated. And that needs to be presented to the advisory board, and to the community. So they can see what the risks are and the benefits. And obviously the benefits seem to outweigh the risks at this point. One of the CAC members mentioned that they wanted to put a park there. I don't think that would be a good idea. Because Hansen Dam park right now is very in need of a lot of repair right now. I mean, there's graffiti everywhere. I mean, the people have disrespected that park. And until that people can take pride in their park, and keep it clean. I don't see any point in having another park.

And also they mentioned something about a multiplier factor as far as economically. That is true, that a lot of the people that do go to the airport, they would contribute to the local economy; by going to Costco, by going to Lowe's to get materials and things. I mean, it's as long as we keep the area surrounding it safe. That's the way we're going to bring more people in, and more people are going to be shopping locally, and spending money in the community. But if they don't feel that it's safe, then they're not going to come and they're not going to stay. And it's up to us to keep it safe, it's up to us to take responsibility. And not have all this negative environment around the airport. Because you have a lot of homeless. You have a lot of people stealing things. Stealing copper from the lights, so the lights go out. I mean, it's the surrounding environment that we need to take care of. And that's my comment. Thank you.

Burton:

Okay. Hi, my name's Burton. I live in Arleta, right next door. Okay, you can hear me, all right. Just some comments that come up earlier in the discussion with the members. The airport itself is right next to a major railroad line. Okay? And it looks like all adjacent properties to the railroad are either industrial or commercial. So when we're talking about, if there's mentioned about things like parks, or open space, and things like that. Right next to the park maybe that's not really a good open space. But the fact is Jessup Park is right next door to the airport. There is a park there already, right there, and back. As well as the one mentioned earlier, Hanson Dam.

So some forms of open space also probably wouldn't generate income for the community as far as theaters or housing. That rail line is just too noisy for those types of uses. I just want to encourage you as a committee to, as you're considering these things, not to be distracted by rhetoric that might come up, that's designed to cover up an underlying factor, that special interest developers have their own eyes on this big block of property. And they're waiting to jump in with their own plans, and wanting to first shut down and take away Whiteman Airport. Which has been there since 1946. A longstanding icon and resource in the San Fernando Valley. So committee please consider and find plans to improve and expand the resources of Whiteman Airport. Not take it away. Thank you so much for your consideration. I'm finished.

John:

Okay, wonderful! Well, thank you first of all, for allowing me to speak. With regard to solving the specific problem of noise and safety, my fellow pilots and myself have been looking into the problem that the community faces. And I've actually spent a fair amount of time on Sutter Avenue under the narrow corridor of short final to the runway, the north end of the airport. Where they had an unfortunate accident happened. And it is certainly stressful. I have to agree from a noise standpoint of watching planes land right over your head. Where it feels like you can almost get a haircut. That's unnerving.

And this is not an unusual problem for local airports. And many other airports have implemented their own safety, and noise abatement procedures. That seem to work to the satisfaction of the local community. And I spent some time talking to a couple of the neighbors there, including the lovely woman who placed the flower Memorial for the down pilot. She was very gracious and very kind. So it motivated myself and some others to come up with some ways of increasing safety and reducing the noise at a Whiteman.

And I've tried this myself. I'm a pilot at Whiteman, a member of the association. If we increase the altitude a bit on short final, it actually reduces the noise by over half, at least. That's what I could tell from the ground. And it adds a very large margin of safety. And we land further down the runway, but Whiteman can certainly accommodate that in the type of airplanes we have here. And the point is to adopt a problem solving mindsets. This approach has been very successful at other airports. So I'll be mercifully brief here. In short, I mean, the problem isn't just that wouldn't, if we- (call briefly dropped)

Okay. Well, I'll just finish up here. I don't know why it cut off, but the traffic at Whiteman was going to be rerouted. It's not going to disappear. And it's going to increase the air traffic management workload at these other airports. Which is already high. And I'm sure it goes without saying, you can only push that envelope so far. The problem gets worse with every small airport that closes. And so the city representatives in surrounding districts may want to take that into consideration. And actually help us solve the problem, rather than just eliminate the airport. As has been said, there are great advantages to having an airport there. And that's about it. Sorry for the audio problems, that they may be at my end.

