



Sky Posse Palo Alto

Key Points Fact Sheet

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1. PALO ALTO IS DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTED BY NEXTGEN: ADDRESSING AVIATION NOISE & EMISSIONS POLLUTION IS URGENT AND CRITICAL

- a. Three of the four approach routes into SFO now converge over Palo Alto. Few, if any other communities at these distances from SFO, OAK, or SJC experience hundreds of low flying jets on a daily basis.
- b. In addition, traffic congestion at SFO increases the duration of noise when planes make turns to extend their routes over our neighborhoods as they line up for the final approach.
- c. Frequent, loud, low-flying flights affect residential neighborhoods, schools, and parks disrupting health, productivity, sleep, and quality of life.[1][2]

2. CONCENTRATING SFO ARRIVAL ROUTES OVER THE SAME NEIGHBORHOODS IS NOT EQUITABLE

- a. The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) NextGen air traffic management system implemented in March 2015 amplified our already noisy skies. Palo Alto was not consulted in a timely manner on changes to increase the capacity of all Bay Area airports using these particular routes over our community.
- b. NextGen's claim of "net noise reduction" is misleading because NextGen may reduce aviation noise for some while creating communities with intolerable noise levels. This unfair distribution of the noise burden calls for alternate designs that consider populations on the ground.[3]
- c. In addition, Palo Alto was never considered in the noise abatement initiatives of the SFO Roundtable, which excludes cities from Santa Clara County.

3. THE SITUATION IS FIXABLE AND PALO ALTO IS PREPARED TO HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM

- a. The San Francisco Bay presents a unique opportunity to avoid aircraft descents over heavily populated residential areas. Better design and noise metrics can be achieved with community input to assist the FAA in developing a less harmful and more equitable route system. Cities should be equal stakeholders with airlines, airports, and the aviation industry in noise assessment and airspace design.
- b. Palo Alto is commissioning a professional study, and wants to work with the FAA to alter routes so that planes fly above 6000 feet over Palo Alto and other cities, and then descend over the Bay.
- c. Political support on both the national and local level[4] is critical to achieving our goal of quieter skies and cleaner air. We support the work of the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus to bring meaningful noise metrics, oversight and community engagement into the aviation route design process.[5][6]

[1] See *Growth of Traffic at the Menlo Waypoint* in home page of Sky Posse website <http://www.skypossepaloalto.org/>

[2] *Aircraft Overflight Noise in Palo Alto* <http://www.tcracs.org/tcrwp/aircraft-noise-in-pa/>

[3] <http://peninsulapress.com/2015/10/30/eshoo-says-no-quick-fix-housing-crisis-traffic-gridlock-silicon-valley/>

[4] http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/airplane_noise.asp

[5] <https://nqsc.org/downloads/CAUCUS.pdf>

[6] <http://acousticstoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Aircraft-Noise-Regs.pdf>