

We write to you to oppose the closing of Whiteman Airport. Whiteman Airport is a vital part of the East Valley Community offering non-ubiquitous commercial, social and youth programs. The activities carried out at the Whiteman Airport are of critical importance for the commerce, safety, education and enrichment of the community and are unique to the Whiteman airport in the San Fernando Valley.

The following include activities hosted as reported by the LA County Website:

“COMMUNITY BENEFITS: General Aviation Products, Services, and Facilities * Business / Corporate Travel * Aircraft Charter / Air Taxi * Flight Training * Personal Flying (Recreation and Training) * Utility/Pipeline Patrol & Inspection * Aerial Surveying & Observation * Aircraft Storage * Aviation Businesses (Aircraft Fueling, Maintenance/Repair, and Rental, Sale of Parts and Supplies, etc.) Emergency Preparedness & Response * Aerial Fire Fighting Support (utilized by L.A. County Fire, U.S. Forest Service, and other support agencies) * Law Enforcement/National Security * Disaster Relief * **Search & Rescue (Civil Air Patrol—U.S. Air Force Auxiliary Squadron 35 is based at the airport)** Community Services & Facilities * Aeromedical / Air Ambulance Flights * News, Weather & Traffic Reporting * Events (Annual Air Fair, Airport Tours, etc.) * Youth Organizations / Educational Programs * Aircraft Viewing Area and Meeting Facilities Destination & Special Events * The airport directly supports approximately 246 jobs. Accounting for the multiplier effect, the airport creates roughly 412 jobs, with associated labor income of nearly \$19 million annually. Economic Impact * The airport and the surrounding communities benefit from the estimated \$54.5 million in total airport-related (direct, indirect and induced) spending each year.”

To expand on some of the social and youth programs, we draw attention to the following unique programs:

Project Angel Flight – Providing 100% free non-emergency routine health flights for low-income or disabled community members needing transportation for treatment to distant medical facilities or for “non-critical” organ donation transportation. 21 of these pilots are based out of Whiteman airport.

Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron 137- STEM activities, youth leadership and aerospace education.

EAA Chapter providing the following youth programs:

Young Eagles – Provides flight time in a non-commercial aircraft.

JACKPOT Program- joint aircraft build of an airplane that kids will fly in upon completion.

Aviation Explorer Post 747 - Ground School and flight training

CIC APPROVED

November 2, 2021

4 Yea 0 No 1 Absent 0 Abstain

Aviation Explorer Post 3 KittyHawk Squadron – Ground School and flight training.

Scout Aviation Merit Badge – One Saturday of academic work and one Young Eagle Flight

The supposed “public safety threat” referenced by the councilmembers for districts 6 and 7 in Council File 21-0002-S13, after a private aircraft crashed just short of the runway, did NOT in fact occur on a residential street, but rather on the commercial land portion of the street and the casualty was the pilot. The amount of automobile accidents that take place on a daily basis, within, around, and outside Pacoima—frequently with injuries and fatalities—pose a far greater threat to public safety than the singular aircraft accident from November 2020 at Whiteman Airport.

Additionally:

The 2007 report by Pacoima Beautiful citing Whiteman Airport as the “largest toxic source emitter in Pacoima,” is not only extremely outdated, being 14 years old, but it does not take into account new emissions standards for private planes and the subsequent use of unleaded fuel, but is also contradicted by at least one other report showing that the air around Whiteman airport contains no more toxic emissions than neighborhoods at a significant distance from the airport. Furthermore, the US Environmental Protection Agency cites a graph on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report of 2014, where 25% of the global greenhouse emissions come from Electricity and Heat production followed by 24% attributed to Agriculture, forestry, and other land uses; Transportation, however, does come at 14% after Industry accounting for 21% of the sources of pollution.¹ While a passenger light-rail system is coming to Pacoima (to be fully operational in 2028) there is no mandate for all motorists to stop driving automobiles and only use public transit systems (or other means of non-polluting transportation) at all hours of a given day nor are there programs to provide electric vehicles at affordable prices for all.

Finally:

We are optimistic about the recent management shift to that of LA County and their expressed intention to invest funds in the airport. There is up keeping that had been overlooked by prior management as well as shortcomings in incorporating the airport more into the neighborhood as a whole. We look to Santa Monica Airport as a prime example of what Whiteman Airport can become under new management, in that it is a high-end integrated place of assembly, commerce, art and education. With competent management, it will contribute greatly and go on to become an accentuated “destination” of which the San Fernando Valley and Arleta/Pacoima/Sun Valley/Sylmar noticeably lack.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-data#Sector>
<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg2/>