

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **KEY Frequently Asked Questions**

**1) (NEW) Why is the Airport pursuing a new runway when there is no need to expand at this time?**

The Airport is not pursuing a new runway at this time. The purpose of a Master Plan Update is to prepare the airport to safely and efficiently accommodate future growth. The Airport is operating safely and efficiently today and is anticipated to continue operating safely and efficiently for years to come. While the Airport Master Plan Update draft alternatives identify potential locations for a new runway, a runway would not be constructed until and unless it is financially feasible and necessary to accommodate growth. The Master Plan Update will seek to optimize use of existing facilities as long as it remains practical.

**2) (NEW) Will the Master Plan Update impact the Coastal Trail?**

The Master Plan Update will not impact the Coastal Trail. The Airport has been a steward of the portions of the Trail that lie on its property since the Trail's construction, and the Airport is committed to maintaining a contiguous Coastal Trail. The Airport Master Plan Update acknowledges that an additional runway is one alternative to accommodate forecast growth if significant growth were to occur. If a new runway were constructed on the west side of the Airport, it would require realignment of portions of the Coastal Trail. There is no plan to remove or obstruct the Coastal Trail under any alternative. If and when demand levels merit consideration of an additional runway, the Airport would work with the Municipality of Anchorage, trail users and other stakeholders to mitigate impacts to the Coastal Trail such that the Coastal Trail experience is maintained or enhanced.

**3) Why are additional runways being evaluated (in Alternatives 4 and 5) when there is no current need for additional capacity and air traffic is down?**

Currently there is no need for an additional runway and there may not be a need for many years to come. However, the existing three-runway airfield is unable to accommodate forecast demand levels. The Airport must identify feasible alternatives to accommodate forecast demand during the Master Plan Update. Adding a runway would enable the Airport to accommodate forecast demand levels safely and efficiently. The primary purpose of the

Master Plan Update is to *plan* for future development of the Airport. Planning for future needs enables the Airport to identify and preserve lands that may be needed for future development. The Master Plan Update alternatives identify two feasible locations for an additional runway to be constructed if and when it is needed. The Master Plan Update will not result in construction of an additional runway.

**4) [NEW] *The airlines have said they don't want an additional runway. Why is the Airport considering building one?***

The Airport is not considering building a runway. The airlines have stated both in the past and recently that they do not believe an additional runway is needed at this time and would not support the construction of one now. The Airport agrees that no additional runway is currently needed. However, the airlines support responsible long-range planning to identify future needs enabling the Airport to make responsible near-term land use planning decisions.

**5) (NEW) *How will the Airport address noise concerns associated with Alternative #3 that would put additional air traffic over areas east of the Airport?***

The Master Plan Update is currently assessing noise impacts associated with implementation of Alternative 3. Noise impacts cannot be addressed until the impacts are defined.

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

**1) [NEW answer] *Can we move the Airport to Point MacKenzie?***

The 2002 Airport Master Plan investigated the possibility of relocating the Airport to the Pt. Mackenzie area and it was determined at that time that the cost of doing so (estimated to be \$6.3B in 2001 dollars) would be prohibitive. The assumptions that went into that determination have not changed significantly and a Knik Arm bridge would not change the economics, although it would likely improve Anchorage residents' access to an airport located near Pt. Mackenzie. In addition, the 9,345 acre Knik Aviation Reserve established in the 1970's for a future airport was closed in the 1980s and portions of the land were included in an agricultural land sale.

**2) [NEW] *Can we move the traffic to Kenai or Elmendorf Air Force Base?***

The Master Plan Update is evaluating the possibility of reallocating some of the Gas n' Go traffic to Fairbanks in Alternative 2. As an alternate airport, Fairbanks is the best option. The runway at Kenai Municipal Airport is only 7,800' long versus 10,500' for the shortest

runway at ANC. This means that heavy aircraft can carry larger payloads and thus operate more efficiently at ANC. In addition, the presence of many domestic and international carriers at ANC facilitates the exchange of cargo and passengers between carriers, resulting in better service and lower costs for both the airlines and the consumers. Until the Department of Defense indicates that the mission of Elmendorf Air Force Base has changed, that airfield will remain unavailable for civilian use. However, even if the Base became available, there would still be considerable costs involved in modifying the facility for joint civilian-military use. Design standards and navigation aids for military airfields, for example, are different than those used for civilian airports.

