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DUAL TRACK AIRPORT PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1993 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION

February 1994

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Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 473.616
Subd. 4

Dual Track Airport Planning Activities

1993 Annual Report to the Legislature

Metropolitan Airports Commission

Introduction

The 1989 Metropolitan Airport Planning Act requires that the Metropolitan Airports Commission report to the Legislature by February 15 of each year on its airport planning activities for the preceding year, and its anticipated activities for the upcoming year.

For 1993, the following activities are discussed:

- 1992 Report to the Legislature.
- Aviation Activity Forecast Update.
- Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan Update (MSP LTCP).
- Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan Environmental Scoping Process.
- FAA Capacity Enhancement Plan for Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport.
- New Airport Site Selection.
- New Airport Site Selection Study Alternative Environmental Document.
- Dual Track Airport Planning Process Environmental Impact Statement Alternatives.
- Dual Track Airport Planning Process Decision Document.
- Community/Agency Coordination.
- Governor's Task Force on Metropolitan Airport Planning.

For 1994, the following anticipated activities are discussed:

- Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan Alternative Environmental Document.
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan.
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan Alternative Environmental Document.
- Economic Impacts Study.
- Community Impacts Study.
- Dual Track Airport Planning Process Decision Document
- Community/Agency Coordination.

Total costs for MAC Dual Track planning activities are provided for 1993 and 1994 at the end of the report.

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Work Completed in 1993

Purpose and Objective

During February 1993, a report to the Legislature similar to this document was prepared and submitted. The report described on-going 1992 work and anticipated 1993 work.

Status and Results

The 1992 report was submitted to the Legislature on February 15, 1993. The report summarized progress on the following initiatives:

- MSP Long Term Comprehensive Plan Update
- Site selection study for a potential new airport
- FAA Capacity Enhancement Plan for MSP
- Alternative environmental process for the Dual Track Airport Planning Process
- Environmental Scoping Process
- DNR biological survey - Dakota Search Area

Purpose and Objective

To update the aviation activity forecasts that were prepared in 1990, and that are used as the basis for Dual Track Airport Planning Activities.

Status and Results

In 1990, the MAC prepared forecasts of aviation activity for use in the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. The forecasts were revised during 1993 to take into account changes in the aviation industry - such as changes in Northwest's operating and market development strategies, and the expanded role of regional carriers - and to take into account updated forecasts of population, employment and income for the region, which better reflect changing economic conditions.

An Expert Panel Session was convened on May 27, 1993 to review work previously accomplished and to develop consensus on the final assumptions, methodologies and scenarios to be used in the updated forecasts. A Public Scoping Session, as well as two other Expert Panels were held earlier in the process (1992) to ensure the full range of review and input into the development of the revised forecasts.

The revised forecasts showed that air carrier originations and regional carrier enplanements were higher than originally forecast. Total enplanements and total aircraft operations were lower than in the original forecast, primarily due to lower hubbing activity anticipated by Northwest Airlines. The revised forecasts were presented in Volume 6 of the Long Term Comprehensive Plan for MSP, published in December, 1993.

Purpose and Objective

The Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport was developed to provide a blueprint for airport development through the year 2020, should the Legislature decide to retain MSP as the region's air carrier airport. It includes a 2010 development plan and a 2020 conceptual plan. The plan was approved by the MAC in December 1991. The completed Plan will provide a benchmark to compare with the Comprehensive Plan to be developed for a new airport. The Metropolitan Airport Planning Act of 1989 requires that this plan be updated prior to the recommendation to the Legislature.

Status and Results

Work was initiated on the update of the Long Term Comprehensive Plan for Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport. An updated inventory of facilities at MSP was performed in September 1993. These facilities will be compared with those required to accommodate the revised forecast traffic levels, and to determine what, if any, refinements are needed to the previously identified airport expansion alternatives. Facility requirements were re-evaluated based on the revised forecasts.

Purpose and Objective

"Scoping" is the decision-making process that determines what alternatives, impacts, issues and mitigative measures will be addressed in the Alternative Environmental Documents and the final EIS and in what level of detail. The AED for MSP development is similar to an EIS except that only LTCP alternatives will be considered at this stage of the Dual Track process.

Status and Results

A Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet/Draft Scoping Decision Document was developed in December 1993. Twelve runway alternatives and 14 terminal alternatives were considered in the development of the LTCP. These alternatives were screened to six alternatives for more detailed analysis. Four of the concepts are recommended to be carried forward for detailed analysis in the AED; it is recommended that the south parallel runway alternatives be deleted from further analysis in the AED.

