Dual Track Airport Planning Process

Summary and Decision

Metropolitan Airports Commission

May 1996

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DUAL TRACK AIRPORT PLANNING PROCESS

OVERVIEW

A Dual Track Airport Planning Process – designed to study the region's long term aviation needs – was established in 1989 by the Minnesota Legislature's Metropolitan Airport Planning Act. The seven year planning process has been conducted by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) and the Metropolitan Council.

To address the region's long term aviation needs, one track focused on expanding Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). The other track studied building a new (replacement) airport in Dakota County.

The Metropolitan Council conducted the new airport search area study and prepared an MSP reuse study. The MAC was responsible for selecting a new airport site within the search area, preparing a comprehensive plan for an airport on the selected site, developing the Long Term Comprehensive Plan for MSP, and preparing the state environmental documentation.

The Airport Planning Act required the MAC and Metropolitan Council to make a recommendation to the Legislature no later than July 1996 on which approach should be taken to meet future airport development needs. The decision process was accelerated in December 1995 when Governor Carlson requested the MAC and Metropolitan Council to submit their recommendations to the Legislature during the 1996 legislative session, and requested the Legislature to act on the recommendation during the 1996 session.

As a result, the MAC and Metropolitan Council formally submitted their recommendations to the Legislature on March 18, 1996. On April 2, 1996, legislation was passed by both the House and Senate, and subsequently signed by Governor Carlson, stopping further study of a new airport at this time and directing MAC to implement the MSP 2010 Long Term Comprehensive Plan.

DUAL TRACK AIRPORT PLANNING PROCESS – (continued)

Legislative Mandate

The 1989 Metropolitan Airport Planning Act required the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) and the Metropolitan Council to complete a comprehensive and coordinated program to plan for major airport development in the Twin Cities. The planning activities were designed to compare the option of future expansion of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) with the option of building a new airport.

The legislation required the MAC to adopt a Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for MSP that satisfies the region's air transportation needs for a 20 year period (to 2010), and to adopt a concept plan for an additional 10 year period (to 2020). In addition, the plans are to be updated at least every five years, and amended as necessary to include "...changes in trends and conditions, facilities requirements, and development plans and schedules."

Goals

A set of goals for future commercial air transportation facilities in the Twin Cities was identified by the Metropolitan Council, with input from the MAC. The goals provided direction for plan development, and were a yardstick against which alternative strategies were measured. The goals were as follows:

1. Develop the airport's physical facilities to meet future aviation needs (passengers/ community/users), to provide enhanced levels of air service and to further the economic development of the State of Minnesota.

2. Minimize costs to users of the airport.

3. Develop the airport in a manner which is flexible and adaptable to changing conditions.

4. Provide an airport that is safe and reliable.

5. Develop an airport that is consistent with state, regional and local plans and economic development policies.

6. Develop the airport and the airport vicinity to minimize and reduce adverse aircraft noise and other environmental effects.

Integrated Planning/Environmental Process

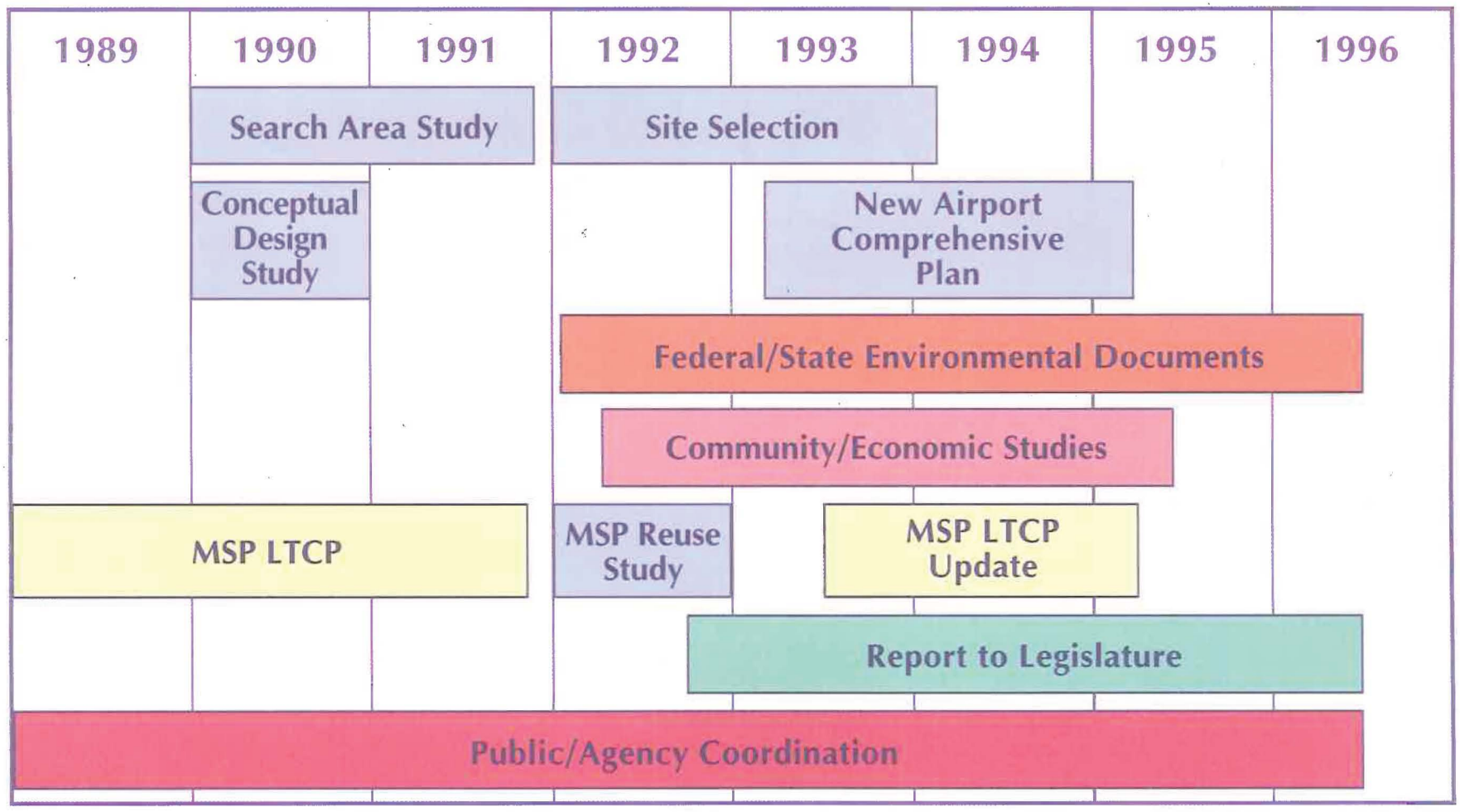
The planning and environmental issues associated with the Dual Track alternatives were integrated throughout the process, so that incremental decisions on preferred alternatives included detailed environmental analysis. More than 30 categories of environmental impacts were analyzed at key decision points in the planning process, including search area selection, site selection, New Airport Plan development, and MSP LTCP development.

