



Albert Whitted Airport: an asset to our community, an asset to our economy.

A sound financial decision

You probably know that saving our only airport is vital to the preservation of our city's history. But what you may not know, and what the other side is desperately trying to spin, is just how sound saving our airport is financially to city taxpayers.

The \$100 million "park"

Nobody knows for sure just how costly building the proposed "park" would be. Some estimates have costs skyrocketing past \$100 million, and that's just the beginning. The city estimates that annual maintenance alone would cost taxpayers \$390,000 for a park built on only half of the airport land. Add in an expensive legal battle needed to get out of an iron-clad, 20-year agreement signed with the FAA and we'll have one hefty bill on our hands... a bill that you, as a St. Petersburg taxpayer, would be responsible for.

What about airport costs?

Unlike the proposed "park", which would rely on city taxpayers for funding, the airport is, and always has been, funded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Depending on the type of grant, the FAA will provide up to 90% of the cost of any airport improvement. City officials estimate the enhancements to Albert Whitted would cost \$38 million. Of that, more than \$30 million would be paid for with state and federal grants. That's over \$100 million for a park with little to no economic benefit, or \$8 million for a thriving, low-impact and cost effective economic generator. The right choice is obvious: protect and invest in Albert Whitted.

Albert Whitted: A viable economic contributor

A study commissioned by our city government found our airport to be, "a viable economic contributor to the Florida economy. Albert Whitted, its tenants and users, directly provide jobs and earning, and produce goods and services that ripple throughout the economy." Furthermore, the study found that Albert Whitted contributes \$21.6 million to the Florida economy on a recurring annual basis.* The airport draws business to our community from all over the world. A "park" would have no such impact on our economy.

Looking toward the future

Albert Whitted is part of an integrated national system of airports. In that respect, it is a community on-ramp to the national aviation system, much as a freeway is to cars. Current trends in aviation show that the use of smaller airplanes and general aviation airports by business travelers are on a steady rise. As this trend continues, the loss of Albert Whitted would undoubtedly have a severe negative impact on our economic future.

It comes down to a simple question:

"Is it worth \$100 million of MY tax dollars to have yet another park?" Add in the fact that, in order to build this high-dollar park, we would have to tear down our ONLY airport and it's clear... **the "park" scheme does not make sense.**

*Taken from the report, commissioned by the city, and performed by the firm of The LPA Group Incorporated in 1999.

About the organization who's helping to bring you this message: This paid political advertisement was paid for by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, 421 Aviation Way, Frederick, MD 21701, independently of any committee. AOPA represents the interests of over 400,000 members across the U.S., including 27,000 pilots and aviation enthusiasts across Florida. AOPA is proud to support its many members and volunteers in the Tampa Bay area who share a united interest in preserving Albert Whitted Airport in St. Petersburg.



**Help save our airport.
Vote NO on amendment #3
and YES to all the rest on
Tuesday, November 4th.**