Purpose and Objective

The purpose of the MSP Capacity Enhancement Plan is to identify potential projects to increase the airport's runway and taxiway capacity, and to quantify the potential benefits of these projects for future operations.

Status and Results

The FAA has conducted, or is in the process of conducting, Capacity Design Studies of all the major airports throughout the United States.

The MSP Capacity Design Team included FAA representatives from air traffic control, flight standards, and the Airport Capacity Office. The Team also included airport tenants (airlines, military), and representatives from local and state agencies (MAC, Metropolitan Council, MnDOT). The Team was chaired by the FAA Airport Capacity Program Manager.

The plan draws on information from the Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for MSP. The data and results from the capacity study will be considered in the LTCP update.

The FAA Capacity Design Team completed its Capacity Enhancement Plan for MSP in December 1993. The Design Team -- established in July 1992 -- met periodically through the fall of 1993. The plan, published in December 1993, documents existing airport capacity, identifies potential capacity enhancement projects, and quantifies the potential benefits of these projects for future levels of aircraft operations. The report confirmed the need for additional capacity to meet Future 1 (530,000 annual operations) demand levels, and indicated that a north-south runway provides the additional capacity in the most cost-effective manner. The report also indicated that two additional runways (north-south and north parallel) would be needed to meet Future 2 (600,000 annual operations) activity levels.

Purpose and Objective

After the Metropolitan Council selected the Dakota Search Area in December 1991, the MAC was required to select a specific site for an airport within the search area.

Status and Results

The MAC developed a three-tiered methodology for site selection, including:

1. Site Identification, to identify all possible locations for the new airport based on a limited number of general criteria.

2. Site Screening, to reduce the number of potential sites to a more limited number. A set of detailed criteria was then used to assess physical characteristics, operational efficiency, community/social impacts, environmental impacts, and development costs.

3. Site Selection, to analyze the remaining sites and recommend a "preferred" site. Analysis during this final phase included the factors addressed during site screening, but at a more comprehensive level, and included additional factors that were required to distinguish among the sites and to meet environmental review requirements.

In 1992, seven potential sites were identified in the site identification phase. The sites were analyzed using a series of site screening criteria developed with guidance from the Site Selection Technical Advisory Committee and the Site Selection Task Force. As a result of the screening process, three sites (Sites 2, 3, 6) were selected for a more detailed technical study that began in February 1993.

The three sites were analyzed using an extensive list of criteria grouped in the categories of Airport Characteristics, including operational efficiency, airspace interaction, site expandability, and site accessibility; Community/Social Impacts, including displaced communities, land use impacts, changes in community services and infrastructure, noise impacts, state safety zones, historic/archaeological resources, farm and non-farm businesses, prime farmland, and public parks; Other Environmental Impacts, including wild and scenic rivers, wetlands, waste disposal sites, water and air quality, bird strike issues, biotic communities, energy supply, natural resources, and floodplains; and Differential Costs.

Meetings of the Site Selection Technical Advisory Committee and Task Force were held throughout the year to review the results of the site selection analysis and to discuss outstanding issues. Public information meetings were held on February 25, March 18, and July 22, 1993, for review and comment on the site selection analysis. A preferred site (Site 3) was identified at a joint meeting of the Technical Committee and Task Force on July 28 and forwarded to the MAC.

At a meeting on September 20, 1993, MAC approved Site 3 for purposes of public review and comment. This was followed by a public hearing, held on November 18, 1993, for review and comment on the selection of a preferred site and on the Draft Alternative Environmental Document covering the site selection process. Final action by the Minnesota EQB and the MAC on the environmental review process and on the preferred site is anticipated in January 1994.

Purpose and Objective

The consideration of environmental impacts is an integral part of the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. An alternative environmental review process approved by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board was initiated along with the new airport site selection study. The process is identical to the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement in terms of addressing issues and potential environmental impacts, however, alternatives are treated in a more limited manner.

An Alternative Environmental Document (AED) substitutes for an EIS in the site selection for a new airport. The analysis in the AED focuses on differences among alternative sites, since the purpose of the AED is to help select among alternative sites.

Status and Results

Sites 2, 3 and 6 were selected for further study as a result of a scoping process conducted between February 4 and April 19, 1993 and outlined in a document titled "Scoping Decision Document, New Airport Site Selection Study."

