DUAL TRACK AIRPORT PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1995 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION

February 1996

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 473.616
Subd. 4

Dual Track Airport Planning Activities
1995 Annual Report to the Legislature
Metropolitan Airports Commission

Introduction

The 1989 Metropolitan Airport Planning Act requires that the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) 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 1995, the following activities are discussed:

- 1994 Report to the Legislature.
- Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport Long-Term Comprehensive Plan (MSP LTCP) Update.
- MSP LTCP Alternative Environmental Document (AED).
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan.
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan Draft AED.
- New Airport Site Preservation Study.
- Remote Runway Study.
- MnDOT Supplemental Airport Study.
- Draft Dual Track Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Economic Impact Study.
- Financial Analysis.
- FAA Airspace Capacity.
- Dual Track Technical Report.

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- Dual Track Airport Planning Process Report to the Legislature.
- Community/Agency Coordination.

For 1996, the following anticipated activities are discussed:

- MSP LTCP Update.
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan.
- Financial Analysis.
- FAA Airspace Capacity Study.
- Dual Track EIS.
- Economic Impact Study.
- Dual Track Technical Report.
- Dual Track Report to the Legislature.
- Community/Agency Coordination.

Total costs for MAC Dual Track planning activities are provided for 1995 and 1996 at the end of the report.

Work Completed in 1995

Purpose and Objective

In February 1995, a report to the Legislature similar to this document was prepared and submitted. The report described on-going 1994 work and anticipated 1995 work.

Status and Results

The 1994 report was submitted to the Legislature on February 15, 1995. The report summarized progress on the following initiatives:

- Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport Long-Term Comprehensive Plan Update (MSP LTCP).
- MSP LTCP Alternative Environmental Document (AED).
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan.
- New Airport Comprehensive Plan AED.
- New Airport Site Preservation Study.
- Remote Runway Study.
- FAA Airspace Capacity Study.
- MnDOT Supplemental Airport Study.
- Dual Track Airport Planning Process Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Economic Impact Study.
- Community Impact Study.
- Dual Track Airport Planning Process Report to the Legislature.
- Community/Agency Coordination.

Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport
Long-Term Comprehensive Plan Update

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 previous plan was approved by the MAC in December, 1991.

The Metropolitan Airport Planning Act of 1989 requires that this plan be updated prior to the recommendation to the Legislature. The updated plan provides a benchmark to compare with the comprehensive plan being developed for a new airport.

In 1993, as the first step in the update process, the aviation activity forecasts for MSP were updated. In 1994 and 1995, these forecasts were used to reassess anticipated facility requirements, and to re-evaluate the selection of Concept 6 as the recommended concept.

A series of detailing work was done for the LTCP in 1995, including development of an implementation plan, updating the Lindbergh Terminal development study, a regional aircraft parking location study, and an assessment of Lindbergh Terminal capacity.

Status and Results

An updated Concept 6 was adopted by the Comission as the recommended MSP Long-Term Comprehensive Plan on February 21, 1995. A preliminary Airport Layout Plan was submitted to the FAA for review and comment this summer; comments were addressed during the fall and winter. A draft of Volume 7 of the MSP LTCP, summarizing the update was completed in November.

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 (EQB) was initiated along with the MSP LTCP Update. The process is similar to an EIS in terms of detail and level of analysis, however the document only considers the four MSP LTCP development alternatives. 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.

Results from the AED analysis were used in the decision-making process to select the recommended development alternative. Analyses from the AED were also incorporated into the Dual Track EIS. The AED considered 19 major environmental factors in evaluating the four MSP development alternatives, including:

- *Air Quality*
- *Archaeological Impacts*
- *Biotic Communities*
- *Bird-Aircraft Hazards*
- *Construction Impacts*
- *Endangered and Threatened Species*
- *Energy Supply and Natural Resources*
- *Floodplains*
- *Groundwater*
- *Historical/Architectural*
- *Land Use Issues*
- *Noise Impacts*
- *Park and Recreation Areas*
- *Socioeconomic Impacts*
- *Surface Water Quality*
- *Transportation Access*
- *Visual Impacts*
- *Wetlands*
- *Wildlife Refuge*

Status and Results

In late 1993, a Scoping Document and Draft Scoping Decision Document were prepared to identify issues that would need to be addressed in the MSP AED. A 60-day agency and public comment period on the Draft Scoping Decision Document (SDD) for MSP began in February 1994, and a public hearing was held on February 15th. A final SDD, which incorporated comments received, was published in March 1994.

