

15. Resolution in Support of the Intermunicipal Airport Master Plan Task Force Recommendations

Council Member McCall moved, seconded by Council Member Chemtob, the following resolution:

I move to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Intermunicipal Airport Master Plan Task Force (hereinafter the “Task Force”) was established by the elected officials in the City of Rye, Village of Rye Brook, Village of Port Chester, Town of Rye, Town of Greenwich, Town of New Castle, and Town of North Castle, who each appointed representatives to meet and provide unified recommendations for the County’s upcoming Airport Master Plan revision; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force is composed of community volunteers with expertise in governance, planning, law, aviation, and engineering; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force recognizes the economic and practical benefits of the County airport and the need to provide an improved passenger experience, including necessary safety features, without changing the passenger terminal capacity; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has identified key areas of concern including environmental protection, community health and safety, traffic, noise, air and groundwater quality, stormwater management, and expansionary airport development; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has submitted a comprehensive report dated July 10, 2025, which includes but is not limited to the following principal conclusions and recommendations:

1. **Airport Development:** We endorse past and ongoing efforts by the County to limit development of the Airport in order to protect the fragile environment surrounding the Airport, including impacts on the quality of drinking water for almost nine million people, impacts related to noise, air and water pollution, and impacts on downstream communities from stormwater runoff. Communities in proximity to the airport also deserve to have the security and safety risks posed by airport operations kept at or below present levels.

We call on the County to incorporate in all aspects of the Airport’s new Master Plan the provisions and principles of Board of Legislators Resolution 245-2003, as reaffirmed by Board of Legislators Resolution 58-2024, and of Section 712.462 of the Laws of Westchester County, including but not limited to the policy of no expansion at the airport, which has been upheld by County administrations for forty years. The Master Plan needs to make clear that any enlargement of the Airport’s physical infrastructure or the level of its use would most likely have detrimental impacts on adjacent communities and to residents of the County.

To the extent that safety, sustainability, or legal compliance factors compel deviations from the long-established County policy of Airport non-expansion, the Master Plan should provide clear justifications and use all available means to ensure that such deviations do not result, directly or indirectly, in the expansion of airport operations or detrimental impacts on surrounding communities and the environment.

2. **Commercial Passenger Experience:** There are numerous opportunities to improve the

commercial passenger experience without enlarging the capacity or footprint of the commercial facilities. These include providing for curbside drop-off, ticketing and check-in, and improvements in TSA security areas, the waiting area, and related facilities (e.g., food service, baggage and logistics, and ground transportation). These will require minor interior design changes, changes to the use of spaces, training or reallocation of staff, and the change, or expansion or relocation of vendors.

The commercial passenger terminal capacity has not increased but parking is an issue. According to airport figures, passenger volumes are very near maximum permissible hourly levels and County Law caps those levels. We therefore recommend that the County rely on the following strategies to address periodic parking shortages:

- a. Better communication about parking availability at all onsite and offsite facilities
- b. Improved public transportation options
- c. Enforcement of parking rules to reduce unauthorized parking in unsafe and congested locations
- d. Efforts to dissuade airlines from exceeding the terminal capacity during holiday periods when normal caps are suspended, including public education about the role airline overscheduling plays in creating parking and seating shortages at the airport.

The Airport Master Plan and County policy should reference and adhere to Section 712.462 of the Laws of Westchester County, which specifies that the Passenger Capacity of the Terminal was designed for a capacity of 240 passengers per half hour, without consideration of whether such passengers are enplaning or deplaning. These limitations state that they apply to each half-hour interval of normal airport operations and are not to be aggregated to allow for more passengers in any half-hour than is stated in this law.

3. **Fixed Base Operations:** Fixed Base Operators (FBOs) are companies that service most resident general aviation and based-elsewhere aircraft at Westchester Airport and are an important consideration for the Master Plan given that these aircraft represent about 80% of take-offs and landings at the airport. There are currently five FBO locations at the airport that provide services to many operators for aircraft of all sizes, plus additional FBOs that support either one or a small number of aircraft operators. In addition, most of the violations of the voluntary restraint from flying (VRFF) during night hours are attributable to the general aviation and transient aircraft serviced by the FBOs.
 - a. **VRFF:** Ensure maximum adherence to the voluntary restraint from flying curfew: The Airport operates a voluntary curfew from midnight to 6:30am. Due to Federal regulations, the curfew cannot be made mandatory, but the County could consider options for achieving maximum compliance with the curfew, including broadly publicizing the top offenders among aircraft operators.
 - b. **Seat Limits:** Submit to the FAA for approval the County's amendments to Terminal Use Regulation law stipulating that airlines selling tickets to more than nine passengers per flight, including non-traditional operators, must adhere to gate and passenger caps (240 passengers arriving and departing per half-hour) and use the main passenger terminal with its more robust security protocols. Safety and security issues have only grown in importance with the growth in population near the airport over the past 55 years.
 - c. **Protect Light General Aviation Access:** Light General Aviation (GA) aircraft are

defined as aircraft with a Maximum Take-Off Weight (MTOW) under 12,500 pounds. These are generally smaller planes that are based at the airport and are responsible for about a quarter of all aircraft operations. The County should seek to ensure Light GA aircraft do not see a diminution in their dedicated airport parking capacity.

