

City had no place in airline business

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The following is in response to news that Porter Airlines will stop service at Jack Garland Airport as of Sept. 11.

To the editor:

With regard to the recent announcement that Porter Airlines is leaving North Bay, lets look at things in a more positive way.

While it's great to have competition, choice and enhanced service, the reality is that, ultimately, there must be the market demand to support and sustain the ongoing operations.

Porters' presence in North Bay (as can be gleaned from a Freedom of Information report) was enticed, bought and paid for by the transfer of taxpayer dollars provided in the form of airport usage concessions.

At least now taxpayers will no longer have to pay a subsidy to compensate for the luxury of too few people using the service.

We can now just focus on paying off the \$2 million spent on the airport, \$20 million on Memorial Gardens and the additional \$1 million recently awarded to Invest North Bay that appears to be headed in the same direction as the previous "investments."

North Bay taxpayers should never have been involved in the airline business (or any other private enterprise for that matter), as it is blatantly obvious that we do not have the capability to assess market demand and economic conditions.

We would be far better off focusing on delivering the required local services, quality of life enhancements and amenities that our tax dollars were meant to provide, while providing a level playing field, efficient and cost-effective service delivery and a corresponding taxation level of competitiveness that wins the appeal of businesses, industry and residents alike.

Miles Peters

North Bay Taxpayers' Association