A Draft AED was published in October 1994. A 60-day public comment period followed, which included a public hearing on October 26, 1994. The Environmental Quality Board reviewed the AED in January 1995. The Commission determined the AED to be adequate on February 21, 1995.

Purpose and Objective

After the Metropolitan Council selected the Dakota Search Area in December 1991, a site selection study was undertaken to identify a recommended site for development of a potential new airport. The study culminated in the Commission's selection of "Site 3" on January 27, 1994. The site is located about 28 miles southeast of downtown Minneapolis, near Hastings.

A comprehensive plan is required by the Dual Track Legislation, and is designed to identify a preferred layout and blueprint for development of the proposed new airport. It determines the size, location phasing and initial design of runways and taxiways, passenger terminals, ground access and parking, air cargo, general aviation, support facilities and utilities. The new airport plan is similar in scope to the MSP LTCP, so that both may be compared.

In late 1994 and early 1995, analysis of three alternative layouts led to the development of a recommended comprehensive plan for the new airport, incorporating the best features from the alternative layouts.

Status and Results

On April 18, 1995, the Commission selected a New Airport Comprehensive Plan. A preliminary draft of the New Airport Comprehensive Plan Technical Report was completed in December, 1995.

Purpose and Objective

Under the Alternative Environmental Review Process approved by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB), an Alternative Environmental Document (AED) was prepared for the new airport. The process was identical to the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement in terms of addressing issues and potential environmental impacts; however, only alternative layouts for the new airport were considered. The document is similar in scope to the AED for MSP.

The analysis in the AED focused on the differential environmental impacts of the three new airport layout alternatives so that a preferred layout can be identified.

Status and Results

The draft AED for the new airport site selection was made available for public comment in December 1994. A public hearing was held on the draft AED on January 18, 1995. A final AED was made available on March 27, 1995 for public/agency review and comment. The Environmental Quality Board reviewed the AED in March, 1995. The Commission determined the adequacy of the Final AED on April 19, 1995.

New Airport Site Preservation Study

Purpose and Objective

The MAC undertook a detailed study of the effects of preserving a site for a possible new airport in Dakota County. While it is possible that a relatively short period of time would transpire between when the Legislature decides to build a new airport and actual construction and operation, it is also possible that a decision could be made to preserve the land and build a new airport at some point further in the future -- nearer to 2020, when warranted by higher demand levels.

Under the New Airport Site Preservation Study, three scenarios were analyzed. The first assumes that the site would be preserved for a period of 10 years after which construction would begin. The second scenario assumes that the property would be held for 20 years before a new airport is built. The last scenario investigates the effects of preserving the site for 20 years, then deciding that a new airport will not be built on the property and releasing the land back for other land uses.

The three scenarios were examined for their financial impacts on land owners and public agencies (townships and school districts), economic impacts, social impacts, environmental impacts and costs.

Status and Results

A final report entitled, "Analysis of the Impacts of Preservation of a Site in Dakota County, MN, for Future Airport Development of a Commercial Air Carrier Airport" was published in December, 1995.

Remote Runway Study

Purpose and Objective

During the Dual Track Process, a Remote Runway alternative was suggested. Under this alternative, the existing infrastructure at MSP International Airport, including the terminal, parking facilities and other support facilities, would be maintained as today, however runways would be constructed at a remote location, for example in Dakota County, where aircraft operations would occur. A high-speed rail link would transport passengers between the terminal area and the remote runway complex. The stated purpose of this alternative is to maintain the convenience of the close-in facilities already in existence at MSP while moving aircraft operations with associated noise concerns to a site more distant from the population.

The Remote Runway Study identifies the operational and environmental impacts of this alternative and identifies the associated costs.

