



# Wiley Post/Will Rogers Memorial Airport MASTER PLAN UPDATE

**Chapter 8  
Public Participation**

**DRAFT**

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# 8 Public Participation

This chapter summarizes the public involvement process conducted for the Barrow Airport Master Plan Update.

As a central part of life in Barrow, the airport and its future are important to a wide range of stakeholders and nearby communities. As such it was important to reach out to people early in the planning process to ensure that their concerns would be consistently understood and considered in the development of this document. To engage the public and key stakeholders in the project and the public process, several tools are being used, as discussed below.

## 8.1 Agency Coordination

The agency coordination for the duration of the Barrow Airport Master Plan Update consisted of keeping agencies informed throughout the planning process. The following agencies received all communications provided to the public:

- Alaska Aviation Advisory Board
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources
  - Division of Coastal and Ocean Management
  - Division of Oil and Gas
  - State Parks/State Historic Preservation Officer
- Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities<sup>1</sup>
- Alaska State Troopers
- Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement
- Federal Aviation Administration<sup>2</sup>
- Ilisagvik College
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Park Service
- Tagiugmiullu Nunamiullu Housing Authority
- Transportation Security Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers / Regulatory
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Branch of Energy Minerals in Alaska
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey Energy Resources Program
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

<sup>1</sup> Specific individuals from ADOT&PF included the following:  
 Steve Hatter, Deputy Commissioner, Aviation  
 Steve Titus, P.E., Regional Director, Northern Region (NR)  
 Jeff Roach, MSS, Planning Manager Aviation & Highways, NR  
 Ryan Anderson, P.E., Acting Aviation Planner, NR  
 John Olsen, Barrow Airport Manager, NR  
 Alexa Green, Transportation Planner, NR  
 William Russell, Maintenance and Operations Supervisor, NR

Jeremy Worrall, Regional Aviation Manager, NR  
 Bill Cole, P.E., Design Engineering Manager, NR  
 Lauren Ivanov, Design Engineer, NR  
 Steve Masterman, Regional Engineering Geologist, NR  
 David Koester, Construction Engineering Assistant, NR  
 Thomas Kowalczyk, Aviation Leasing Specialist, NR  
 Brittany Russell, Environmental Analyst

<sup>2</sup> Specific individuals from the Federal Aviation Administration included the following:  
 Patricia Oien, Lead Planner, Alaska Region Airports Division  
 Patricia Sullivan, Environmental Program Manager, Alaska Region Airports Division  
 Bruce Greenwood, Environmental Protection Specialist  
 Tom Clark, Alaska Lead Planner, ATO Western Service Center

## 8.2 Steering Committee

To help identify build alternatives and mitigation strategies a project steering committee was formed at the start of the master plan process. The purpose of this committee was to work with local, state, and federal agencies with jurisdiction over resources within the airport boundary to ensure impacts to natural and cultural resources would be minimized. The steering committee met with the project team in April 2013 to discuss the master plan schedule and identify initial constraints and opportunities. Initial alternative concepts were distributed to the steering committee in September 2013 for comment, and the preferred build alternative was presented to the committee in November 2013. In addition to ADOT&PF and FAA, the steering committee was composed of the following stakeholders:

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources
- Alaska State Troopers
- Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- North Slope Borough
- Tagiugmiullu Nunamiullu Housing Authority
- Transportation Security Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers / Regulatory
- U.S. Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- UIC Science, LLC

## 8.3 Website

The project website, shown at right, was developed to provide public access to basic project information such as the schedule, documents, meeting notifications, and meeting summaries.



Figure 8-1 – Website Homepage (<http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/barrowmp>)

## 8.4 Postcards

Postcards were the primary tool used to inform the public of project developments and meetings. To date two postcards have been mailed. Postcard #1 (February 2013) announced the beginning of the project and invited people to the public meeting on February 26, 2013. This postcard included a link to the project website and an online survey targeting Barrow residents, aircraft operators and businesses. Postcard #2 (August 2013) announced that the team had completed the land use assessment, environmental overview, and the draft aviation forecast. The postcard invited people to the second public meeting on August 19, 2013.