The draft AED for the new airport site selection was completed in August, 1993 and reviewed by the MAC, FAA, the Technical Committee and the Task Force prior to a public hearing on November 18, 1993. The draft final AED was completed on December 27, 1993.

The final AED will be reviewed by the Minnesota EQB at its January 20, 1994 meeting, with a final MAC Determination of Adequacy of the AED and selection of Site 3 anticipated on January 27, 1994.

Purpose and Objective

Environmental regulations require consideration of prudent and feasible alternatives including the No Build alternative, in an EIS. The objective of this task is to identify and describe the No Build alternative and other alternatives.

Status and Results

Two potential options of the MSP No Build alternative have been identified. Both options would be limited to only routine maintenance for airfield facilities. One terminal option would also be limited to only routine maintenance, whereas the other option would upgrade the Lindbergh Terminal to improve operational flow and convenience to users, but would not add any aircraft gates or significantly increase the terminal's floor area. Alternative no-build scenarios are still under discussion.

In addition to the No Build alternative, several other alternatives have been suggested to the MAC for consideration. These include a High-Speed Rail alternative and an alternative airport concept.

The High-Speed Rail alternative provides an option to some short-haul air service at MSP. The rail service would be provided between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago. The objective is to reduce the physical facilities that would be required at MSP in the future. This alternative will be documented in the EIS.

Options for using the Rochester Municipal Airport (RST) as an alternative to MSP development were evaluated. The objective of the RST alternative is to utilize that airport in a manner that will alleviate capacity and noise issues at MSP. It focuses on providing high-speed rail service between MSP and RST and identifying selected flight segments which may use RST rather than, or in concert, with MSP. This evaluation is being broadened to involve MnDot and to look at a more system-oriented approach to providing alternate airport facilities.

Dual Track Airport Planning Process
Decision Document

Purpose and Objective

The Decision Document will lay out the key data, analysis and rationale for the recommendation to the Legislature for meeting the long term aviation needs of the Twin Cities. The report is to be completed by July 1996. A recommendation by the MAC and the Metropolitan Council will be included in the document.

Status and Results

Redrafting of the Decision Document was begun in 1993. This draft incorporates comments provided at, and subsequent to, public hearings held in 1992 on the previous draft and identifies the questions and key issues that will need to be addressed in the Decision Document. This will focus the studies undertaken in the next phases of the dual track planning process to yield information necessary to making the recommendations contained in the Decision Document.

Purpose and Objective

Throughout the Dual Track Process, a high level of public and agency coordination is being maintained. MAC staff and consultants are working on a continuing basis with several committees and review groups in each of the study elements.

Status and Results

The following activities took place during 1993:

- Briefings of the State Advisory Council at the call of the Co-Chairs.
- Regular meetings of the Site Selection Task Force.
- Regular meetings of the Site Selection Technical Advisory Committee.
- Presentations to MAC at major decision points.
- Bi-monthly newsletters.
- Public information meetings and public hearings.

The Site Selection Technical Advisory Committee held meetings on January 12, January 27, February 9, March 9, April 13, May 26, June 16, July 14, July 28, September 14, and December 15, 1993.

The Site Selection Task Force held meetings on January 13, January 27, February 10, March 10, April 14, May 26, June 16, July 14, July 28, and December 15, 1993.

Public information meetings were held on February 25 and July 22, 1993 to review the results of the site screening/selection study. Public meetings were also held on March 18, 1993, for the scoping process for the new airport site selection AED, and on November 17, 1993, to familiarize the public with the site selection/screening processes and results. A public hearing was held on November 18, 1993 on the Draft AED for the New Airport Site Selection.

Presentations were made to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board Technical Reps on April 6, 1993 and to the Environmental Quality Board on May 20, 1993 regarding the Scoping Document for New Airport Site Selection.

Purpose and Objective

The Governor's Task Force on Metropolitan Airport Planning was established to address three charges from Governor Carlson:

1. Do current projections of future airport traffic properly incorporate the effects of changes in the airline industry, including changes at Northwest Airlines?

2. Is it feasible to shorten the dual track planning process so that a final report and recommendation can be made to the Minnesota Legislature by January 1, 1994 or January 1, 1995 instead of the current deadline of July, 1996?

3. Can a technically sound report be prepared if the Task Force decides to shorten the time frame with a new deadline for completion?