### **3) What are you doing about managing airport noise?**

The Airport is currently conducting a Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 150 Study. A Part 150 Study is a voluntary noise exposure and land use compatibility study. According to the project website ([www.anc150study.com](http://www.anc150study.com)), “The overall purpose of a Part 150 Study is to reduce the number of people affected by significant aircraft noise levels within acceptable economic, environmental, and legal parameters.” The study will recommend noise mitigation measures and land use measures to reduce noise impacts.

### **4) What is an Airport Master Plan Update?**

According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), an airport master plan is a comprehensive study of an airport and usually describes the short-, medium-, and long-term development plans to meet future aviation demand. The Anchorage International Airport Master Plan Update will define future needs and develop alternatives to meet those needs, creating a fiscally responsible plan to keep the Airport efficient and appealing to all aviation users.

### **5) Why is the Airport doing a Master Plan Update now?**

The Federal Aviation Administration recommends that airports prepare master plans on a regular basis – about every 5 to 7 years. It has been 11 years since the last Master Plan Update was approved in 2002. Planning efforts in 2008 resulted in a study report, but the report was not completed or adopted as a Master Plan Update. Thus the Airport is in need of a Master Plan Update.

### **6) How long will it take to complete the Master Plan Update?**

Our plan is to complete the Master Plan Update in about 18 months, from June 2012 to December 2013. The majority of public involvement was completed in approximately one

school year (September 2012 to May 2013) to make the best use of the public's time and interest.

**7) [MINOR EDITS] What alternatives are being considered in the Master Plan Update?**

Five draft development alternatives re being considered:

- **Alternative 1 – Minimize Development** limits investment at Anchorage International Airport to those elements necessary to meet required FAA airport design standards while identifying areas for tenants to develop facilities as they see fit. The Alternative 1 airside elements are included in all five alternatives. Alternative 1 does not meet the 20-year facility requirements and may result in untenable delays and reduced airport efficiency. Alternative 1 would likely reduce the Airport's economic benefit to Anchorage and Alaska because the Airport would be unable to efficiently accommodate growth in air traffic
- **Alternative 2 – Optimize AIAS** balances demand between Anchorage International Airport and Fairbanks International Airport (FAI), making greater use of existing Alaska International Airport System (AIAS) infrastructure. Alternative 2 meets the 20-year facility requirements with the assumption that half or more of all "gas-n-go" air cargo flights would use Fairbanks International Airport instead of Anchorage International Airport. It is anticipated that Alternative 2 would reduce the Anchorage International Airport's economic benefit to Anchorage but may maintain the economic benefit of aviation in Alaska. Though Alternative 2 assumes some air cargo demand would be accommodated at Fairbanks International Airport, it should be noted that the AIAS cannot require airlines to use a specific airport, and the Airlines may choose to bypass Alaska altogether. Airlines have the right to use any public use airport that provides the required facilities. Further, implementation of Alternative 2 would require investments in facility upgrades at Fairbanks International Airport to accommodate increases in traffic.
- **Alternative 3 – Optimize ANC** would result in more efficient use of existing airfield infrastructure at the Airport. Alternative 3 would maximize capacity of existing runways by modifying the preferential runway use policy during daytime hours, approximately 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM. This policy is currently in effect at all times to reduce noise impacts on residential areas east of the Airport. During peak arrival periods when there are more landings than take-offs, air traffic control would use Runway 7R and Runway 15 for landing aircraft. Runway 7L would be used for all take-offs. This provides two runways for landing aircraft and one runway for aircraft taking-off. During peak take-off periods when there are more take-offs than landings air traffic control would use Runway 7L and Runway 33 for take-offs. Runway 7R would be used for all landings. This provides two runways for aircraft taking-off and one runway for aircraft landings. Alternative 3 does not accommodate all forecast demand in all weather conditions. The Airport would continue to rely on a single north-south runway during some weather conditions such as strong north/south winds, significantly reducing airfield capacity and efficiency. Alternative 3

would result in an increase in noise impacts east of Anchorage International Airport due to more frequent use of Runway 7L for departures by jet and heavy jet aircraft.