X7882:

Hi, thank you. I'm just going to turn down the volume on my computer. My name is Victoria. I live in San Fernando. I grew up in Sun Valley. I just also wanted to comment that I know there's been a lot of criticism, and probably justifiably that there's been poor outreach from Whiteman Airport about all the programs that they provide. And my feeling was similar to the earlier speaker. That just because there's poor outreach doesn't mean we get rid of the wonderful programs. So if my children can learn how to fly a plane, and build a plane, and get their pilots license. And the children our community can learn these skills, and these trades, and these careers for free. Why would we get rid of that? I would say we demand better outreach, and we demand more coordination between Whiteman and the community.

Also, there's a lot of great ideas of things we can improve Whiteman with. And I think a wonderful restaurant to take your family to. That Santa Monica has airport and museum. It could be even native culture. What we want in the community, it doesn't mean we could tear down the airport. So I'm just a little concerned that it's, I don't even get where that's coming from. I think that it sounds here like people are working together, and are willing to work together to see how we can improve this, and make it better for the community. But it seems like we have a little jewel here. That we can get at our kids amazing careers, and amazing opportunities, and amazing skills if it's done right.

I also want to thank, I know Pacoima Beautiful sounds like they're so strong opposed to this. But thank you for identifying yourself as affiliate with Pacoima Beautiful, so I know where you're coming from. And thank you for the pilots who work at Whiteman for identifying yourself. Every perspective is valid. And I'm glad that no one is trying to be sneaky, and not saying their affiliation. So I do appreciate that. But also the help that for the fires, or the medical, charities that are going on. How can we expand that? Can we do maybe a firefighter cadets program there? I just think there's a lot of options, and it doesn't mean closing down the airport. Thank you.

Elisa:

Hi, good evening, everyone. I'm opposed to closing the airport. I live four blocks away from it. I'm so proud of everything that they do and why want to close the airport for open space when we have Ritchie Valens, Hansen Dam, Robert Jessup Park? Not only that, what the airport is doing, it's giving an opportunity to the youth that lives in my community. An opportunity to have a really great career. Not only that, the train, how many lives has it taken? And we're going to put a railroad track down Venice. That makes no sense. It's not fair that they want to close the airport because they're not doing a really good job in outreach. Okay? It's all of our faults also. It takes a two way street to knock on their door and say, "Hey, why haven't you guys done this?"

This is not fair and it's not correct, what? Trying to close it. And I don't think it's fair that Monica Rodriguez got to choose half of the committee when she's want to close it. It's not fair, and it's not right, and it's not correct. Now we can talk about the tar company on San Fernando. Every day at 10:30, it smells really bad. We have other things now, if you guys want to close the airport and put section eight homes. We're never going to have good businesses; trader Joe's, grocery store. We're not going to be able to have that, because they're not going to want to come to a community that only has section eight homes. I'm asking the committee, don't close it. Thank you.

John:

Honorable committee members you may have heard there was a protest staged by Pacoima Beautiful at the airport, September 25th. Now, those who saw it have told me there were roughly 20 young protestors carrying printed signs, calling for the closure of the airport. Now,

meantime, at exactly the same time on the airport. A grand total of 59 young people lined up to take free rides with a generous pilots of the EAA Young Eagles Program, just as they have for many years. You can of course, draw your own conclusions about those numbers.

And there's one more thing I'd like to point out as this committee consider his ways to reimagine Whiteman Airport. In recent meetings of the CAC, members of Pacoima Beautiful have referred to Whiteman as a playground for rich people, who don't live in the neighborhood. Well, I'd like to address that issue. The truth is that anyone who can afford a car can actually afford an airplane. Mine costs me \$20,000 to be Frank. Now, admittedly, it's an old bird flown by many others, for many decades before me. But it is my airplane. And it takes me up in the sky where the earth believe me, becomes a beautiful place to live. Mountains, rivers, oceans, deserts, all remind me how lucky I am to be on this planet. I say that experience is available and even affordable to anyone in Pacoima. The opportunity to get involved in aviation is open to absolutely anyone who wants it. And that's the trick, they have to want it.

We have just lost our place here. I apologize. Oh, yes, I'm sorry. And the time is ticking. Or the point I wanted to make was that the experience is available to anyone who wants it. The door is particularly open. The door to aviation is open to young people. It's a chance for them to make something of themselves in an industry that is now hungry for new people, especially pilots. We all remember watching Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos after their flights into space last July. And then last months, William Shatner flew into space with the Blue Origin. I watched them on TV as they stepped out and tried to describe the feeling. And I say to you tonight, the thrill, the joy, the feeling of accomplishment are exactly what I feel just a mile up in my little tailor craft airplane. I would love see everyone in Pacoima share that joy. Thank you for listening. I appreciate this opportunity to talk.

