



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF ST. LOUIS
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Chairman Paul Payne
Comptroller Darlene Green - represented by LaTania Kenner
President Lewis Reed - represented by Gerard Hollins
Linda Martinez
Alderwoman Marlene Davis
Rhonda Hamm-Niebruegge
Michael Garvin

Dear Members of the Airport Working Group

Thank you to each of you for your hard work, professionalism, and deliberation over the past year and a half as you explored the idea of leasing the operation of St Louis Lambert International Airport. I know this has been challenging work – it has explored a new way of doing business, for the purpose of getting a better airport and complying with the City's 11 Guiding Principles.

Today, I have asked my representative not to support or vote to approve the issuance of the Request for Proposals.

When I inherited this idea in April, 2017, I agreed to explore the concept to determine if we could get a better airport. As we have worked, I have also been listening closely to residents, business leaders, and other elected officials. They have expressed serious concerns and trepidation about the process, and about the possibility that a private entity might operate the airport.

As you know, this form of operation is common in other parts of the world, but St Louis would be the first major airport in the US to lease its full operation. Being 'first' at anything brings inherent risks and skepticism.

Through this exploration, we have learned a lot about our current airport operation and its future needs. Our airport has 1,000 unused acres of land, \$900 mil of capital requirements over the next 10-15 years, a big runway which is underutilized, almost \$700 mil of debt, and has serious capacity issues. I thank the Advisor Team and our airport employees who brought tremendous experience and numerous ideas to the table.

Eighteen teams responded to the RFQ. These teams brought their deep experience and ideas to the table. I thank them.

The Airlines are our most important partners. They have worked extremely hard with us as we explored this idea – I sincerely appreciate their efforts. The Airlines also know that St Louis Lambert International Airport needs to provide a better customer experience, increase passengers and cargo, and capitalize on our assets.

Many other cities have already begun or completed major airport improvements. The business community and airlines are committed to find a way to make the major investment needed at St Louis Lambert International Airport.

Again, thank you for your tremendous efforts.

Respectfully


Lyda Krewson

