



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Office of Gerrie Schipske, R.N.P., J.D.
Councilwoman, Fifth District
Memorandum

R-11

Date: October 1, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor Foster and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Gerrie Schipske, Fifth District *GS*

Subject: **Request for City Manager to Discuss with Boeing the Donation of: 1) Building to House a Long Beach Aviation Museum and 2) Archives, Photographs and Memorabilia Related to Operations of Douglas Aircraft, McDonnell-Douglas, and Boeing in Long Beach from 1940 through 2015**

Discussion:

Long Beach Aviation History: Without a doubt, few cities can boast of an aviation history such as the one Long Beach enjoys. From the early 1900's when balloonists flew over the Pine Avenue Pier and Cal Rodgers landed his transcontinental flight in 1911 near Seaside and Linden Avenues, to the 1920's when lessons given by John Montijo to fledging pilot Amelia Earhart qualified her to fly in the "Long Beach Air Circus" with Early Daugherty, and then the roll out of the first airplane made at Douglas Aircraft in 1941, Long Beach continued to make aviation history at the site known as Douglas Aircraft, then McDonnell Douglas and then Boeing. During its 73-plus-year history, the facility produced more than 15,000 airplanes, including the DC-3, DC-8, DC-9, DC-10, MD-80, MD-90 and MD-11 and 717 passenger planes, as well as such military airplanes as the famed C-47 (military version of the DC-3), the B-17 (in cooperation with Boeing), the A-20, A-26, C-74, C-124, A-4D, C-133 and the C-17. The City of Long Beach has spent considerable time, money and energy in support of Boeing's efforts to maintain funding of its C-17 by the U.S. Air Force, but unfortunately production will cease in 2015.

Aviation Museum and Preservation of Archives, Photographs and Memorabilia: While the announced closure of the C-17 plant in 2015 by Boeing will end this era of Long Beach history, it presents an excellent opportunity for the City to partner with Boeing to create a lasting legacy to commemorate our aviation history and to preserve archives, photographs and memorabilia that are specific to the history and residents of Long Beach and which are now in storage at a Boeing facility. They have the rosters of employees from the 1940s. The newsletters feature photos and information on the people who worked in the plant – many of whom lived in Long Beach. Other photographs document how Long Beach workers produced the more than 15,000 planes made at the site. It is an incredible wealth of historical documentation and it should remain in Long Beach. The City of Long Beach should negotiate with Boeing for a donation of a building on the current Boeing site that could house a Long Beach Aviation Museum. Additionally, the City should also request that archives, photographs and memorabilia that have been placed in storage several years ago be donated to the City's Library Services so that they can be preserved and placed on display in an Aviation Museum. Thousands of retirees from Douglas, McDonnell-Douglas and Boeing could be involved in establishing and serving as docents for a museum.

The Seattle Museum of Flight (<http://www.museumofflight.org/>), where the Boeing Company was started, is an excellent example of what an aviation museum can do for a city. More than 500,000 people visit this Smithsonian affiliate each year.

Fiscal Impact:

To be determined by the City Manager.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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Recommendation: By motion of the City Council, request the City Manager to discuss with the Boeing Company the donation of both a building on the Boeing site suitable to locate a Long Beach Aviation Museum and the archives, photographs and memorabilia related to operations of Douglas Aircraft, McDonnell-Douglas and Boeing in Long Beach from 1940 through 2015.