Della:

Hi. I apologize. My name is Della. I am on a different account. But hi, again, my name is Della Rodriguez. I'm a community organizer with Pacoima Beautiful. And I'm in support of closing the airport. I am also a Pacoima resident and was a Pacoima youth who grew up right next to the airport. To me, re-imagining the airport as opening space for reparations to the community of Pacoima and the north east San Fernando Valley, who have carried the hardest burdens that the hardest effects, and burdens of the day-to-day operations of Whiteman Airport. The history of redlining and placement of industries like Whiteman Airport is not a coincidence. And the airport existed on privately owned land before LA county owned it. And it now exist as an industrial park that hosts over 600 private aircraft.

The benefits of the airport does not outweigh the risks of the social determinants of health of Pacoima residents, and the surrounding community in the Northeast, San Fernando valley. Social determinants of health include physical health and mental health, as well as environmental health. And mental health, and environmental health is a fundamental factor of health and quality of life. We are here to support our community members. I am here as a

community member, pleading to the county to please install noise canceling windows, to help the community take that burden away of having to deal with those airplanes landing and flying above their homes. I live right near the airport as well, and I hear the constant flights early in the morning when I wake up. And it's a constant stress of noise pollution.

So we also please demand that you put a noise pollution strategy in place. So that we are not hearing flights coming out early in the morning and late at night, near 8:00 PM at this time as well. So thank you so much for the time and opportunity for public comment. I really hope that we could get some noise canceling windows in place, as well as noise canceling opportunity, excuse me, for other to be a curfew on noise pollution. And thank you for your time. That is all. Thank you.

Craig:

Okay, thank you. I had a couple comments here. Just quickly, one of the things that's come up in meetings with other aviation organizations. Is the fact that the Whiteman Airport has taken grant money from the FAA, and can't legally close the airport for at least 20 years. I'd like to know what the committee's proposal is to get around that problem. Also, as I understand that the airport was deeded to the county under the terms that it remained open and operating as an airport. I'd like to know the tax proposal is to deal with that legal issue.

It's all well and good to talk about re-envisioning and grand plans. But if you can't legally close the airport in the near term, what's the strategy for dealing with that issue? From one of the other members brought up the fact that you need more open space in Pacoima. Well, doesn't Hansen Dam have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of acres of open space directly, adjacent to the airport? It seems like there's a lot of open space to utilize in the area besides Whiteman Airport.

The third thing I wanted to mention was, really taking the opportunity to build on the asset that you have here. As other public commenters have stated, you really have a unique opportunity here, and a unique asset that you can leverage in the community for jobs, for job training, for education, for recreation, and many other activities that can't be done any place else. The fact is there will never be another airport opened inside the city of Los Angeles.

So closing an airport is extremely, extremely shortsighted. There's a lot of opportunities to do something in this airport. And I think the CAC should focus their attention on ways to improve the airport, extend outreach, and build upon this unique asset that exists in your neighborhood, in no place else. And that's all I have to saying. Thank you very much.

Shelly:

Yes, this is Shelly. I'm with Whiteman Airport Association. The last time one of the ladies was talking, and she said that we don't do outreach to the schools, and things like that, she said like Pacoima Beautiful does. But she doesn't realize, or maybe all of you don't realize Pacoima

Beautiful pays their people to do this. Some of them are on salaries. And at our airport, we have the EAA Young Eagle Program that provides free rides for kids. All those pilots use their own airplane, use their own gas, and use their own time. No one in that thing gets paid. We all do it for free.

The Civil Air Patrol is part of the Air Force. They're creating good citizens through aviation. None of those people get paid. None of the Civil Air Patrol people that work at our airport get paid. They are all volunteers. Aviation Explorer Squadron 3 and Aviation Explorer Group 747. All their advisors and their instructors do everything for free. Aircraft build project, helping kids learn, all the supplies, and the pilots that help the kids learn how to build an airplane. Do it for free. No one gets paid. The Girl Scout Badge Project, supported by the 99s. All of them, no one gets paid.

