

Noise is still a continuing problem at Aurora Airport

Reader View

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As a long time member of the Positive Aurora Airport Management committee (PAAM) I was surprised by some of the statements in the last week's article 'Aurora airport becoming an ECONOMIC HUB'. Firstly, the Airport tour was sponsored by PAAM, not by the Chamber of Commerce, even though their CEO is PAAM's PR man and they arranged for the City to provide SMART bus for the tour. True, the Airport is an economic hub but sometimes the PR can get too enthusiastic. One Airport business owner is quoted as "crediting effective public communication for quieting down the opposition to airport expansion." In fact there has been little public communication since the Airport Master Plan process ended some 12 months ago. But the complaints about noise continue and I am asked regularly about the 1,000 foot runway expansion proposed in the Plan. I agree with the Friends of French Prairie quote in the article that during that process "---all public input ended up ignored and used as nothing more than window dressing---." The original proposal from the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) was 'no runway extension'. That was quickly overruled using selected comment over a 3 week period rather than the overwhelming testimony against expansion given during the more than 2 years of debate on the Plan. At each monthly PAAM meeting we discuss noise issues and complaints. True, there have been adjustments to take-off departure patterns over Charbonneau and Wilsonville, but they are not mandatory. True, two noise abatement signs have been added at each end of the taxiway but the maps are small and hard for pilots to read. True, the tower is planned, but will sequestration get in the way of the FAA funding the staffing for it? More jets are coming to Aurora and more hangars are being built to receive them. An eventual 1,000 foot runway extension will bring even more. That means even more noise. Finally, no signs, nor a tower, will stop the over-flights of Wilsonville and Charbonneau by aircraft landing to the south on runway 17. Aircraft noise will be a continuing problem at Aurora and community residents are still concerned about it. The problems have not gone away.

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