Status and Results

During 1995, the analysis associated with this concept was completed, and a final report was published in July, 1995. The study noted:

- The high-speed rail link between MSP and the remote runway site would haveadverse environmental impacts.
- It would be unrealistic to assume that no local passengers would be allowed to drive directly to the remote runway site: some parking and passenger processing facilities would have to built at the remote site. This would result, in effect, in a two-terminal system with redundant facilities.
- The cost of this alternative would be slightly greater than the New Airport alternative.
- The distance between terminal processing facilities and the gates/runways would result in inefficient operation. Normal breakdowns of the transit system would result in unacceptable delays for passengers and airlines.

Supplemental Airport Study

Purpose and Objective

Use of a supplemental existing airport is among the alternatives suggested to meet the region's future aviation needs. Under this alternative, certain components of aviation demand (e.g., cargo or military activity) would be relocated to another airport. This would free-up capacity at MSP and allow greater use for passenger flights while reducing expansion needs. The supplemental airport could be connected with MSP via high-speed rail.

Minnesota Department of Transportation studied this alternative in detail to determine its effectiveness in meeting 2020 aviation demand, to identify the environmental impacts, and to quantify the associated costs.

Status and Results

A presentation was made to the Commission in December 1995 regarding the findings of the study. A final report is due in early 1996. Among the findings are:

- Relocating military, cargo or international operations would not reduce the need for additional runway and terminal capacity at MSP.

- Relocating certain segments of passenger operations (i.e., international, regional, or service to major markets) would ultimately result in poorer air service because a large volume of passengers connecting between domestic, international and regional flights would be inconvenienced by a ground trip between two airports, and would likely connect through other hubs.

- Relocating GA activity would slightly reduce peak hour activity, however it would not diminish the need for expanded terminal facilities.

Purpose and Objective

A Draft Joint Federal and State Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared concurrently with the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. The purpose of the EIS is to identify, describe and compare the environmental consequences of the recommended MSP development plan, the recommended new airport comprehensive plan, and a No Action alternative, as well as other reasonable alternatives that meet the region's long-term aviation needs.

Federal and State EIS's are required prior to any Federal and/or State actions implementing the recommendations of the Dual Track Airport Planning Process. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is responsible for preparing and processing the Federal EIS, while the MAC is responsible for the State EIS. The Minnesota EQB will determine the adequacy of the State EIS. A joint document significantly reduces duplication of effort.

Since the Dual Track environmental review process approved by the Minnesota EQB required the MAC to perform EIS-level analysis for both the MSP and new airport tracks, much of the effort involved was a compilation of analyses from both the MSP and new airport AED's.

Status and Results

The FAA and MAC jointly published a scoping document for the Draft EIS (Second Phase Scoping Report) on May 22, 1995 and held three public hearings in June. The 30-day comment period ended July 15, and a final Scoping Decision Document was issued July 26, 1995.

A Draft Joint EIS was published in December 1995, and the agency and public review and comment period commenced on December 15, 1995.

Economic Impact 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 versus the development of a new airport is an integral part of the analysis leading up to an airport development decision by the Legislature. The work performed is incorporated into the Environmental Impact Statement.

Status and Results

Presentations were made to the MAC on a number of occasions in late 1995. Key findings include:

- By the year 2020, both the MSP alternative and the New Airport alternative would generate 16,600 direct jobs and 19,550 indirect jobs; the No Action alternative would result in 16,000 direct jobs and 18,850 indirect jobs.

- Both the MSP and New Airport alternatives would result in $581 million in direct wages and $471 in indirect wages. The No Action alternative would result in $560 million in direct wages and $464 in indirect wages.

- Total construction costs for the MSP alternative is estimated at $2.8 billion; the New Airport would cost about $4.6 billion. This level of construction would create 32,000 and 53,000 direct construction jobs respectively.

- Northwest Airlines has stated it may not relocate approximately 10,000 jobs not directly tied to daily airport operations (e.g., maintenance activity and reservations sales agents), as well as those associated with reduced activity, should the new airport be built. If this were the case, the New Airport alternative would produce significantly less economic benefits.