We all do it because we love aviation. We love kids. And we like to donate our time. All of the young Eagles Programs, the fuel is so expensive. And the men and women pilots, lovingly donate their time, and the gas, and everything. So that's what I was saying. We don't have an outreach program, because we're all volunteers. And we all work, and we do this out of the goodness of our heart and we love aviation. Thank you.

Jalon:

Hello. This is Jalon. I am a pilot who has a plane at Whiteman Airport. I've spoken previously about how important it is to yes, please re-envision the airport. And again, what I mean by that is to bring the community even more fully into the airport with better viewing spaces to watch planes land and take off, better restaurants. And just to reiterate what so many others have said already, there are so many of us that do offer free rides, volunteer our time, volunteer our finances indirectly through again the fuel that it costs and the maintenance it costs for us to fly the youth around. We also benefit the area indirectly by every time we come there. Again, many of us stop and shop at Target, Costco, buy the wares from vendors off the streets, roll up to one of the local taco stands on the sidewalk and enjoy a couple horchata and a taco.

I mean, we have embraced the Pacoima community and the Whiteman Airport, because for many of us it's a place we frequent regularly. I hope that the CAC is objective here. I know that many people on the committee have expressed being in favor of closing the airport. And I hope that our comments here tonight and in past meetings and in future meetings are heard with an objective, open mind. Because again, as so many have said, the airport is a gem that cannot be replaced. It seems too that so many in the community when I look on the Facebook pages and the Change.org petitions, so many of the locals of Pacoima, meaning those that actually live and reside around the airport, are in favor of keeping the airport not closing it. So I really hope that many of the CAC members again are actually talking to the community and not just looking at Whiteman as a land grab and a development opportunity for their own greed.

I really hope again, that groups like Pacoima Beautiful are really acting towards the benefit of beautifying Pacoima. I mean, gosh, there's already so many areas there in that could be beautified, taking out the airport isn't one way do that. I'd also just like to comment on one girl that talked about noise pollution in the neighborhood. Again, I live right under the flight path of Burbank Airport. We can't just go closing every airport because some of us are inconvenienced by noise. I chose to move to this area. The airport was here before me as was Whiteman I'm sure there before her.

We cannot close all the local airports across this country because some of us have chosen to move into those neighborhoods. It's not about redlining and disenfranchisement. We chose to move to these areas. And again, we may not at times like planes flying over our head, but we have to look past ourselves, our nimbyism and look towards the greater good of our community. Again, I am not a fan of being a nimby and anyway... Keep Whiteman airport open please. Be objective in your thoughtfulness towards this process. Thank you.

Juan:

Hey, so I apologize. I heard about this meeting last minute, so I didn't hear all of it but I still wanted to say my little rant I guess on this topic. Pacoima really basically has two major gems, the airport and Hansen Dam. To get rid of one of those just like that on the whim based on knee jerk, emotional reaction I think is really not what we expect out of our elected officials, as well as our community organizations that are here to supposedly be the... Were elected and chosen to be the voice and reason for us and speak for the people. I don't hear the elected officials of Pacoima Beautiful saying that they should shut down the train tracks when someone commits suicide on the tracks, right?

I don't hear any commotions when those trucks start doing donuts in our intersections and putting a lot of people, properties and themselves in danger. I don't hear that. I don't hear them saying anything. Same with all of the car shops and mechanic shops that are on San Fernando. That's supposed to be our mile. It's supposed to be a place of culture, of food, a place for business. And all the businesses are providing... All they're doing is really just providing pollution, especially with the spray painting, the sanding, the primary, the cutting of granite, all that is creating I think more pollution than what the airplanes ever do. Not to mention whenever it rains, all the oil that spills into the ground and into our spreading grounds.

I'm a man of reason. I'm comfortable with changing my stance on an issue if I'm introduced to actual logical common sense, facts and points. And I think that closing down an airport, because one of the pilots tragically passed away is a knee jerk reaction. And I don't think it's very well thought out. I think that some of the actions that are coming out of this is I think all politically motivated. I don't know if Pacoima Beautiful is still paying rent. I think they're still being free in city hall. All these people that I just heard that are on this committee, they've already said what their stance is and I don't think they're going to change. So I think it's very sad that they already know what they're going to vote. And this is just a waste of time just so they

could say, "Well, we heard the community and we're still going to get rid of it." And it's just sad because our parents left the country for corruption and now their kids come to this country and are doing the same thing.