Status and Results

On April 30, 1993, Governor Carlson announced the formation of a Task Force to address three specific issues related to the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. The Task Force was chaired by Richard Braun and consisted of seven members representing state agencies and the legislature. The Task Force held ten meetings over a period of several months, gathering technical information related to the issues, and hearing substantial public testimony.

The Task Force provided a preliminary assessment on June 30, 1993, and completed its work in late August, 1993. A Final Report was sent to Governor Carlson on September 30, 1993. The Task Force concluded that "... the Dual Track Airport Planning Process should continue, at least until a new site has been located within the Search Area and a development plan for a new airport has been completed. Concurrently, the capability of the existing airport to accommodate additional aircraft traffic should be accelerated to ensure an adequate comparison of the costs and benefits and their respective impacts on the economic development policies of the State of Minnesota." The Task Force also concluded that "...the current dual track airport planning process should be retained with a completion date of July, 1996 for the recommendation to the Legislature."

Work to be Conducted in 1994

Purpose and Objective

The Long Term Comprehensive Plan for MSP will be updated using the revised forecasts developed under the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. The primary goals for the LTCP Update are to determine the projected aircraft activity and passenger levels for MSP in 2010 and 2020, assess the changes in facilities required to meet these levels from the current LTCP, and to update the alternatives previously considered and the recommended development plan to determine what adjustments need to be made.

Status and Results

The key components of the LTCP Update include:

- Update Existing Conditions at MSP
- Update Forecasts of Aviation Demand
- Revise Airport Facility Requirements
- Revalidate Airfield and Terminal Alternatives
- Update 2010 Development and 2020 Conceptual Plan
- Prepare Airport Layout Plan

The MSP LTCP update will focus on the alternatives, impacts and issues that are proposed to be addressed in the Scoping Decision Document. Outstanding issues remaining from the previous Long Term Comprehensive Plan process will also be addressed as part of the update. Plan alternatives will be evaluated and an Airport Layout Plan will be developed for the preferred alternative for approval by the FAA.

Purpose and Objective

The consideration of environmental impacts is an integral part of the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. An alternative environmental review process approved by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board was initiated along with the MSP LTCP Update. The process is identical to the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in terms of addressing issues and potential environmental impacts, however, the treatment of alternatives is more limited.

An Alternative Environmental Document (AED) substitutes for an EIS for the MSP LTCP. The analysis in the AED focuses on environmental impacts, and specifically on differences among alternative airport development plans, since the purpose of the AED is to help select among alternative MSP development plans.

Status and Results

The Draft Scoping Decision Document (SDD) completed near the end of 1993, will be subject to public and agency review and comment including a public hearing on February 15, 1994. This will be followed by publication of the final SDD by MAC in March 1994.

A draft AED will be completed and released for public review and comment in July 1994, followed by a public hearing in September 1994. The final AED will be published in November 1994.

Purpose and Objective

After the final site has been chosen in January 1994, work will commence on a detailed comprehensive plan for the new airport. In detailing the airport layouts for the three final new airport sites, work on some of the elements of the new airport comprehensive plan was initiated. There has, therefore, been some overlap between the site selection study and the new airport comprehensive plan.

Status and Results

The development of the new airport comprehensive plan will consist of the following tasks:

- Prepare comprehensive plan inventory--Data files from the site selection element of the Dual Track Process will be reviewed for adequacy. Additional data will be collected as required.

- Identify alternative airport layouts--Several alternative layouts will be developed to optimize operational efficiency, taking into account existing physical and community factors.

- Evaluate alternative layouts--The most feasible combinations of airfield, terminal, and ground access layouts will be identified and evaluated.

- Select preferred layout--The preferred layout will be selected.

- Prepare transfer analysis--Assuming that MSP is closed and all aviation activity is transferred to the new airport, a transfer schedule will need to be developed. The schedule will also address necessary interim improvements at MSP while new airport construction is occurring.

- Prepare airport plans--Detailed plans will be developed, including airport layout plans, land use plans, airport property map, and an airport access plan. A 2010 Comprehensive Plan and a 2020 Conceptual Plan will be prepared, as well as an Airport Layout Plan for FAA approval.

- Prepare financial plan--Development schedules will be prepared addressing the initial construction period, short-range development, intermediate development, and long-range development. From these schedules, costs can be estimated. Operational and maintenance costs will be identified as well as revenue sources. A financial plan will be prepared based on the above information.

