



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL**FROM:** Mayor Sam Liccardo**SUBJECT:** Airport Master Plan
Amendment and Capital Plan**DATE:** January 9, 2020**APPROVED:****DATE:**

1-10-20

RECOMMENDATION

To partially mitigate any greenhouse gas emissions resulting from greater air traffic with the expansion of SJC, return to Council with a proposal for fee reductions for airlines that utilize hybrid, electric, or low emission fuels for airplane and ground vehicles.

DISCUSSION

Silicon Valley residents and employers have long yearned for more service from our airport. Recent growth has certainly helped, but it remains the case that most San Jose metro residents seeking to fly direct to New York, Washington, or Boston will drive to SFO rather than using their own airport. Failing to expand air service in San Jose translates into greater GhG emissions from millions of air travelers stuck in freeway traffic on 101 and 280. Whether we expand the airport or not, people will still need to fly—whether we expand the airport or not.

We can grow sustainably. San Jose and Silicon Valley create and embrace new technologies that will lead the world to a more sustainable future. Electric air travel currently only appears feasible for small planes on short flights, and electric commercial airline travel may be a decade away. We should provide a national platform for the demonstration of this promising technology as it emerges, and in the meantime, focus on the deployment of low emission fuels as the best opportunity to provide a cleaner path to expanding air travel. When Staff returns to Council, it would be helpful to know the extent to which we actively engage with the Airport Council International Task Group on sustainable alternative fuels.

We should also invest in the most sustainable land use and transportation infrastructure to support the expansion. As the Airport Master Plan moves forward, we must strike a careful balance between satisfying automobile parking needs and investing in transit and multi-modal options. The Airport-Diridon-Stevens Creek Connector RFI received 23 responses, promising news for those of us seeking innovations that will boost our transit options. I look forward to exploring that opportunity in the months ahead.