Tom:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the committee. I'm a member of EAA Chapter 40 in a private pilot. And I would like to remind everybody what they already know that aviation careers are good, rewarding, high paying careers. I work frequently with the EAA Young Eagles program, and it's very rewarding to talk to the parents who are bringing their children to expose them to the possibility of an aviation career. And I like to remind everyone there are at least three groups at Whiteman Airport offering either low cost or free flight instruction. There's the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron 137, there's the Aviation Explorer Post 747, the Aviation Explorer Post 3, the Kittyhawk Squadron. They all offer free and/or low cost flight training. In addition, we have the San Fernando Valley 99s which is a group representing women in aviation. We have the EAA Young Eagles program that I've already mentioned, and the EAA is presently building an airplane with youth from the community in our hangar at Whiteman airport.

Now, I realize that the outreach by the various groups can be improved. I know that everyone who should be reached is not being reached. I have a specific example that I'd like to go through. There is a young woman, I know the name Jen. I've never met her except I read her editorial in the San Fernando Valley Sun. In that editorial she points out she's never been on the airport. She had not heard of the Young Eagles free introductory flights. That is an example of how the youth outreach groups need to do a better job of outreach. In my opinion, a wonderful thing would be if Jen could meet some of the female members of our organizations, go on an airport tour, including the tower, an introductory flight participate in the airplane building. I think a wonderful outcome would be if Jen could help build an airplane that eventually she could fly herself. This whole thing of providing outreach to youth is extremely important, and that would be lost if we no longer had an airport in the community. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak to the group this evening.

Lisa:

Hey, this is Lisa. I'm the president of the Aviation Explorers program and the advisor of the Aviation Explorer Post 747. I'm also a pilot, but beyond that, I'm a mother of seven and a grandmother of 13, and I'm a mother of a special needs child who's severely disabled. And I just want to emphasize that it's because of Whiteman Airport, that at the age of 57, I was able to start my training and learn how to fly, become a commercial instrument rate at single engine land pilot. But also to be able to be a part of and become leader of the Explorer program where we can expose our youth in the community to futures in aviation. And I'm also an EAA pilot. I've flown 320 kids out of Whiteman Airport in the last eight years since I've my private pilot.

And I'd just like to say that we are working on our outreach. We're working on our banners right now for the Aviation Explorer Post. They'll be up. I hope in the next three weeks they'll be up. And we're hoping that the community will take advantage of the website and Facebook page that we have to find out more about the Aviation Explorers. We meet second and fourth, Monday nights at 6:30 at Whiteman Airport. And anyone interested in their youth attending can reach out to the airport office and they'll give them the numbers who to contact. But also, I wanted to say that I do a lot of Eagle Flights where adults just want to have a discovery flight. It's just like Young Eagles, but it's adults that want to see what it's like to be up in an airplane. And I do this frequently. I'm at the airport most days of the week.

And I'd like to invite, especially the women, but guys okay too. Anyone that's on the action or the committee here that have not been able to have that experience. I'm volunteering my time, my airplane and my fuel. Anyone that's interested, I'm happy to take them up on a short flight and give them a feel of what Whiteman Airport and the area looks like from up in the sky. Also, I'd just like to say that the airplane build is an exciting event for the kids because the parents and the kids can come together and work on the planes. And we have so many kids coming out right now. It's absolutely amazing.

The Explorers are a part of it and they're learning how to build the plane. It's absolutely fantastic. So if any of the members would like to come and see what we're doing or bring their kids, we'd love to have you come. And that's Wednesday nights, I believe it was seven o'clock and Saturdays at 2:00. Thank you for letting me share. And again, you need any more information you can contact me through the airport.

Brandon:

So, hi, I'm Brandon. Someone mentioned the pilot that was 18 years old. There was a Latino pilot. That's me. My story begins few years ago when a man named Dave took me up on his little plane. And I had no idea that that aviation was such a huge field that it's just great to join. You know what I mean? But couple years later, this year, the month of April, I became a licensed private pilot. And recently I was elected student president of the Aviation Explorers. So I'm basically here to testify that these programs are absolutely real. The aviation explorers has made before me like over 30 pilots. We work with the youth, ages 14 to 21.