- **Alternative 4 – Closely Spaced Runway** increases airport capacity by adding a new north-south runway parallel to and west of Runway 15-33. The parallel runways would be separated by 908 feet between runway centerlines. A closely spaced parallel runway provides modest additional capacity. Alternative 4 is not anticipated to completely meet the 20-year facility requirements in all conditions because closely spaced runways cannot be operated independently. This runway alternative is currently on the Airport's Airport Layout Plan (ALP) which has been conditionally approved by FAA.
- **Alternative 5 – Widely Spaced Runway** increases airport capacity by adding a new north-south runway parallel to and west of Runway 15-33. The parallel runways would be separated by approximately 3,350 feet between runway centerlines. A widely spaced parallel runway provides substantial additional capacity because the two north-south runways could be operated independently at all times and in all weather conditions. Alternative 5 is anticipated to provide sufficient capacity to fully meet forecast demand.

You can read about the alternatives in more detail, examine technical details related to each alternative, and view alternative maps on the project library page of the Master Plan website: [www.ancmasterplan.com/library](http://www.ancmasterplan.com/library).

**8) [MINOR EDITS] When will a draft preferred alternative and a final alternative be identified?**

The Airport's Master Plan Update planning team has spent the summer months (May – September 2013) evaluating the draft alternatives and considering public input prior to selecting a draft preferred alternative in September 2013. A Public Open House will be held on September 12<sup>th</sup> at the Coast International Inn to share the Airport's draft preferred alternative. Public input will be sought and considered on the draft preferred alternative before the planning team identifies the final alternative, which will be shared at a Public Open House, scheduled for November 2013. For more details, visit the website at [www.ancmasterplan.com](http://www.ancmasterplan.com).

**9) [NEW] Under Alternative 3 (remove preferential runway plan for peak hours), how can you know if peak hours will stay the same over the next 5, 10, 20 years? What if peak hours change? Will we have then to deal with noisy planes after 5pm? After 7pm? After 10pm?**

The forecast of aviation activity includes forecasts of peak operating times. The future schedules developed for use in the Master Plan Update anticipate that peak operational times will occur at similar times to today's flight schedules. Further, Alternative 3 only considers

permitting more departure operations on Runway 7L during the hours of 7 AM to 10 PM. Alternative 3 does not propose to change preferential runway use policy during nighttime hours of 10 PM to 7 AM regardless of future demand levels.

***10) [NEW] Will Alternatives 4 and 5 mean that AWWU's Asplund Wastewater Treatment Plant must be relocated?***

No. The Airport is not considering any action or alternative that would require the Asplund Wastewater Treatment Plant to be relocated. The Airport is coordinating with AWWU, and both agencies agree that they can work together to accommodate future expansion at both facilities as needed over time.

***11) [NEW] The community has come out strongly against past proposals for a new north/south runway. Why does the Airport think things are different now?***

The Airport is not considering building a runway at this time. The Airport has an obligation to plan for the potential future aviation demand and a new north-south runway may be the best option for meeting future demand. We are evaluating that possibility in two of the alternatives (4 and 5). In their decision, the Airport must consider which alternative best meets the planning goals and objectives and FAA's requirement to plan for long-term development that meets aviation demand, while considering costs, impacts, and public input.

***12) [NEW] How long would it take to engineer, permit, and build an additional runway?***

The required environmental, permitting, and engineering for an additional runway would likely take 7 to 10 years, and construction may take 3 to 4 years.

***13) [NEW] How much would an additional north-south runway cost? Who would pay for it?***

Planning-level engineering estimates suggest that an additional north-south runway would cost \$500 million or more. The majority of the cost would be paid out of FAA Airport Improvement Program grants. The balance would likely be Airport Revenue Bonds paid back by user/tenant fees at the Airport.

***14) What is the Airport's position on the Coastal Trail?***

The Airport is committed to maintaining a contiguous Coastal Trail. Currently the Airport allows Coastal Trail access and use on Airport property. The Airport recognizes the importance of the Coastal Trail to the community. Future airport development (or development by other entities such as the Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility) may alter the trail by realigning it. However, the Airport anticipates that any changes to the

Coastal Trail would include enhancements to maintain or improve the quality of the trail. Recently, the Kincaid Park trails were realigned and enhanced to accommodate the extension of Runway 7R, and the changes were developed in partnership with the Municipality of Anchorage and recreational users, including the Nordic Ski Association of Anchorage. The Airport anticipates that any future development would accommodate similar enhancements so that the Coastal Trail can continue to be enjoyed by the community. In addition, any substantial airport construction/development projects would be required to complete more detailed environmental analysis prior to permitting or construction. That process would include public input and clearly identify impacts and mitigation/enhancements in detail.