The environmental process culminated with a Joint State/Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – published in December 1995 – which evaluated the selected MSP plan, the selected New Airport plan, and the No Action plan. Following the incorporation of comments received during the public comment period and public hearing, a final EIS will be prepared. The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board will determine the adequacy of the State Final EIS. The Federal Aviation Administration will approve the Final Federal EIS.

Public/Agency Coordination

Throughout the Dual Track Airport Planning Process, there was a major emphasis on public and agency involvement. In addition to the State Advisory Council on Metropolitan Airport Planning and involvement of affected local, state and federal agencies, three policy task forces and four technical committees representing various citizen, community and agency interests were involved in the program. The groups met monthly, with over 90 meetings held during the process. In addition, over 50 public meetings and hearings were conducted during the process.

DUAL TRACK AIRPORT PLANNING PROCESS – (continued)



Dual Track Schedule

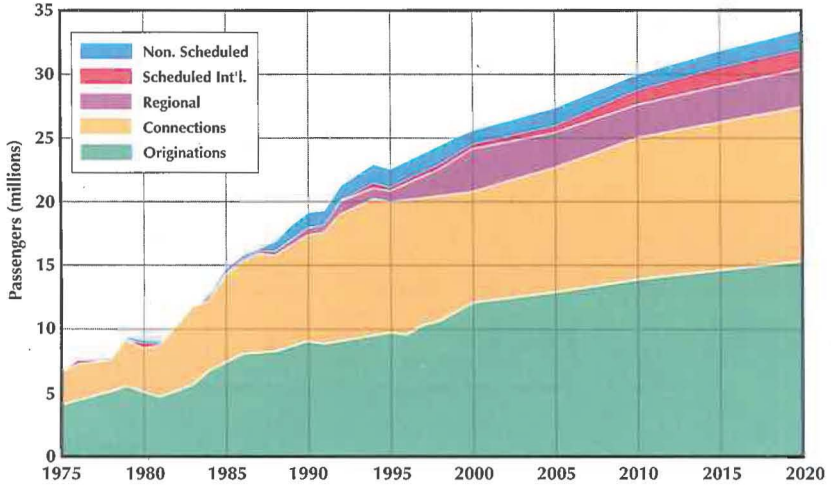
AVIATION ACTIVITY FORECASTS

As required by the Dual Track legislation, airport activity forecasts were developed for a 30-year period (to 2020). These forecasts helped determine the airport facilities needed to meet 2020 activity levels. An initial forecast was prepared in 1990, and updated in 1993 based on changed conditions. The components that most influence facilities are annual passengers and annual aircraft operations.

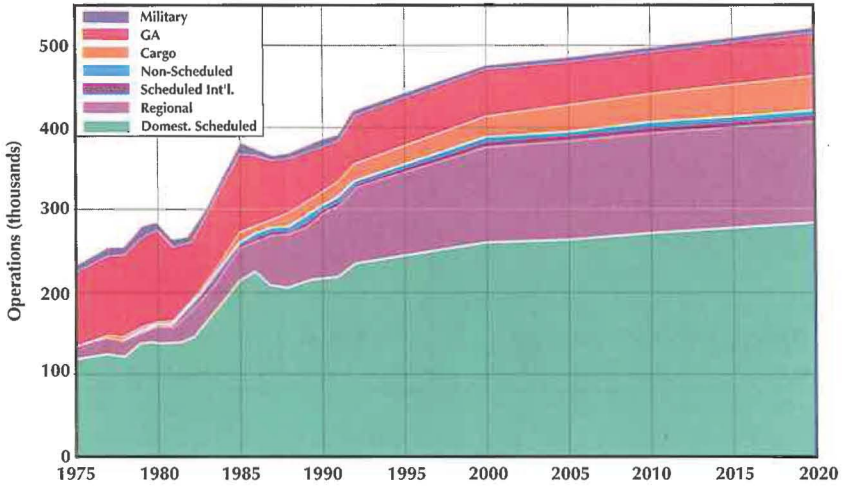
In order to ensure that all viewpoints were considered, four expert panel workshops were held in 1992 and 1993 by the MAC and Metropolitan Council. The panels consisted of airline representatives, economists, and others experienced in aviation forecasting. The panels addressed forecast methodologies, aviation assumptions, socioeconomic trends and alternative scenarios.

Total annual passengers are expected to increase 56 percent, from 21.4 million in 1992 to 33.4 million in 2020. Aircraft operations will increase at a slower rate, as aircraft size and passengers per departure increase through 2020. Total annual aircraft operations are forecast to grow 24 percent, from 418,000 in 1992 to 520,000 in 2020.

Passenger Activity (millions)



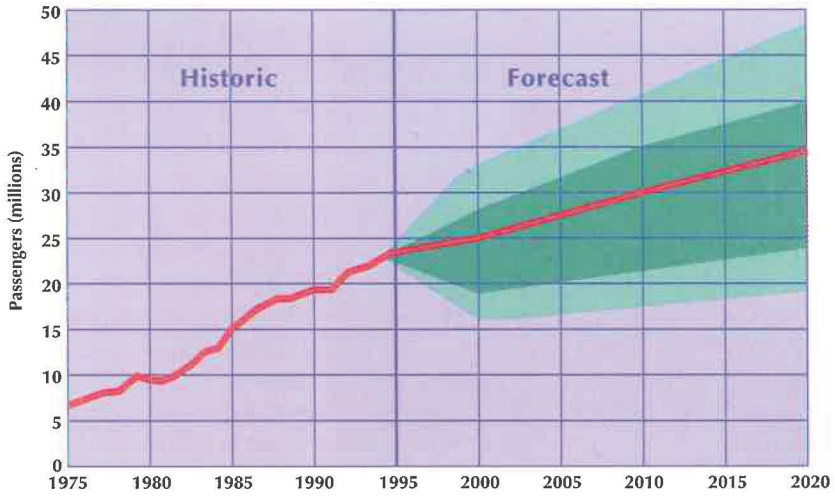
Aircraft Operations (thousands)



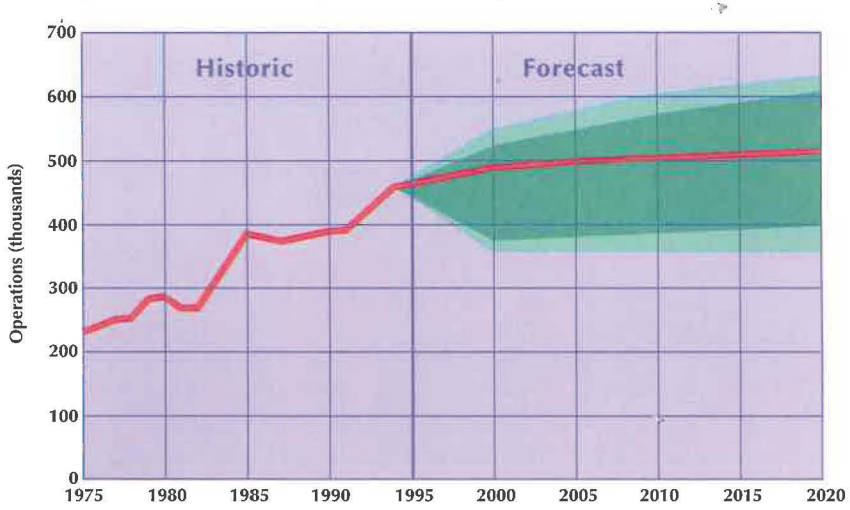
AVIATION ACTIVITY FORECASTS – (continued)

In order to test the flexibility of the development alternatives to accommodate activity levels higher or lower than anticipated by the baseline forecast, a number of alternate forecast scenarios were examined. These scenarios were designed to evaluate the effects of high or low rates of economic growth, changes in airfares and changes in airline operational policy. The high end of the forecast range, used to test the flexibility of the development plans, was 48 million passengers and 640,000 annual operations in 2020.