And we basically hold your hand the whole way through. We provide you with scholarship information. We help you personally with scholarships. If you want a career in aviation we help you. That's what happened with me. I'm currently a licensed private pilot. I'm going on to my instrument. Maybe I'll be an airliner someday and that's because Whiteman Airport was there. I don't think I've heard anybody mention Glendale Community College, but that's a really affordable flight training. They have a really affordable flight training program and that's only because of Whiteman Airport. Whiteman Airport doesn't have any room for jets. It's too small of runway. This gives us a lot of opportunity for students to go in there and train safely and as time efficiently as possible.

It is true we are working on an airplane. I go there every Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturdays at 2:00 PM when I can, when I don't work. And every second and fourth Monday, just like Lisa said, we're there in our hangar. We're going over ground school and we're teaching these kids to fly because they're interested. And I just want to say that there's a lot of opportunities here at Whiteman Airport. And I mean closing it down, I'm not slashing at the throats of Pacoima Beautiful. I think we should work together here and come to an accord, because I mean, I think there's other ways to beautify the city of Pacoima.

But shutting down the airports, it's not one of them. Where like many others before me have said, if you want to see it in action you can come down to the flights and see these pilots actually volunteer their time and their airplanes. We're real. We're here. And I really appreciate it if you could keep my airport open so I could keep inspiring aviation to everybody that wants something in it like me. Thank you.

Mariam:

Yes. Hi, I'm Miriam and thank you for the opportunity. I'm here as a parent of a 19 year old who wants to become a commercial pilot. And I'm here because he started at the Whiteman Airport. I strongly oppose to the closure of this airport because it provides opportunities for youth like my son, like many others that I have met in the course of the last couple of years, visiting Whiteman, having my son have his first solo flight there, meeting so many wonderful pilots, taking a tour in the tower and throughout the airport and the experience. A lot of people here complain about the noise, environmental impact. There is no such thing. If people really will want to experience the environmental impact or air pollution or all these allegations, let them stop by at Sun Valley Park. Let them just spend an hour next to the AMH recycling plant, or experience the noise coming from the train in the middle of the night or Burbank Airport.

Like I couldn't agree more with most of the participants here. This is an important historic airport and our community needs it. And as a person, I feel that this is a decision that a community should make, not just a group of cap members who most of them are biased in a way or so. I would like this decision to be on the community. Apparently most of us are opposed to the closure of this little gem. No other airport provides opportunities for youth. My son joined EAA. He got his first solo flight there. Now he's working to get his private license there. And so many others like him who want to have a brighter future, a good career. And this airport provides it all for this youth.

And not only if you want an open space, there is so many other issues that the councilwoman and the county can deal with such as the noise coming from the train or the noise coming from the plant that operates 24 hours under my nose, such as the air quality. You're talking about air quality here. I have been begging the Air Resource Board to provide me with air quality reports. Why don't you start to check the air quality in the neighboring Sun Valley? This airport should be the least of your concerns. This is a beautiful airport. This is an educational facility. I think you should improve it, build upon it, make it better, have a better

outreach within the community. I think it's better to do it than just close it. Closing it is not going to solve any of these problems. That's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

David:

I'm the Dave that Brandon referred to a few minutes ago. I built my airplane and got its first flight 39 years ago next week. Has been flying out of Whiteman ever since, but it only takes two people, me and one other. And I have flown something over 600 kids over the years. And it's always heartwarming to hear somebody like Brandon say they're starting an aviation career because I had something to do with it. I was just innocently giving somebody a ride. But I'd like to raise a couple of issues that have not been raised at all as far as I know.

Lead-free fuel is on its way. I've been following it for more than 30 years. The difficulties of getting a lead-free fuel, I won't go into the technical difficulties of it, they're very significant. We've been trying for 30 years to come up with something that will replace it. It's now getting very close and it will take a few years to work that out into the system and get it readily available. I know that's happening up at Reid-Hillview because that's the whole excuse for trying to close that airport. Electric airplanes are on the horizon. And so far they're really only suitable for the training types of flights that often originate right there at Whiteman.

So we've got those two things. We got the lead going away. We've got electric replacing it. And in fact, the former airport manager told me not that long ago that the lead pollution on the airport measures no differently than it's surrounding it. But the last point I want to make is I think the ethics, the morality of trying to close an airport and sending all the aircraft and people somewhere else is completely backwards. We don't have any right to say, take your airplanes and go provide a problem to somebody else. That's not the way things should be done. It seems to me like the people who want to be only Pacoima are being incredibly selfish and I don't think it has any place in the United States of America. Thank you.