

2017 Analysis: 46.9 Million Annual Passengers Breaks Another Record at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport

New Report Reveals Airport Contributed \$22.5 Billion to Local Economy; New Construction to Expand Central Terminal Starts Feb. 8

Mark Snider, Port of Seattle News Release | FEB 1, 2018

For the seventh consecutive year, passenger travel at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport has set a record. Demand for air travel¹ at Sea-Tac Airport increased 41 percent the last five years, rising from 33.2 million passengers in 2012 to 46.9 million passengers in 2017.

Increased demand for air services means more airport-related jobs and local economic activity. A new airport [economic impact analysis](#) by Community Attributes Inc., found that the airport supports \$22.5 billion in total economic activity, 19,100 jobs at the airport and a total of 151,400 jobs directly or through multiplier effects. When all 350 airport employers are combined, the total number of on-site jobs makes Sea-Tac Airport the 5th largest employer in King County.

“It takes a highly skilled village² to serve 46 million passengers³ while simultaneously building world class facilities,” said Courtney Gregoire, Port of Seattle Commission President.

“Recordbreaking demand is not enough. We also need to deliver record-breaking results for local businesses, local workers, and neighborhoods closest to the airport. Between airport construction and airport-related development in the area, we are partnering with communities to make even closer connections on job and business opportunities.”

The airport is currently underway with \$2 billion in construction projects aimed at serving more

¹ aiR footnote: This is not ‘demand for air travel’; this increase is airlines adjusting schedules to use KSEA more intensively, as a sorting-facility for more through passengers. The impact on the environment – especially homeowners and families residing under the approach and departure corridors – has been devastating. Nonetheless, the Alaska and Delta airline CEOs are happy for the chance to claim higher profits, so PoS continues to promote this as economically positive, while ignoring the enormous downside on health and quality of life.

² aiR footnote: It also takes a growing toll of impacted neighborhoods, where residents are suffering sleep-loss and amplified stress, while breathing more aviation pollutants.

³ aiR footnote: 46.9 million passengers means 23.4 million enplanements. In 2010, when the Part 150 Study Aviation Activity Forecast was published, it projected 20 million enplanements in 2020, and estimated 23 million enplanements in 2027. Thus, KSEA passenger growth is now 10-years ahead of the most recent POS analysis ... which says a lot about the inaccuracy of these expensive studies.



passengers and improving the travel experience and expects to spend \$3.2 billion on capital development between 2017 and 2022. In 2017, the airport broke ground on the new [International Arrivals Facility](#) and [North Satellite Modernization](#), major projects designed to meet growing demand, enhance the passenger service and

provide more dining and retail options to travelers. On February 8, the airport will begin a new high-profile \$17 million renovation to add 10,000 square feet to the [Central Terminal](#) dining area. No taxpayer dollars are used to fund airport projects.

“Sea-Tac Airport has provided more than a gateway for our region, it has enabled our local business community to respond effectively and efficiently to the opportunities and challenges of globalization and technology,” said Andrea H. Reay, President and CEO of the Southside Seattle Chamber of Commerce. “Our Chamber values the commitment the airport has to not only move people and cargo but to be a driver for our local economy and a responsible steward in our community. The sky is the limit with what our local businesses can accomplish by fully utilizing the opportunities available within our region.”⁴

“We couldn’t be happier about being at Sea-Tac,” said Danialle An, owner of CHALO Seattle. Her business sells unique Seattle-themed items, with a whimsical look at what makes the city special. “The opportunity to get our products in front of thousands of potential customers every day has helped our company grow – we’ve had to hire additional staff and boost inventory to meet the demand.”

In addition to increasing its economic development programs, the Port of Seattle has expanded its community development investments in neighborhoods most affected by a busier airport. Recently the Port of Seattle created a new Airport Communities Ecology Grants program, began offering airport advertising opportunities for neighboring cities, established a local cities stakeholder roundtable, and became an active participant in a University of Washington study to examine the health impacts of ultra-fine particulates from airplanes. The Port of Seattle is also involved in efforts to create a similar study at the federal level. 2017 Service Highlights

- Sea-Tac Airport served 46.9 million passengers in 2017, a 2.3 percent increase over 2016
- International passenger traffic was up 5.4 percent in 2017, including a 17.1 percent increase to Europe.

⁴ **aiR footnote:** Actually, if PoS and FAA elected to slow down KSEA growth by imposing reasonable limits on air traffic flow rates, we’d see nearly all the same benefits, but with other huge improvements: much reduced impacts on residents, less fuel wasted by ATC having to impose turns, loops, and other delays to flights arriving during periods of congestion, and more direct flights (less total air travel time) for the increasing number of system passengers being routed THROUGH the over-congested KSEA airport.

- In 2017, Sea-Tac added four new international airlines:
 1. Virgin Atlantic to London-Heathrow
 2. Norwegian to London-Gatwick
 3. Eurowings to Cologne
 4. Aeromexico to Mexico City
- Sea-Tac will add three more international airlines in 2018:
 1. Air France to Paris
 2. Thomas Cook to Manchester
 3. Aer Lingus to Dublin
- 425,800 Metric tons of cargo (freight and mail) passed through Sea-Tac in 2017, a 16.2 percent increase over 2016. Domestic air cargo grew by 19.8 percent, while international cargo increased 8.5 percent compared to last year.

2017 Economic Impact Highlights

- The airport directly supports an estimated 87,300 jobs, including 19,100 at the airport and 68,200 jobs supported by visitor spending.
- The majority of airport-supported jobs are in King County, with 40 percent of airport workers coming from South King County. • The airport’s neighboring communities are direct beneficiaries of Sea-Tac activities.
Combined, those cities have realized direct economic impacts of more than \$7.4 billion.
- Overall, the report estimates 151,400 total jobs are supported by the airport, either directly or through multiplier effects.
- Airport activity contributed \$442 million in state and local taxes
- 1,673 individuals hired at Sea-Tac through Port Jobs

Central Terminal Renovation Highlights

- 10,000 square feet of new dining and retail space
- Expanded employment opportunities with new tenants
- Spectacular views from north and south mezzanine dining areas
- New, family-friendly seating in Central Terminal food court
- Charging stations to meet travelers’ technology needs
- New sit-down restaurants will soon open near the Central Terminal
- Abundant food options throughout the airport, closer to passenger gates

more about the [Central Terminal Renovation project](#) here.

About Seattle-Tacoma International Airport: Operated by the Port of Seattle, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA, KSEA) is ranked as the 9th busiest U.S. airport, serving 46.9 million passengers and more than 425,800 metric tons of air cargo in 2017. With a regional economic impact of more than \$22.5 billion in business revenue, Sea-Tac generates more than 151,400 jobs (87,300 direct jobs), representing over \$3.6 billion in direct earnings and more than \$442 million in state and local taxes. Twenty-eight airlines serve 87 non-stop domestic and 23 international destinations.

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