Financial Analysis

Purpose and Objective

An important consideration under the Dual Track Process is the cost and financial feasibility associated with each alternative. For this reason, it is essential that the financial aspects be analyzed in detail. The MAC is responsible for determining the costs associated with the various development alternatives and develop a financial plan outlining means of financing either the MSP expansion or new airport construction. The financial analysis is distinct from the economic impact study of Dual Track alternatives.

Status and Results

Presentations were made to the MAC to provide an overview of the work program and underlying assumptions.

FAA Airspace Capacity Study

Purpose and Objective

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) completed a Capacity Enhancement Plan for MSP in 1993. The study included an analysis of airfield capacity enhancement options designed to meet 2020 needs. In late 1994, the FAA initiated an Airspace Study for MSP. The purpose of this study is to identify capacity deficiencies in the surrounding airspace structure and propose possible solutions that will meet future activity levels. As with the airport capacity study, the airspace study is part of an ongoing effort by the FAA at major airports around the country.

A task force was formed consisting of FAA air traffic controllers from the MSP control tower and the Minneapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center. Also participating are airline personnel and aviation planners.

Status and Results

The group met periodically, with work during 1995 focussing on evaluation of the existing terminal airspace structure and ways to optimize aircraft flows to the runway ends. Analsyis was also carried out of airspace changes required to accommodate future airfield development.

Purpose and Objective

The technical report will document the technical analyses conducted during the Dual Track Process. It will describe the legislative mandate; identify airport alternatives; summarize activity forecasts; and present results of airport operational issues, ground access issues, environmental impacts, economic and community development issues, financial feasibility and sensitivity/flexibility issues.

Status and Results

In December, the outline for the Technical Report was developed. Preparation of the working papers was initiated.

Dual Track Airport Planning Process
Report to the Legislature

Purpose and Objective

The Report to the Legislature 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 following action by the MAC and Metropolitan Council. A recommendation by the MAC and the Metropolitan Council will be included in the document.

Status and Results

Redrafting of the Outline for the Report to the Legislature was begun in 1993 and continued in 1995. The draft incorporates comments provided at, and subsequent to, public hearings held in 1992, and identifies the questions and key issues that will need to be addressed in the Report. This process will help to focus the studies undertaken in the next phases of the dual track planning process to yield information necessary for inclusion in the Report to the Legislature.

Community/Agency Coordination

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 1995:

- Briefings of the State Advisory Council at the request of the Co-Chairs.
- Regular meetings of the Dual Track Task Force.
- Regular meetings of the New Airport Comprehensive Plan and MSP Technical Advisory Committees.
- Presentations to MAC at major decision points.
- Periodic newsletters and brochures.
- Dual Track video.
- Public information meetings and public hearings.

On January 20, 1995 there was a presentation to the State Advisory Council. In September the Council toured the New Dever Airport. In December, the Council toured Atlanta Hartsfield and Phoenix Sky Harbor Airports.

The Dual Track Task Force held meetings on January 25, February 22, March 22, May 4, July 13, August 10, September 19, October 5, November 9, and December 7, 1995.

The MSP Technical Committee held a meeting on January 24, 1995. The New Airport Technical Committee held meetings on February 22 and March 22, 1995. In August the Technical Committees were merged with the Dual Track Task Force.

A public hearing was held in January 1995 on the Draft Alternative Environmental Document for the New Airport Comprehensive Plan. Two public scoping meetings were held in June 1995 in order to receive comments on the joint Second Phase Scoping Report. Several presentations were made to City Councils to provide an overview of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the evaluation of airport development alternatives.

Presentations were made to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board Technical Representatives on January 10, March 7, and July 11, 1995, and to the Environmental Quality Board on January 19, March 16, and July 20, 1995.

Work to be Conducted in 1996

Purpose and Objective

The primary goal for the LTCP Update in 1996 is to complete the MSP Airport Layout Plans and technical documentation, which show the approved development plan for the airport.

A comparison of the Northwest Airlines and MAC MSP airport development plans for 2020 is also being conducted.

Status and Results

Final FAA comments on the MSP ALP set will be addressed, and final approval is anticipated in 1996. Completion of Volume 7 of the MSP LTCP is expected in March, 1996.

New Airport Comprehensive Plan

Purpose and Objective

The New Airport Comprehensive Plan describes the recommended layout and phasing of facilities at the proposed new airport site. The plan will be similar in scope to the MSP LTCP in order to allow direct comparison.

