



LAKE ELMO AIRPORT EA/EAW PROJECT

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the proposed project and why is it being considered?

A: The MAC recently completed and adopted a Long-Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for Lake Elmo Airport. Information developed for and presented in the LTCP will provide the basis for environmental review of proposed airport improvements. The plan evaluated facility needs over the next 20 years and serves as a “road map” to guide future airport development. The LTCP addresses the following issues associated with the Lake Elmo Airport:

- **Failing infrastructure that’s at the end of its life**
- **Enhancing airfield safety**
- **Improving facilities for the aircraft currently operating at the airport**

To achieve these objectives, the LTCP proposed the following:

- **Relocate Runway 14/32 by shifting 615 feet to the northeast and extending to 3,500 feet, including all necessary grading, clearing, and runway lighting.**
- **Realign 30th Street North around the new Runway 32 Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) and reconnect to the existing intersection with Neal Avenue.**
- **Construct a new cross-field taxiway to serve the new Runway 14 end, including taxiway lighting and/or reflectors.**
- **Convert existing Runway 14/32 to a partial parallel taxiway and construct other taxiways as needed to support the relocated runway, including taxiway lighting and/or reflectors.**
- **Reconstruct Runway 4/22 and extend to 2,750 feet, including necessary lighting and taxiway connectors.**
- **Establish a new non-precision approach to Runway 14 end and upgrade existing Runway 4 approach.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a Federal Environmental Assessment (EA) and why is one being completed?

A: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of proposed actions prior to making decisions. Based on the nature of the proposed project, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required. An EA takes a close look at environmental effects that can be expected and addresses the purpose and need of the project with various alternatives. It then determines whether or not the proposed alternative has the potential to cause significant environmental effects compared to a no-action alternative.

Q: What is a State Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) and why is one being completed?

A: The Minnesota Environmental Policy Act and the related Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) guidelines require project proposers to complete environmental reviews for various types of projects. According to Minnesota Rule 4410.4300, an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) is required for construction of a paved, new airport runway. An EAW provides an analysis of the potential environmental impacts of a specific project. The standard EAW form issued by the EQB will be completed and included as an appendix to the Federal EA.

Q: How will Lake Elmo Airport development projects be funded?

A: Future development will continue to be self-funded by aviation users via FAA and/or Minnesota Department of Transportation grant programs, as well as Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) funds. No local sales or property taxes will be used to fund airport improvements.

Q: Why is Lake Elmo Airport important?

A: Lake Elmo Airport is an important part of the MAC General Aviation (GA) Airports system, which alleviates congestion at MSP and provides infrastructure to accommodate the region's GA needs. Lake Elmo is intended for use primarily by smaller propeller aircraft. In this regard, it is similar to Crystal Airport in the GA Airports system. Lake Elmo is also the only public airport in Washington County, providing the sole direct air connection to the northeast suburbs and outlying areas of the Twin Cities. The Airport accommodates personal, recreational, and some business aviation users. Businesses at the Airport include flight training and aircraft maintenance.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will a longer runway mean larger airplanes?

A: The purpose of the project is to conform to FAA guidance and standards, to better meet the needs of existing Airport users and their aircraft operations. It is not the MAC's intent to design the new runway to accommodate a larger aircraft family. The mix of aircraft using a runway results from individual decisions made by pilots, who evaluate the available runway length and conditions with reference to the performance characteristics of their aircraft. More information regarding past, current, and projected future operations and aircraft types operating at the airport, and associated aircraft noise levels, will be presented at the second public event identified in the project-specific stakeholder engagement plan (SEP), tentatively scheduled for July 2017.

Q: What type of road traffic will the relocated 30th Street be designed for?

A: While the long term comprehensive planning process contemplated a 30-mph roadway, for the EA the MAC will research expected traffic levels and then apply appropriate design standards for the relocated section of the road. Through this process the MAC will keep the public's concerns about safety and community disruption top of mind.

Q: How can I stay up to date on what is happening with the project?

A: The best way to keep current is to sign up to receive updates via our e-news subscription program. Regular updates will be sent to this email list, including notices about public meetings. The MAC will launch a project website in March 2017. The website will include public meeting information, public project documents (reports, newsletters, presentations, fact sheets, etc.), answers to frequently asked questions, and information on how to provide public comment and receive project updates.

Q: Will the public have an opportunity to view and comment on the document and its findings before it is finalized?

A: Public involvement is an important part of this project. Four events are being planned to provide relevant information throughout the process. The dates, times and locations of these events will be posted to the project website, as well as published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the Stillwater Gazette, and the Oakdale/Lake Elmo Review, at least 21 days before the event. A notice will also be sent to subscribers who've asked to receive email notices about the project.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How can I share my ideas?

A: Throughout the process, interested citizens can submit comments via a “Contact Us” link on the project website, in writing sent to the address posted on the project website, and/or in person at the four public events mentioned above.

Q: How will the MAC respond to and/or use public comments submitted about the project?

A: Response to comments will be addressed in one or more of the following ways:

- **Comments may be addressed by updating the FAQs on the project website.**
- **Comments received prior to release of the draft EA will be considered in development of the document**
- **Comments received during the public comment period after release of the draft EA will be responded to and considered during its finalization.**
- **Comments may be answered verbally as part of a question and answer session in a public meeting.**

For additional information regarding public involvement, please see the stakeholder engagement plan.

ACRONYMS

EA – Environmental Assessment

EAW – Environmental Assessment Worksheet

EQB – Environmental Quality Board

FAA – Federal Aviation Administration

GA – General Aviation

LTCP – Long-Term Comprehensive Plan

MAC – Metropolitan Airports Commission

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

RPZ – Runway Protection Zone

SEP – Stakeholder Engagement Plan