Range of Forecast Passenger Scenarios



Range of Forecast Aircraft Operations Scenarios



AIRPORT ALTERNATIVES

Facility Requirements

The primary alternatives studied in the Dual Track process were the expansion of MSP and the development of a replacement airport at a new site. In addition, environmental regulations required that a No Action alternative and other feasible alternatives be addressed in the planning process.

The need for airport facilities is driven by the level of demand. Both the MSP and New Airport alternatives provide the following facilities:

- a minimum of three independent runways with crosswind runway capability.
- 2.8 million square feet of terminal building (domestic, international, charter, regional).
- 83 air carrier gates and 34 regional aircraft parking positions.
- 31,500 public and employee parking spaces.
- 156 acres of cargo area.
- 266 acres of airline maintenance area.

MSP Expansion

The first of the two primary alternatives addressed in the Dual Track Planning Process was the continued development of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to meet 2020 demands. The following additional facilities will be required:

- one new runway and multiple taxiway improvements.
- 15 jet aircraft gates (for scheduled and non-scheduled airlines).
- 1.32 million sq. ft. of terminal space (charter, regional, international).
- 3,500 public parking spaces.
- 80 acres of air freight facilities.
- 74 acres of airline maintenance facilities.

A wide range of development options was analyzed for MSP expansion. Following an extensive screening process, four development alternatives were selected for detailed evaluation in the MSP Long Term Comprehensive Plan Update.

The alternatives consisted of various combinations of a new north parallel runway or a new north-south runway, with either a new terminal building on the northwest side of the airport or continued development of the existing Lindbergh Terminal. A new south parallel runway option was eliminated early in the process based on operational and environmental factors.

In February 1995, Concept 6 (including a north-south runway and new terminal on the northwest side of the airport) was selected by the MAC as the preferred alternative and used as the basis for the development of a 2010 Long Term Comprehensive Plan and 2020 Conceptual Plan.

NWA Proposal

In early 1996, Northwest Airlines proposed an alternative development concept for MSP. Many of the plan items were similar to the concept adopted by MAC, however NWA proposed a different terminal concept and indicated that they did not need growth in a number of support facilities.

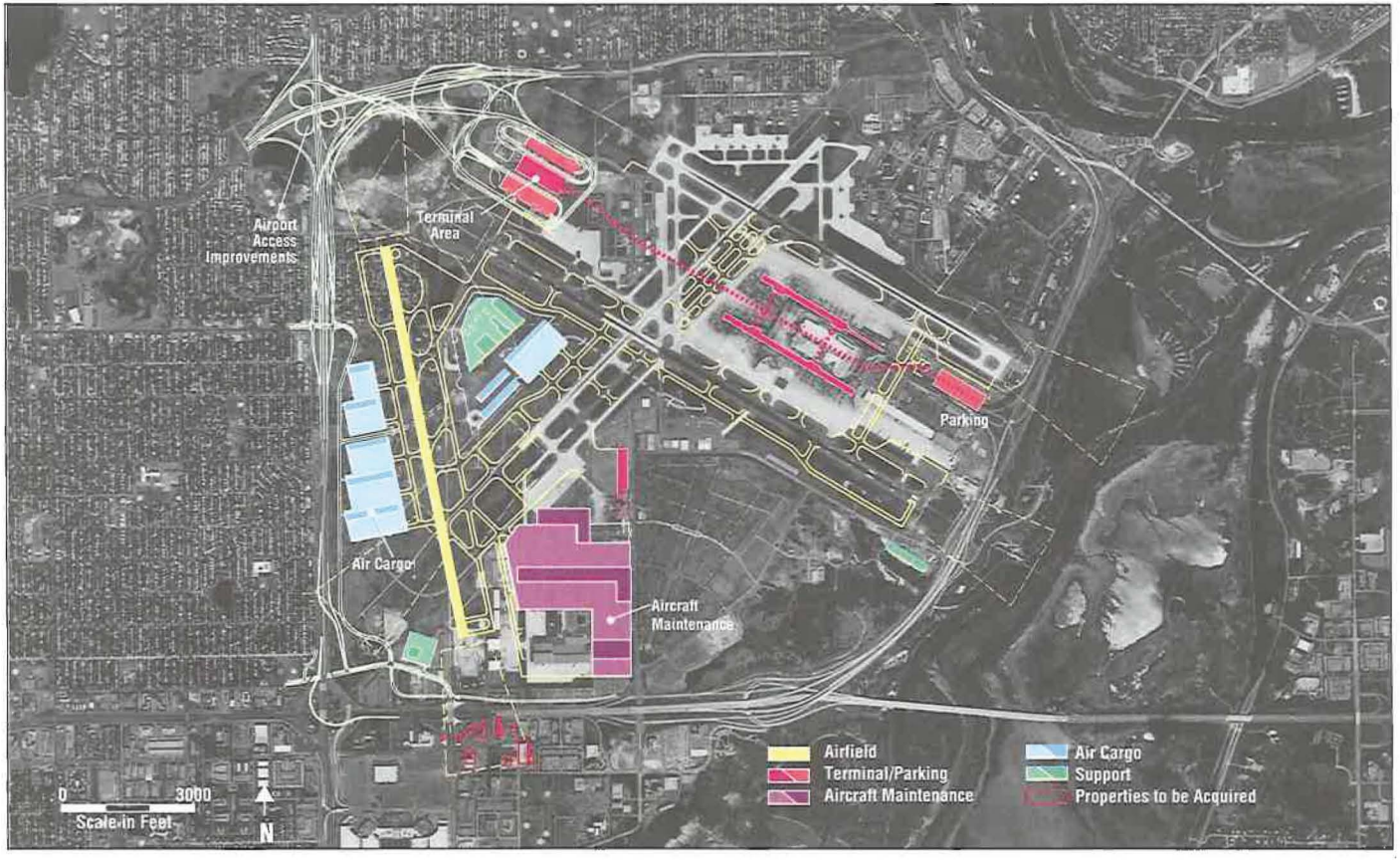
After extensive discussion and review of the alternatives, the MAC and Northwest determined that needs through 2010, and potentially longer, could be accommodated by continued phased development of the Lindbergh Terminal, but that for 2020 planning and environmental review purposes, Concept 6 would be carried forward as the preferred concept. Continued discussions between MAC and NWA will review ongoing development needs.