Status and Results

In 1996 the new airport ALP set will be revised, based on FAA comments. The plans include airport layout plans, land use plans, an airport property map, and an airport access plan. A final 2010 Comprehensive Plan and a 2020 Conceptual Plan will be prepared. In addition, the draft report prepared in 1995 will be incorporated into a final document.

Financial Analysis

Purpose and Objective

An important consideration under the Dual Track Process is the cost and financial feasibility associated with each alternative. For this reason, it is essential that the financial aspects be analyzed in detail. The MAC is responsible for determining the costs associated with the various development alternatives and develop a financial plan outlining means of financing either the MSP expansion or new airport construction.

Status and Results

In 1996 a final report related to the financial analysis will be completed and issued.

FAA Airspace Capacity Study

Purpose and Objective

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) completed a Capacity Enhancement Plan for MSP in 1993. The study included an analysis of airfield capacity enhancement options designed to meet 2020 needs. In late 1994, the FAA initiated an Airspace Study for MSP. The purpose of this study is to identify capacity deficiencies in the surrounding airspace structure and propose possible solutions that will meet future activity levels. As with the airport capacity study, the airspace study is part of an ongoing effort by the FAA at major airports around the country.

A task force was formed consisting of FAA air traffic controllers from the MSP control tower and the Minneapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center. Also participating are airline personnel and aviation planners.

Status and Results

The MAC is working with the FAA to ensure consistency with on-going MSP LTCP work. The study is expected to be completed in early 1996, at which time a capacity enhancement plan will be issued. The results of the work will be incorporated, as appropriate, into Dual Track documents.

Dual Track Airport Planning Process
Environmental Impact Statement Process

Purpose and Objective

Federal and State Environmental Impact Statements (EIS's) describe and document the environmental impacts of the various alternatives proposed to meet the region's future aviation needs, including the recommended MSP development plan, the recommended new airport comprehensive plan, and a No Action alternative.

In December 1995, a joint Draft EIS was prepared for public and agency review.

Status and Results

A 60-day comment period for agency/public review will conclude on February 13, 1996. Two public hearings will be held in January 1996 to receive public and agency comments. A Final State EIS will be prepared following a MAC and Metropolitan Council recommendation. A final Federal EIS will be prepared following action by the Legislature.

Economic Impact Study

Purpose and Objective

The economic impacts study identifies direct, indirect and induced economic impacts resulting from each of the airport development alternatives. The economic impacts of continuing development of MSP versus the development of a new airport is 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

A final report documenting the analysis and findings of the economic study will be issued in early 1996.

Dual Track Airport Planning Process
Technical Report

Purpose and Objective

The technical report will document the technical analyses conducted during the Dual Track Process. It will describe the legislative mandate; identify airport alternatives; summarize activity forecasts; and present results of airport operational issues, ground access issues, environmental impacts, economic and community development issues, financial feasibility and sensitivity/flexibility issues.

Status and Results

The working papers will be completed in February, 1996 for MAC review and compiled as a technical report in March, 1996.

Purpose and Objective

The Report to the Legislature will provide a MAC and Metropolitan Council recommendation on a long-term aviation strategy for the Twin Cities, and lay out the key data, analysis and reasons for the recommendations.

Status and Results

The report is scheduled to be completed immediately after a recommendation by MAC and the Metroplitan Council.

Community/Agency Coordination

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 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 1996:

- Briefings of the State Advisory Council at the request of the Co-Chairs.
- 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.
- Presentations to EQB for review and comment on the EIS.
- Joint briefing sessions for the MAC and Metropolitan Council on key analyses.
- Public meetings and hearings at major decision points.
- Community meetings.
- Periodic newsletters.
- Public information brochures at appropriate points.

The community and agency coordination element of the Dual Track Planning Process is an ongoing effort.

Costs for Dual Track Airport Planning Activities

MAC COSTS -- 1995

Consultants	Met Council	EQB
$2,714,577	$68,626	$75,000

MAC COSTS -- 1996

Consultants	Met Council	EQB
$1,050,000	To Be Determined	$75,000