- d. **Private Hangar Redevelopment:** Promote modernization but restrict expansion given the potential for adverse community noise, environmental and other impacts. To the extent that modern building, safety, security and/or environmental standards dictate that aging hangars be replaced by new and potentially larger structures, the County should insist on a full and formal analysis as well as robust public input and operational and/or contractual controls to ensure that new facilities don't result in more operations.
4. **Traffic:** The increased use of residential streets as cut throughs to the Airport has brought a range of negative consequences for the local communities, impacting both quality of life and safety. A traffic study needs to be undertaken to understand how the Airport is being accessed from Greenwich, Port Chester, and Rye Brook, specifically impacting King Street, Cliffdale Road, Porchuck Road and other residential streets used as short cuts. The Airport should engage with local law enforcement groups and technology companies to address these issues.
 5. **Noise Considerations:** The noise concerns stemming from Westchester County Airport are significant and require a multifaceted approach involving airport management, the FAA, local government, and community stakeholders. By enhancing monitoring, fostering community involvement, and exploring feasible operational adjustments, the airport can work towards reducing noise impacts and improving the quality of life for residents in surrounding areas.
 - a. **Community Involvement:** Conduct more frequent public hearings and forums to gather community feedback on noise issues, enhance community involvement in the decision-making process and foster a collaborative approach. Update noise reports in a timely manner and educate the public on how to access noise reports and report noise complaints.
 - b. **Noise Profiles:** Quantify the number of larger aircraft in use and compare noise profiles of larger aircraft relative to the smaller aircraft previously utilized by commercial operators. Correlate noise complaints with the type of aircraft corresponding to the complaints. Identify ways to promote more modernized aircraft or updated technologies that reduce noise impacts.
 - c. **VRFF:** Encourage operators (both commercial and private) to reduce total usage within VRFF curfews and commercial airlines' rate of operations within VRFF curfews relative to their total operations. Identify reasons for fluctuations in transient helicopter usage and routes during VRFF curfews.
 - d. **Future Development:** Educate and provide incentives for local municipalities to limit development in areas severely affected by airport noise. Offer sound mitigation solutions for homes in high-noise areas to reduce the impact of noise indoors. Require disclosures to potential buyers of new projects proposed within areas affected by airport noise.
 - e. **Noise Monitoring:** Expand noise monitoring efforts and ensure data transparency by providing regular reports to the general public that are accessible and easy to navigate

and that clearly include percentage increases and decreases. Measure sudden noise impacts over short durations focused on the overhead transit of aircraft, in addition to monitoring average noise levels. Set benchmarks and goals to track noise reduction efforts over time.

- f. **Flight Path Alternatives:** Collaborate with the FAA to identify potentially feasible flight path adjustments that reduce total noise levels but do not re-distribute noise impacts between municipalities.
 - g. **Expansion:** Maintain the county's long-standing policy against airport infrastructure expansion to avoid enabling operations likely to escalate noise levels. Adopt the practice of conducting an impact assessment on any proposed infrastructure or operational changes to anticipate and mitigate potential noise impacts.
6. **Air Quality:** Ultrafine particles and lead are emerging contaminants of concern in aircraft exhaust at airports across the country. In light of the sensitive land uses near the Airport (e.g. residential, school, water supply), the following recommendations should be considered:
- a. **Air Quality Monitoring:** Future studies of aviation emissions and air quality at the airport should include identification and quantification of other relevant contaminants, such as lead, ultra-fine particles, and ozone. Efforts should be made to establish the indoor (terminal) and offsite impacts of contaminants.
 - b. **Air Quality at Terminals:** Studies have shown that pollutant levels within the airport terminals can be high, with the gate departure areas frequently showing the highest indoor pollutant levels. Methods of reducing this pollution should be investigated, including requiring aircraft parked at the gates to use ground power units instead of jet-fuel consuming auxiliary power units.
 - c. **Unleaded Fuel:** Steps should be taken to ensure the Airport has the facilities to support the full conversion to unleaded fuel by general aviation users.
 - d. **Environmental Assessment Guidance:** The Airport and County should provide outreach, share findings, and create actionable, airport-specific environmental assessment guidance for surrounding communities to better encourage appropriate and consistent land use decisions.
7. **Groundwater Quality:** Airport operations have contaminated groundwater over the years with levels of some volatile organic compounds and PFAS now being detected above regulatory levels, both at onsite monitoring wells and offsite private wells. Although past reports cite no known impacts of the airport groundwater to the Kensico Reservoir system, it is imperative that the current contamination underlying the airport be addressed to ensure protection of the Reservoir and offsite receptors.
- a. **Groundwater Sampling Program:** The Airport should continue with the current groundwater sampling program onsite at an appropriate frequency (e.g., semi-annual). Offsite sampling locations should be added to determine the real extent and migration of any contamination. The program should include evaluation of groundwater cleanup or containment measures to protect the reservoir and offsite receptors.

prioritize community and environmental protections in all future planning and operations related to the Airport; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Castle Town Board urges Westchester County to consider the entirety of the Task Force’s report, including the referenced and linked position papers and the additional recommendations contained therein, and invites the County to meet with representatives of the Task Force to address the content of its report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution, along with the full Task Force report, shall be transmitted to the County of Westchester and the governing bodies of the participating municipalities.

VOTE	AYES	NAYS
Supervisor Tipp	X	
Deputy Supervisor Saland	X	
Council Member Chemtob	X	
Council Member McCall	X	
Council Member Naparstek Klein	X	

APPROVED BY
 TOWN BOARD
September 9, 2025
Christina Lopez
Town Clerk