AIRPORT ALTERNATIVES – (continued)

MSP 2020 Conceptual Plan

The principal features of Concept 6 include:

- a new 8,000-foot north-south runway on the west side of the airport.
- a replacement passenger terminal in the northwest corner of the airport.
- realigned passenger concourses in the existing terminal area.
- additional air cargo facilities, and the capability for additional maintenance facilities on the south and west sides of the airport.
- construction of a remote parking facility located on the present site of the rental car service/storage lots, to provide access from the east.
- a pair of new cross-field taxiways which will allow a circular flow of aircraft around the boarding gates and enhance ground traffic flows.



MSP 2020 Conceptual Plan

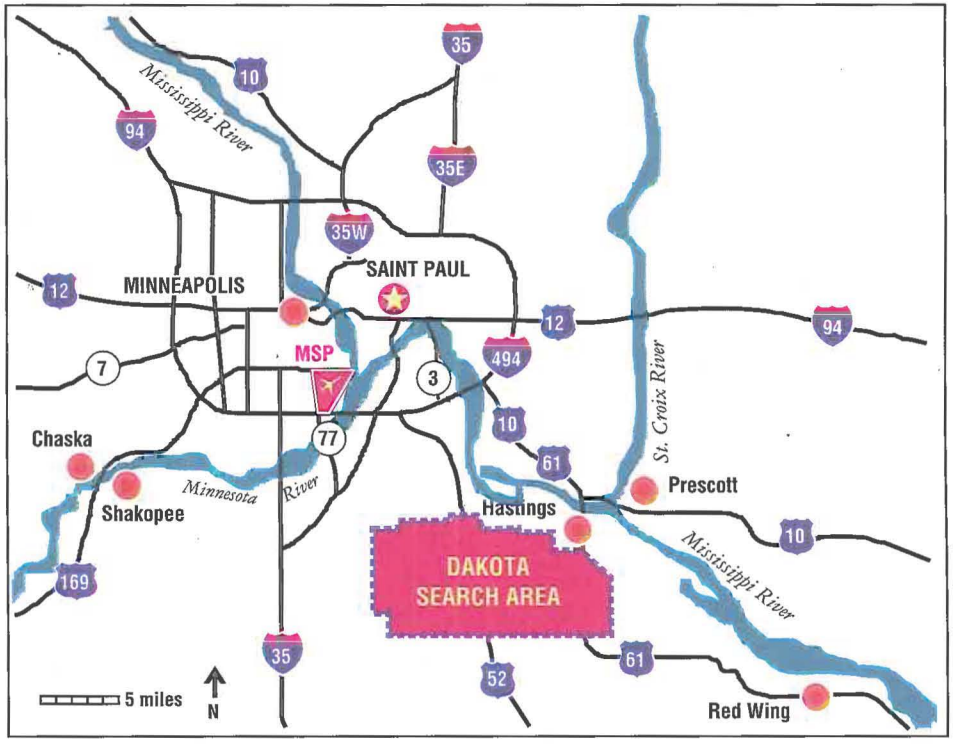
The replacement passenger terminal will result in shorter walking distances and will consolidate domestic, international and regional carrier facilities. The new runway will add significantly to airfield capacity, while directing flights to and from the south over less populated areas.

AIRPORT ALTERNATIVES – (continued)

Construction of a New Airport

The second primary alternative addressed in the Dual Track Planning Process was the construction of a new airport. The process for selecting a location for a new airport and developing a New Airport Comprehensive Plan covered nearly six years and included the following four major tasks:

- the development of a new airport conceptual plan. In December 1990, the MAC adopted a new airport conceptual plan; it was used by the Metropolitan Council in the search area selection process.
- designation of a search area for a new airport. In December 1991, a 17-mile by 8-mile search area in east central Dakota County (Dakota Search Area) was selected by the Metropolitan Council.
- selection of a new airport site within the search area. In January 1994, the MAC selected Site 3, located in the southeastern part of the search area, as the preferred location for a potential new air carrier airport; and
- evaluation of alternative new airport layouts. A range of alternatives was analyzed for the potential new airport configuration, with the final focus on three alternative layouts. In April 1995, MAC approved a composite alternative which incorporated the best operational features of the three layouts, while minimizing environmental impacts.

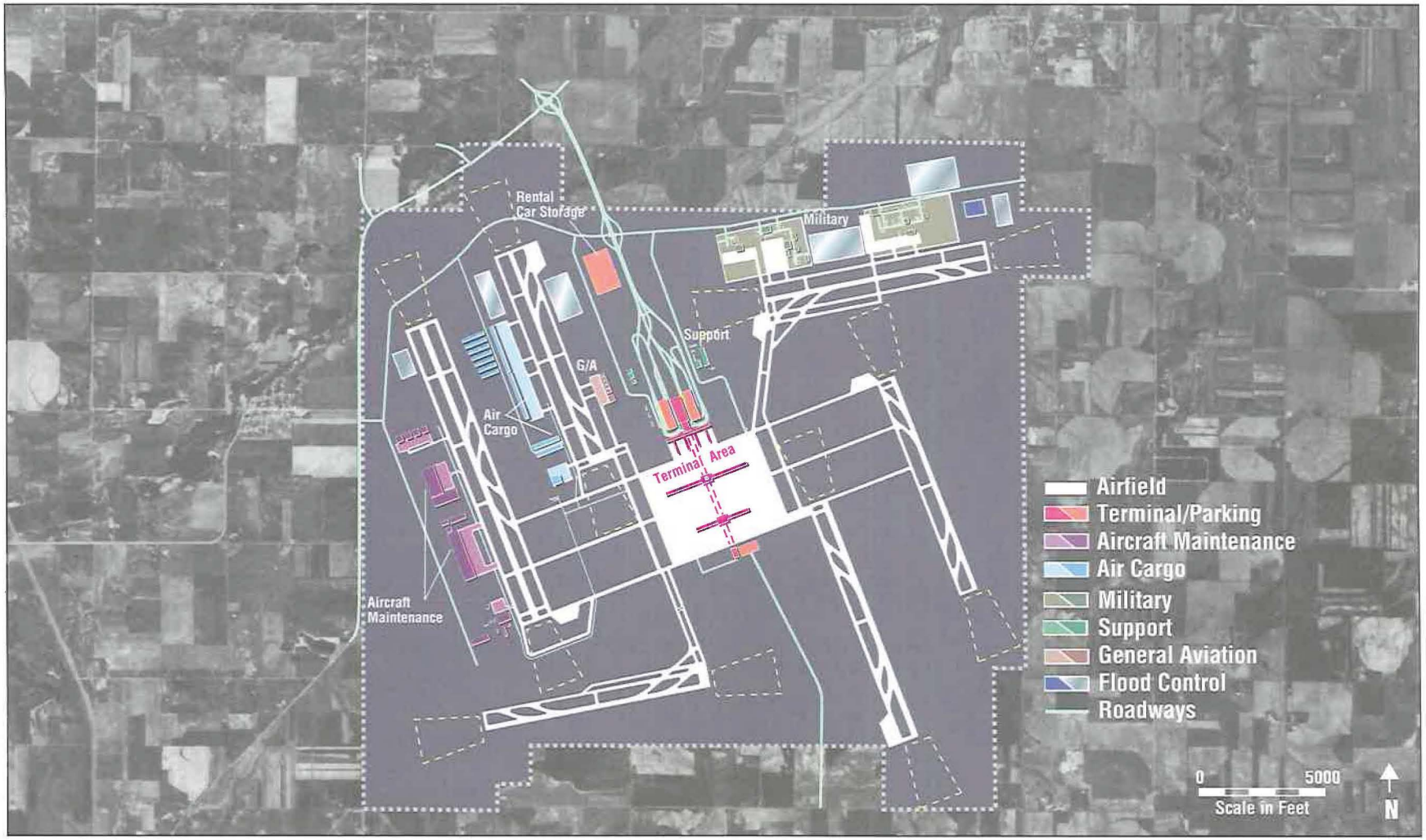


New Airport 2020 Conceptual Plan

Key features of the New Airport 2020 Conceptual Plan included:

- a six runway airfield including four parallel runways and two crosswind runways.
- a 2.5 million square foot main terminal building connected to two midfield concourses by an underground peoplemover.
- parking to accommodate 15,000 public and 16,000 employee vehicles.
- 156 acres of cargo facilities
- 266 acres of aircraft maintenance facilities.

