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October 2, 2009

Mr. Dave Andersen, AICP
Washington State Department of Commerce
Growth Management Services
Attn: WAC Update
906 Columbia St. SW
Olympia, WA 98504-2525

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of 415,000 members, more than two-thirds of the nation's pilots – including 12,364 of our members in the state of Washington. On behalf of our membership, AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability and development of general aviation airports and their facilities as part of a national transportation system.

AOPA views compatible land use around airports as a key component to the future viability of general aviation airports. We are pleased to see the State take steps to strengthen the Growth Management Act requirements via the proposed language of Washington Administrative Code 365-196-455 Land Use Compatibility Adjacent to General Aviation Airports. In support of the proposed language we submit the following comments.

It is important that all jurisdictions that have a general aviation airport located in them comply with WAC 365-196-455. For that reason we recommend the addition of the word "town" to Sections 1(a) and 2(a, c, d and e). This also reflects the language in the Revised Code of Washington 36.70.547.

In section 2(d) AOPA suggests the following phrasing "Counties, cities and towns should ..." conduct the comprehensive study of land uses referenced in that section and develop appropriate plans and policies to ensure compatible land uses and prohibit incompatible uses around the airport. We contend that requiring the local jurisdictions to actively formulate compatible land use surrounding their airports will strengthen the local economic base by maintaining one of the economic engines of the community.

AOPA appreciates the opportunity to help strengthen the protections for general aviation airports in the State of Washington. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

John L. Collins
Manager
Airport Policy