The postcards were delivered via U.S. Postal Service to all box holders in Barrow. The postcards were also delivered to elected officials, agencies, tribal entities, and other interested parties.

### 8.4.1 Public Meeting #1 – February 26, 2013

The first meeting, which was attended by 41 people, was held on February 26, 2013, at the North Slope Borough Assembly Chambers. The purpose of the meeting was to give an overview of the project and to answer questions. The project team gave a presentation that was interpreted into Inupiat. The team followed the presentation with a question and answer session that was also interpreted.

In addition, the project team distributed paper copies of surveys to solicit input. The three surveys targeted Barrow residents, Barrow air taxi operators/general aviation users, and Barrow businesses. See Section 2.4.1 for more detail.

The outreach for the meeting is outlined in the following table. See Appendix H for the outreach materials and complete meeting notes.

**Table 8-1 – Meeting Outreach**

Date	Outreach Method	Description
2/12/2013	Project website	Project-specific website hosted on the Brooks and Associates server and formatted in accordance with ADOT&PF specifications
2/14/2013	Postcard mailer, all box holders	Inviting the public to the 2/26/13 open house
2/14/2013	Display advertising in <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Inviting the public to the 2/26/13 open house
2/14/2013 2/21/2013	Display advertising in <i>Arctic Sounder</i>	Inviting the public to the 2/26/13 open house
2/14/2013	Display advertising in <i>Fairbanks Daily News-Miner</i>	Inviting the public to the 2/26/13 open house
2/12/2013	State of Alaska Online Notice	Inviting the public to the 2/26/13 open house
2/16/2013 to 2/25/2013	Public service announcement request sent to KBRW-FM and KBRW-AM	Sent with request to broadcast announcement inviting public to meeting
2/18/2013	Constant Contact email	Email inviting project stakeholders to the meeting
2/16/2013 to 2/25/2013	Public service announcement request sent to GCI	Sent with request to broadcast announcement inviting public to meeting

### 8.4.2 Public Meeting #2 – August 19, 2013

The second meeting was actually a series of meetings held on August 19, 2013 at the North Slope Borough Assembly Chambers; each meeting addressed a different group. During the day there were meetings for representatives of local government, tribal entities, and adjacent landowners. In the evening there was an open public meeting. In total, 54 people signed in. The purpose of the meetings was to present the status of the project and to get feedback from the public on various concepts.

The outreach for the meeting is outlined in the following table. See Appendix H for the outreach materials and complete meeting notes.

**Table 8-2 – Meeting Outreach**

Date	Outreach Method	Description
8/1/2013	Letter mailed to official stakeholders	Letter to all government officials, utilities, tribal entities, UIC, and SKW to invite them to small group meetings preceding the public meeting
8/7/2013	Project website	Project specific website hosted on the Brooks and Associates server and formatted in accordance with ADOT&PF specifications
8/7/2013	Postcard mailer, all box holders	Inviting the public to the 8/19/13 public meeting
8/8/2013	State of Alaska Online Notice	Inviting the public to the 8/19/13 public meeting
8/10/2013	Display advertising in <i>Fairbanks Daily News-Miner</i>	Inviting the public to the 8/19/13 public meeting
8/12/2013	Display advertising in <i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Inviting the public to the 8/19/13 public meeting
8/15/2013	Display advertising in <i>Arctic Sounder</i>	Inviting the public to the 8/19/13 public meeting
8/9/2013 8/16/2013	Constant Contact email and reminder	Email inviting project stakeholders to the meeting
8/15/2013 to 8/18/2013	Facebook ad campaign	Facebook ad campaign inviting people to the public meeting and referring them to the project website
8/12/2013 to 8/18/2013	Public service announcement request sent to GCI, KBRW-FM, and KBRW-AM	Sent with request to broadcast announcement inviting public to meeting
8/15/2013 8/19/2013	Facebook update	Facebook post on the ADOT&PF page inviting people to the public meeting
8/15/2013 8/19/2013	Twitter	Tweet on the ADOT&PF feed inviting people to the public meeting

### 8.4.3 Public Meeting #3 – December 4, 2013

This will be the last public meeting for this project and has yet to occur.