AIRPORT ALTERNATIVES – (continued)



New Airport 2020 Conceptual Plan

AIRPORT ALTERNATIVES – (continued)

Other Alternatives

A number of other alternatives were evaluated during the course of the Dual Track Planning Process. These alternatives included the following:

- use of High Speed Intercity Rail to divert sufficient passengers to rail service so that a new runway and terminal facilities would not be needed.
- construction of Remote Runways on a new site, while retaining the ticketing, baggage and support facilities at MSP. A high speed rail link would connect the two facilities.
- use of an existing airport to offload some MSP operations, thereby eliminating the need for major new facilities at MSP.
- preservation of a site for a new airport in Dakota County. Development would occur on this site when demand exceeded capacity at MSP.

These four alternatives did not meet capacity requirements, were not operationally feasible, were inconsistent with the goals established during the planning process, or involved unacceptable environmental impacts or costs.

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

How well the primary alternatives – expanding MSP or building a new airport – can meet the region's long term air transportation needs was assessed by examining factors in six categories:

- Airport Operations
- Ground Access
- Environmental
- Economic and Community Development
- Financial
- Flexibility/Sensitivity

The results of this evaluation are summarized here.

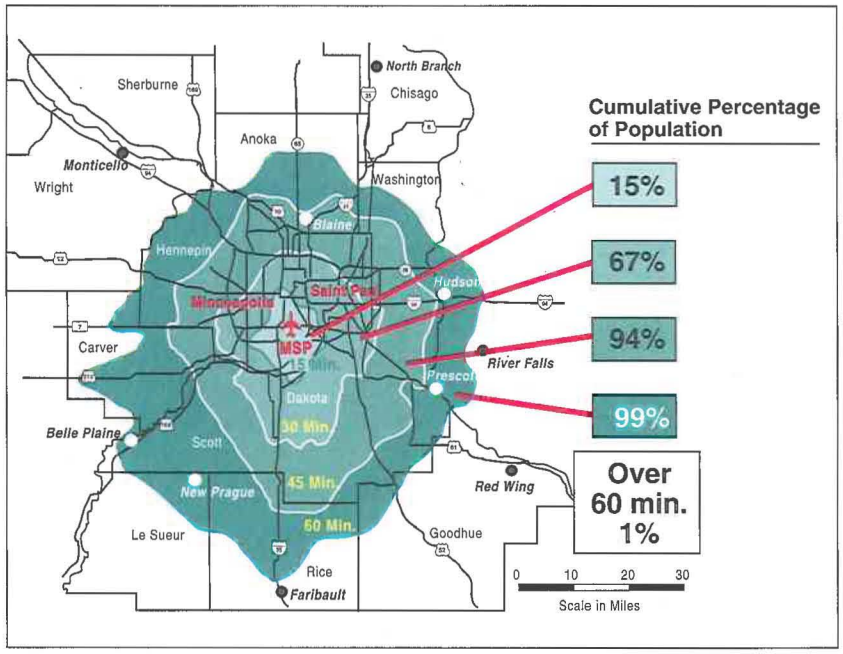
Airport Operations

- Both expansion of MSP and the new airport will adequately meet 2020 demand levels, including the high forecast of 48 million passengers and 640,000 operations.
- An expanded MSP, with activity levels at the high end of the forecast range and current technology, would experience average delays above present levels, and could experience considerable levels of delay for short periods when poor weather conditions occur.
- Both alternatives provide sufficient runway length for long-haul flights.
- The configuration of the new airport minimizes the need for aircraft to taxi across runways.
- The facilities that would be developed at the new airport site could readily accommodate passenger and operations levels significantly higher than the forecast range.
- Protection of approaches to existing and proposed runways is essential to maintaining airport capacity and community compatibility.

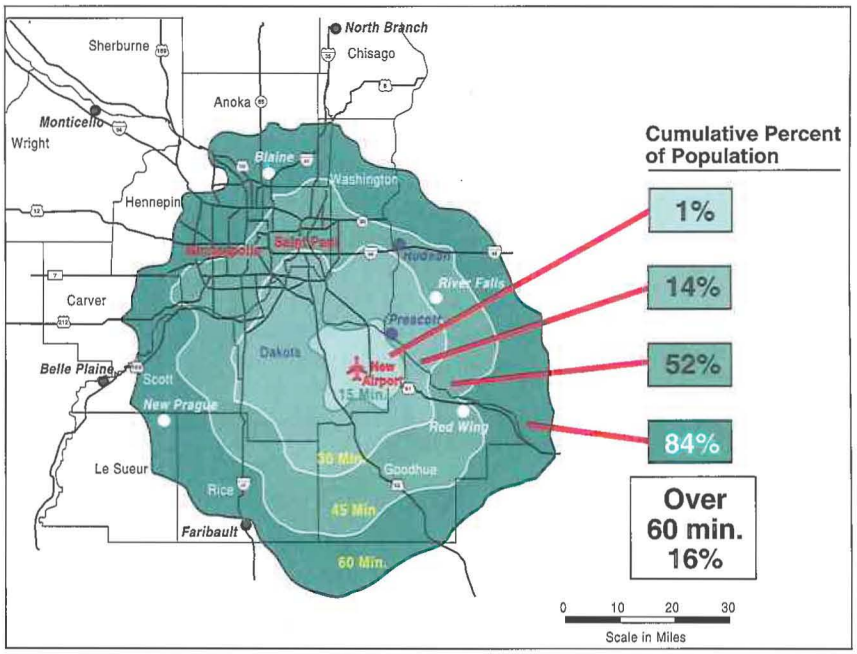
EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES – (continued)

Ground Access

- The average travel time to the new airport is about 20 minutes longer than to MSP.
- Sixty-seven percent of the population of the Twin Cities region and surrounding counties is within 30 minutes peak hour travel time of MSP; 14 percent of the regional population is within 30 minutes peak hour travel time of the new airport.
- Costs of improvements to the regional highway system are $73 million for MSP and $386 for the new airport. Costs of several other projects – identified as needed to provide good access to the airport – would add $84 million to the MSP alternative and $200 million to the New Airport alternative. These costs are not included in the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan nor in current MnDOT plans.
- Additional state funding would be required to provide highway access to a new airport, and to a new terminal at MSP.