***15) [NEW] How much of the Coastal Trail would need to be re-routed around a new runway, as shown in Alternatives 4 and 5?***

The portion of the Coastal Trail extending from Point Woronzof Overlook and around the AWWU Asplund Wastewater Treatment Plant may require realignment under either Alternative 4 or 5. The portion of the trail potentially requiring realignment depends on the future runway alternative and on the realignment options coordinated with trail users. A more accurate length and trail design would be determined during the future engineering and environmental studies, should the need for a new runway ever be realized. Regardless of what Alternative is selected the Airport remains committed to maintaining a continuous coastal trail.

***16) [NEW] Under Alternatives 4 and 5, how do you plan to reroute the Coastal Trail? Will it be a tunnel? A trail on rip-rap next to chain link fence? Will there be a mature tree buffer along the trail?***

The Airport does not have a proposed design because at this time it is too early to commit to final mitigation and trail designs. If and when a new runway is merited by traffic growth at Anchorage International Airport, future engineering and environmental studies will consider alternatives for accommodating the Coastal Trail and mitigating the impacts, as well as considering alternatives to the runway itself. However, the Airport does recognize that any changes to the Coastal Trail would include enhancements to maintain or improve the quality of the trail. Any trail reroute design would need to address the following concerns that have been raised by the public: quality of the recreational experience, safety, ability to support existing uses, visual impacts, and wildlife. The Airport is confident that with proper planning, design, user input, and agency coordination, rerouting the trail could be done in a way that provides unique opportunities to maintain or enhance the trail experience.

***17) [NEW] What will the impacts be to Point Woronzof Overlook? Will you block beach access?***

Point Woronzof Overlook will remain open to the public. None of the five alternatives would remove Point Woronzof Overlook. Public access to the overlook, parking area, and beach in this area would be maintained, and realignment of the access road and parking would occur only as needed to accommodate any changes to the Airport.

**18) [NEW] What will the impacts be to Point Woronzof Park?**

Point Woronzof Park is a wooded park on the west side of the Airport, located to the south of the AWWU Asplund Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is undeveloped except for the Coastal Trail. If Alternative 5 is selected, the Airport would need to acquire the land for Point Woronzof Park. The Coastal Trail would need to be re-routed.

**19) [NEW] How can you build a runway through a permanent park? Is it legal?**

In order for the Airport to build a runway in MOA dedicated park land, the Airport would need to acquire the rights to use that land for Airport purposes. This may require a vote of the public, such as was done with Proposition 5 in the recent municipal election when the public voted to trade dedicated park land to the State DOT&PF for use as West Dowling Road right-of-way, in exchange for some surplus state land.

**20) [NEW] How much will it cost to put fill into the Cook Inlet? Will fill in the Inlet negatively impact beluga whales, birds and fish?**

Should a decision be made in the future to build a runway as shown in Alternative 5, further studies, likely through part of an Environmental Impact Study and/or benefit-cost analysis would be required to estimate the cost of placing fill into the Cook Inlet. The total cost of building a runway as shown in Alternative 5 is anticipated to exceed \$500 Million. Similarly, additional studies would also be needed to investigate potential impacts, including those to whales, birds and fish.

**21) [MINOR EDITS] Will the public have input in the Master Plan Update?**

Yes. Public input is important to the Airport in conducting the Master Plan Update. In this Master Plan Update, the Airport strives to continue improving its relationship with the community and is conducting a robust public involvement process. Throughout the duration of the Master Plan Update project, public input will be accepted. Though the Airport is responsible for all development decisions, the influence of public input will be documented where possible. Visit [www.ancmasterplan.com](http://www.ancmasterplan.com) to make a comment, to join the automatic email distribution list and to view the Public Involvement Program, which describes the public process for the Master Plan Update.

**22) How will public comment be considered in the alternatives phase?**



Five draft alternatives were released for public comment in May 2013, and the planning team has accepted and considered feedback as they evaluated the alternatives during the summer of 2013. In September 2013, the Master Plan Update team will identify the Airport's draft preferred alternative, and solicit further public comment at that time prior to selecting a final alternative in late 2013.