- Prepare implementation plan--An implementation plan will be necessary to identify administrative and institutional procedures, permits and legal and regulatory actions required for construction and operation of the new airport. The information will be used to create a schedule of required implementation actions.

- Prepare comprehensive plan report--A report(s) will be prepared to document each major element of the comprehensive development plan.

The revised forecasts prepared for the MSP LTCP update, with some adjustments, will be used as the basis of preparation of the New Airport Comprehensive Plan. Use of a common set of methodologies and assumptions will ensure that the MSP and New Airport Comprehensive Plans are directly comparable.

The development of the New Airport Comprehensive Plan will focus on the alternatives, impacts and issues that are proposed to be addressed in the Scoping Decision Document. Plan alternatives will be evaluated and a preferred alternative selected in October 1994.

Purpose and Objective

The consideration of environmental impacts is an integral part of the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. An alternative environmental review process approved by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board has been initiated. The process is identical to the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement in terms of addressing issues and potential environmental impacts, however, the treatment of alternatives is more limited.

An Alternative Environmental Document (AED) substitutes for an EIS in preparation of the New Airport Comprehensive Plan. The analysis in the AED will focus on environmental issues associated with the differences among alternative plans since the purpose of the AED is to help select among alternative plans.

Status and Results

An Environmental Assessment Worksheet and Draft Scoping Decision Document (SDD) will be available for public and agency review and comment in April, 1994. A public hearing on the scoping document will be held in May, 1994, with final MAC approval of the SDD in June, 1994.

The draft AED will be completed near the end of 1994, and will focus on the alternatives, impacts, issues and mitigation measures identified in the Scoping Decision Document.

Economic Impacts Study

Purpose and Objective

Airports and their associated activity affect local and regional economies. It is important to identify the various economic impacts -- categorized as direct, indirect and induced -- resulting from each of the airport development alternatives. The economic impacts of continuing development of MSP vs. the development of a new airport will be an integral part of the analysis leading up to an airport development decision by the Legislature. The work performed will be incorporated into the final Environmental Impact Statement.

Status and Results

Evaluation of economic impacts will be initiated in a separate study by the MAC and the Metropolitan Council. A work program for the economic analysis will be completed in early 1994, with work commencing shortly thereafter.

Community Impacts Study

Purpose and Objective

The purpose of this study element is to examine the community impacts associated with the construction and operation of a new airport, and alternatively for expansion of MSP. Where adverse consequences occur, means of mitigating these impacts will be explored. Changes in land use and development around each of the airport sites, as well as the effects of acquisition of land and the removal of land from development will be addressed. The changes in demand for public services will be analyzed, together with measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on adjacent communities.

Status and Results

Evaluation of community impacts was included as part of the site selection process, and in a preliminary manner for potential MSP development. The analysis will be continued in preparing the Alternative Environmental Documents for the new airport comprehensive plan and for the MSP LTCP update.

Dual Track Airport Planning Process
Decision Document

Purpose and Objective

The Decision Document will recommend to the Legislature a long term aviation strategy for the Twin Cities and lay out the key data, analysis and reasons for the recommendations. The report is scheduled to be completed by July 1996.

Status and Results

A detailed outline of the Decision Document will be prepared, reviewed, and approved during 1994.

Purpose and Objective

Each step of the Dual Track Airport Planning Process requires a high level of public and agency coordination. MAC staff and consultants will continue to work on a continued basis with several committees and review groups during the process, and coordinate with governmental agencies where appropriate.

Status and Results

The following activities will be continued in 1994:

- Briefings of the State Advisory Council at the call of the Co-Chairs.
- Regular meetings of the Dual Track Task Force will provide a policy oversight role for the continuing work on all study elements and in key decisions.
- Regular meetings of the New Airport Technical Committee and the MSP Technical Committee to review technical analyses and provide input at key points during the process.
- Presentations to EQB for review and comment on Scoping Documents and Alternative Environmental Documents.
- Presentations to MAC at major decision points.
- Public meetings and hearings at major decision points.
- Bi-monthly newsletters.
- Public information brochures at appropriate points.

The community and agency coordination element of the Dual Track Planning Process is an ongoing effort. This will include regular meetings of the committees and public meetings and hearings at key points of the study.

Costs for Dual Track Airport Planning Activities

MAC COSTS -- 1993

Consultants	Met Council	DNR	EQB
$1,547,000	$228,000	$2,100	$75,000

MAC COSTS -- 1994

Consultants	Met Council	EQB
$1,449,500	$152,500	$75,000