2020 Travel Times (PM Peak) – MSP Alternative



2020 Travel Times (PM Peak) – New Airport Alternative

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES – (continued)

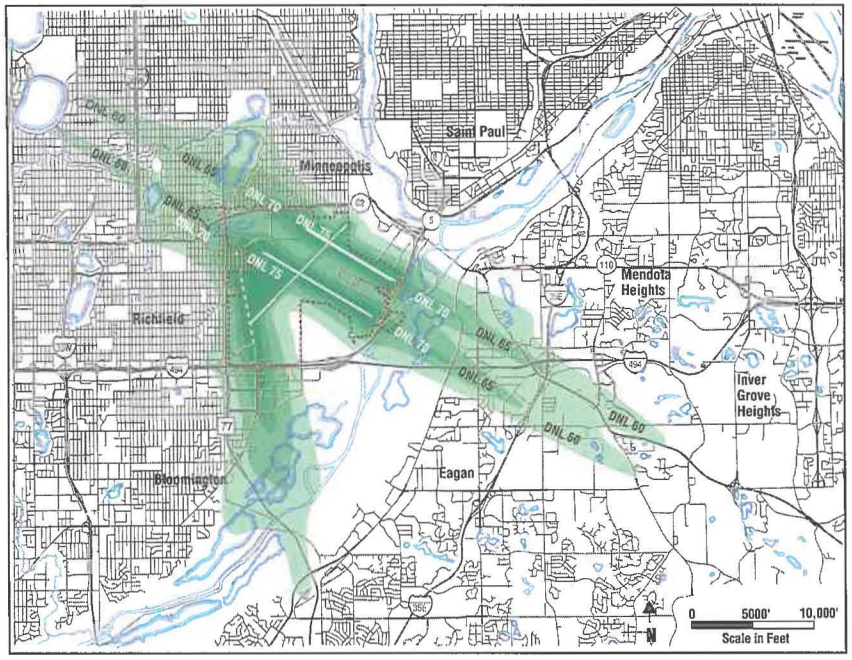
Environmental Impacts

- The number of people exposed to noise levels of DNL (day-night level) 65 or greater at MSP would decrease from 22,090 in 1994 to 7,620 in 2005, primarily due to conversion to an all Stage 3 airline fleet; in 2005, the new airport would expose 175 people to noise levels of DNL 65 or greater.
- The new airport would displace 1,132 residents; the MSP alternative would displace 227 residents.
- The MSP alternative would produce 3,100 tons less of vehicular CO (carbon monoxide) emissions than the new airport; the new airport would produce lower on-airport emissions.
- The MSP alternative would result in the loss of 360 acres of wildlife habitat; the new airport would result in the loss of 6,835 acres of wildlife habitat.
- The new airport would result in the loss of up to 17,000 acres of farmland.

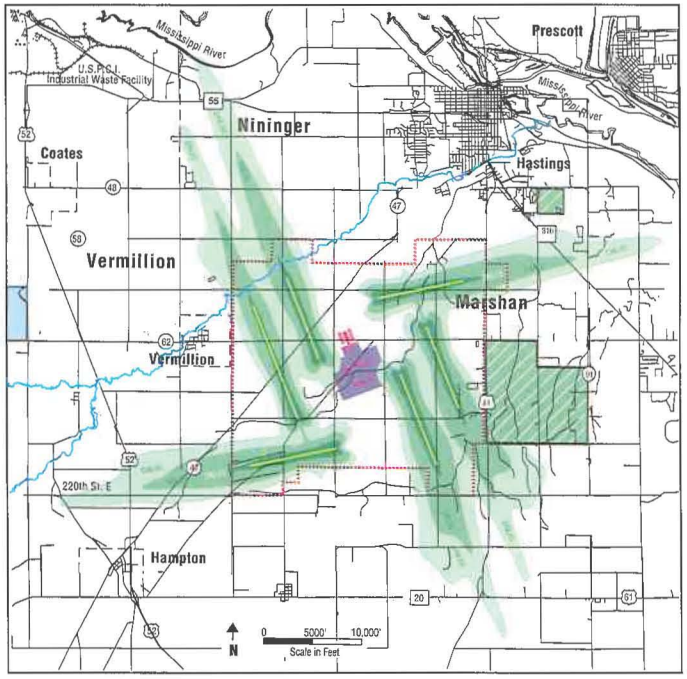
Economic and Community Development

- Both expansion of MSP and development of a new airport would result in an increase in direct airport jobs from 14,900 to 16,600.
- Correspondence from Northwest Airlines has indicated that due to the cost of providing replacement facilities at a new airport and capacity at other locations, it may choose to relocate some or all of 11,000 non-airport related jobs elsewhere. In addition, NWA has indicated a 15 percent activity reduction at a new airport, with an accompanying further reduction in employment. Additional information has been received by MAC and the Metropolitan Council from organizations and individuals with responsibilities for economic development, and considered in the decision making process.
- Indirect employment attributable to each alternative is approximately 19,600 jobs.
- Average annual jobs associated with construction of a new airport would be approximately 5 times higher than for expansion of MSP.
- Visitor expenditures would be the same for either alternative.
- If a new airport is constructed, MSP could be redeveloped with 1.5 million square feet of office space, 3.3 million square feet of industrial space, 800,000 square feet of retail space, and 1,800 residential units by 2020.

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES – (continued)



2005 DNL Noise Contours – MSP Alternative



2005 DNL Noise Contours – New Airport Alternative

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES – (continued)

Financial

- The projected cost (in 1995 dollars) for the MSP development plan is $2.7 billion; the projected cost for the new airport plan is $4.6 billion.
- Capital expenditures to implement the MSP plan occur incrementally such that 33 percent are incurred by 2005; implementation of the new airport requires 80 percent of the cost to be incurred by 2005.
- Escalated costs (not including financing costs) to design and build the new airport plan are $1.1 billion more than the cost to design and build the MSP plan.
- MAC must rely more heavily on borrowed funds, and less on internally generated funds and PFC revenues, to finance a new airport. Projected financing cost for the new airport is $1.1 billion more than for the MSP plan.
- When escalated design, construction and financing costs are considered, the cost of the new airport is approximately $2.2 billion more than expansion of MSP.
- Airline charges per enplaned passenger would increase to $8 for the MSP plan and $11 for the new airport plan (in 1995 dollars).
- Northwest Airlines would incur an increase in annual costs of approximately $70 million to replace existing maintenance facilities at a new airport. MAC could not afford to offset these costs as an inducement to Northwest to relocate maintenance facilities to the new airport.

Flexibility/Sensitivity

- The ability to develop the MSP alternative on an incremental basis allows it to better adjust to changing market conditions.
- The high forecast (640,000 annual operations) can be accommodated at MSP with the one new runway (north-south) included in Concept 6. A third parallel runway is not included in Concept 6.
- The New Airport alternative requires most of the construction to occur in one phase. Any reduction in air traffic below forecast levels after construction would result in excessive facilities and create a significant financial burden.
- The new airport has significant capacity to meet higher than forecast demands.
- The environmental, ground access, community and economic development impacts associated with the high forecast would not significantly affect the ability of either alternative to accommodate the higher activity levels.