**23) Can I participate in the project without having to attend Public Open House Events?**

Yes. The Airport is committed to seeking stakeholder input from a broad spectrum of stakeholders and will provide many opportunities for comments and feedback. Following a Public Open House event, we will host an Online Open House that will include materials from the event and an additional opportunity to submit a comment. The Online Open houses will be accessible for approximately 2 weeks directly after the associated Public Open House at [www.ancmasterplan.com](http://www.ancmasterplan.com), and will allow the participation of those who were unable to attend the Public Open House event in person. You can submit your comments relating to the Master Plan Update on the project website, [www.ancmasterplan.com](http://www.ancmasterplan.com), or send an email to [contact@ancmasterplan.com](mailto:contact@ancmasterplan.com).

**24) What are the Working Group and the Technical Advisory Committee?**

The Working Group and the Technical Advisory Committee were established in the fall/winter of 2012. The purpose of these groups is to provide the Airport with information and guidance on specific aspects of the Master Plan Update. The Working Group is a body of neighborhood, community, recreational, environmental, and business interest groups. The Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from commercial airlines, freight carriers, airport leaseholders, general aviation users and the FAA. These groups will provide input throughout the Master Plan Update. A list of groups invited to participate is available on the library page ([www.ancmasterplan.com/library](http://www.ancmasterplan.com/library)). The public is welcome to observe Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee meetings and provide comments at the end of the meetings. Interested individuals may view a tentative schedule of all public meetings at [www.ancmasterplan.com](http://www.ancmasterplan.com)

**25) How can I find out about upcoming meetings?**

The Airport maintains a tentative meeting schedule on [www.ancmasterplan.com](http://www.ancmasterplan.com). This schedule includes Public Open House events, as well as Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee meetings. Prior to each meeting, notices are sent out via our email distribution list, through the State of Alaska Online Public Notice system, as well as through Alaska DOT&PF's GovDelivery. In addition, each public meeting will be noticed in the Anchorage Daily News.

**26) Will the recently completed Alaska International Airport System (AIAS) aviation forecast be used for the Anchorage International Airport Master Plan Update?**

Yes. A forecast of aviation activity for Anchorage International Airport was prepared under the Alaska International Airport System Planning Study. The Anchorage International Airport Master Plan Update and Part 150 Noise study will use the results of this forecast for all technical work. The aviation activity forecast was completed in the summer of 2012 and has been reviewed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and by the Airlines Airport Affairs Committee (AAAC) which represents the Airlines. Both the FAA and AAAC have documented that they accept the results of the aviation activity forecast for use in these studies. A summary of the AIAS aviation activity forecast for Anchorage International Airport was presented at the September 19, 2012 Anchorage Airport Master Plan Open House event. To review this presentation, please visit [www.ancmasterplan.com/library](http://www.ancmasterplan.com/library). The complete AIAS aviation activity forecast documentation may be reviewed by visiting <http://dot.alaska.gov/aias/news.shtml#forecasts>.

**27) Will the Master Plan Update address a buffer between the Airport and the neighborhoods?**

The Master Plan Update will examine land use needs and opportunities. We anticipate that maintaining a buffer will be a priority for the community, and our planning will strive to balance that desire with the need to maintain economical and efficient airport operations in the future. All airport land is held in reserve to support the Airport's aeronautical function and may be developed to support future growth in aviation.

**28) Why can't the Airport give land to the community for parks or conservation?**

The Airport has received monetary grants from the FAA to acquire and develop its property in support of the Airport's mission as a public use commercial service airport. The Airport is bound by these grant assurances to the FAA, and must utilize lands for the support of public aviation facilities, or lease or dispose of land at fair market value. The Airport's diminishing undeveloped land is a valuable asset for future Airport development needs. At this time, it is not the Airport's intention to dispose of Airport land without receiving equal or better land for airport development.

**29) I've heard about other airport studies. What else is going on?**

There are several other related airport studies going on right now. Here are website addresses for those projects for more information:

- Alaska International Airport System (AIAS) Planning Study: [www.aias.alaska.gov](http://www.aias.alaska.gov)  
*A system plan that looks at Ted Stevens Anchorage and Fairbanks International Airports to develop a coordinated vision for the future. Aviation forecast numbers from this study will feed into the Master Plan Updates for both airports.*
- Part 150 Noise Study: [www.anc150study.com](http://www.anc150study.com)  
*A noise study, following FAA standards, to forecast future noise levels and identify ways to reduce the noise impact to people.*
- Kulis Land Use Study: <http://dot.alaska.gov/anc/about/Kulis.shtml>  
*A land use plan for the former Kulis Air National Guard Base that recommends future uses and development alternatives for the land. Completed in 2011.*