DEVELOPMENT COST

(Millions of dollars)

	MSP Plan	New Airport Plan
Property Acquisition	$70	$163
Airfield	118	414
Terminal Area	1,566	1,728
Roadways	73	386
Other Facilities	878	1,781
Major Utilities	20	108
Grand Total	**$2,725**	**$4,579**

FINDINGS

The Metropolitan Airports Commission and Metropolitan Council reviewed the evaluation of airport alternatives, and developed a set of key findings that were used as the basis for developing a recommendation. The findings focus on the differences between expanding MSP and building a new airport, and were as follows:

1. The requirements of the Metropolitan Airport Planning Act have been met by the Metropolitan Airports Commission and the Metropolitan Council.

2. The forecast of aviation activity provides a baseline forecast for 2020 (33 million passengers and 520,000 operations) and a number of alternative scenarios that identify the impact of changes in the major forecasting assumptions.

3. All reasonable airport development alternatives have been identified and evaluated as part of the airport planning process. The two alternatives selected for detailed evaluation are the Concept 6 expansion alternative for MSP (adopted by MAC in February 1995) and the new airport layout (adopted by MAC in April 1995).

4. Based on the 2020 horizon specified in the Metropolitan Airport Planning Act, preservation of a site in Dakota County for a potential new airport is not necessary.

5. The airfield and terminal proposals for either the new airport or expansion of MSP can accommodate the high end of the aviation activity forecast range.

6. Average travel times for residents of the Twin Cities region to the new airport are approximately 20 minutes longer than to MSP.

7. The environmental evaluation did not identify any critical finding that would preclude either continued development of MSP or development of a new airport.

8. The overall impacts on the regional and state economies are not significantly different for either expansion of MSP or development of a new airport.

9. The cost for a new airport, considering construction (including inflation) and financing costs, is $2.2 billion greater than for expansion of MSP.

10. MSP expansion provides more flexibility and less financial risk than development of a new airport.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Metropolitan Airports Commission and Metropolitan Council determined that the aviation needs of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the State of Minnesota can be met by continued development of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport through the year 2020. Specifics of the recommendations from each agency, which were made in March 1996, were as follows:

Metropolitan Airports Commission

1. Adopt the Findings and Conclusions related to the Dual Track Airport Planning Process.

2. Recommend to the Governor and the Minnesota Legislature that the aviation needs of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the State of Minnesota can be met by continued development of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport through the year 2020.

3. Confirm approval of the recommended 20-year (2010) development plan for Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

4. Confirm approval of the recommended 30-year (2020) conceptual plan for Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, to be used for planning and environmental review purposes.

5. Direct staff to complete an update of the plans in five years.

6. Authorize staff to take actions to protect approaches to existing and proposed runways, specifically to initiate the process for acquisition of property in the south approach to the north-south runway, including a selection process for legal counsel.

7. Authorize staff, with the involvement of affected communities, to develop a comprehensive mitigation plan and program for areas affected by airport operations within 180 days after a recommendation regarding future airport development is submitted to the Legislature.

8. Direct staff to amend the Capital Improvement Program to incorporate appropriate projects identified in the 2010 Long Term Comprehensive Plan.

9. Direct staff to include the Commission action in the Report to the Legislature, and to forward the document to the Governor and the Legislature.

Metropolitan Council

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Report to the Legislature on the Dual Track Airport Planning Process.

That the Metropolitan Council determine that the aviation needs of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and of the State of Minnesota can be met by the continued development of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport through the year 2020.

That the Metropolitan Council confirm approval of the MSP Long Term Comprehensive Plan, called development Concept 6, including:

- 2010 comprehensive plan for development of the MSP International Airport; and
- 2020 conceptual plan to be used for planning and environmental review purposes.

That the Metropolitan Council work with the Metropolitan Airports Commission and with affected communities to develop a comprehensive noise mitigation plan and program and other potential community protection measures for areas affected by aircraft operations within 180 days after a recommendation regarding future airport development is submitted to the Legislature.

That the Metropolitan Council immediately notify affected communities of its adoption of Concept 6 as its year 2020 system plan for the development of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and provide guidance to communities that must revise their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances to be consistent with regional plans for aviation facilities; and

That the Metropolitan Council endorse the Governor's request that the 1996 Legislature act on these recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION – (continued)

Legislative Action

In mid-March, the Minnesota Legislature received the recommendations from the Metropolitan Airports Commission and the Metropolitan Council. Hearings were held before the Senate Transportation and Public Transit Committee, the Senate Metropolitan and Local Government Committee, and the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee. Based on the information developed in these committees, a bill was passed in early April and subsequently signed by the Governor. Highlights of the legislation are as follows:

- The MAC cannot acquire land or construct a new airport.
- The MAC must prohibit operations at MSP by Stage 2 aircraft after Dec. 31, 1999.
- The MAC is directed to implement the 2010 Long Term Comprehensive Plan for MSP.
- Construction of a new west terminal is prohibited without legislative approval.
- Contracts must be entered into between MAC and each affected city stating that a third parallel runway will not be constructed without the city's approval.
- The MAC must prepare an annual report to the Legislature comparing actual activity to the forecasts developed during the Dual Track Airport Planning Process.
- The MAC must spend $185 million for noise insulation and property acquisition between 1996 and 2002, must insulate four schools in Minneapolis and two schools in Richfield, must prepare a mitigation plan for a new runway prior to construction of the runway, and must prepare a mitigation plan for the airport within 180 days of submittal of the Dual Track recommendation to the Legislature.
- The MAC must contract with the University of Minnesota to conduct an analysis of the relationship between air service and commercial and industrial activity and relocation to the state.

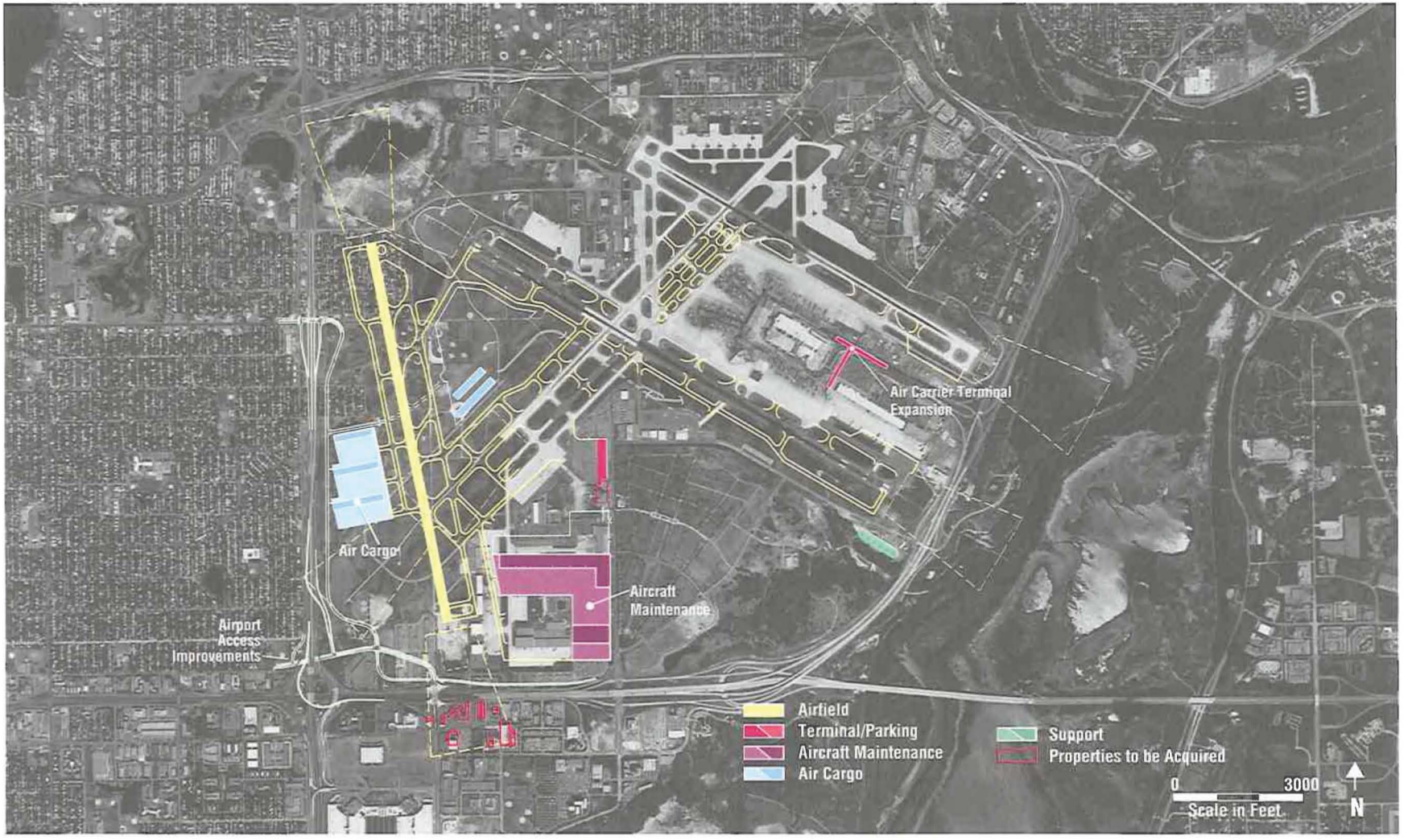
Next Steps

The Metropolitan Airports Commission is charged by the Dual Track Legislation with implementing the 2010 Long Term Comprehensive Plan for Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. The initial step in this process is completion of the Joint State/Federal Environmental Impact Statement. This process should be completed by mid-1997, and is necessary to allow construction of the major facilities identified in the development plan.

While the EIS is being completed, the MAC will prepare an implementation plan for the north-south runway, focusing on both on-airport and off-airport impacts. Land acquisition in the approach to the south end of the runway will be a primary focus during this process. Further development in the terminal area will occur based on needs identified by either the airlines serving the Twin Cities or the MAC.

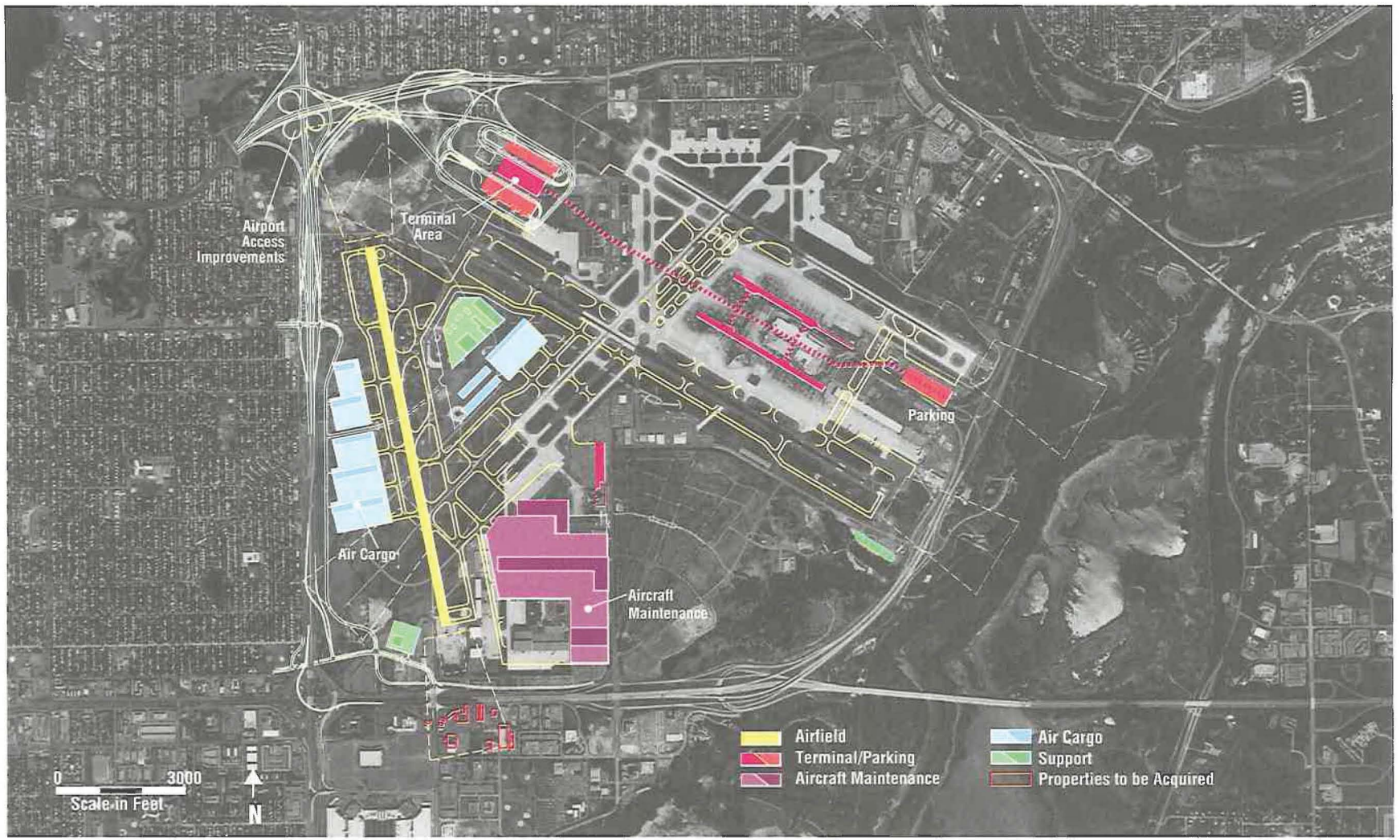
The legislatively required mitigation plan must be adopted by the MAC in September 1996. This plan is key to identifying potential off-airport impacts associated with future airport development and operations, and will provide a comprehensive and coordinated approach to dealing with these impacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION – (continued)



MSP 2010 Comprehensive Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION – (continued)



MSP 2020 Conceptual Plan

APPENDIX

Metropolitan Airports Commission

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