## 8.5 Other Community Activities

### 8.5.1 Questionnaires

In February 2013, the team prepared and launched an online survey directed at Barrow Airport leaseholders, aircraft operators, and local businesses. Copies of the questionnaire were available at the February public meeting and distributed in person during interviews conducted by the technical staff of the project team. In all, four surveys were returned. A full summary of the issues raised in the surveys is contained in Appendix B with copies of the returned surveys.

### 8.5.2 Interactive Banner

This was a banner that was displayed in the air carrier's terminals and the AC store to inform people about the project. It was interactive in that it had a QR code that could be scanned with a smart phone linking to the project website.

## 8.6 Receive and Respond to Public Comment

A summary of the issues raised by the public is provided below. Most comments were received and responded to in public meetings. All public comments received relating to meeting outreach and responses from the project team are available in Appendix B.

### 8.6.1 Public Issues Summary

#### *Airport Relocation*

- ➔ *Why is moving the airport not being considered in this master plan update?*

It would cost upwards of \$600,000,000, and the state of Alaska only gets about \$200,000,000 annually for all aviation projects statewide. This makes moving the runway cost-prohibitive. There are also the serious environmental factors of covering up a big piece of undisturbed tundra.

- ➔ *If the airport were to be relocated – where would that be?*

Airport relocation is not part of our analysis for this master plan update; therefore, we didn't look at specific locations.

- ➔ *That isn't true – relocation options were considered in the past.*

In the previous Barrow Airport Master Plan studies relocation was considered, but it is not part of this update.

- ➔ *The shoreline is eroding at a foot per year. The end of the runway will disappear. Shouldn't you be considering relocation so the community could build on the existing runway and move away from flood prone areas?*

This is not something that the project team has looked at specifically, however there has been no indication that this is an immediate or even a long-term risk.

- *Have you consulted FEMA? More and more flooding has been happening.*

The airport is built above the 100-year flood level, so barring a natural disaster, no immediate risks are foreseen.

- *Given the mega money that the oil industry is proposing to get out of this area, doesn't it make sense to invest money now into relocation rather than pouring little bits in that end up amounting to lots of money over long term?*
- *If Barrow explodes, will moving the airport be on the table?*

If there are significant changes in circumstances the master plan will be revisited. A new master plan is typically completed every 10-15 years.

### Runway Length

- *Is it possible to extend the runway?*

Extending the runway is no longer under consideration because of the ocean on one side and the lagoon on the other. Extending the runway either way would present serious engineering challenges and would be prohibitively expensive. Issues include:

- There is a drop-off on the ocean side that would take a lot of material to fill in.
- An extension on the ocean side could block vehicle access to the south.
- With an extension on the lagoon side there is a risk of contaminating drinking water during construction, use, and maintenance.

Operational and technological changes will have to be considered instead to make it easier for aircraft to land using the existing runway length. These options include:

- An Engineered Materials Arrestor System (EMAS) that uses a crushable material to stop planes that have overshot the runway would effectively lengthen the available runway by reducing the runway safety area needed.
  - ADOT&PF M&O can apply more sand and de-icing chemicals to the runway surface so that carriers can fly heavier in worse weather.
  - Carriers can fly lighter when the weather is worse. This is how they are flying currently because their heavier loads are in the summer when the weather is better.
- *The length of the runway could be impacting the economy and people who live here. There is already a three-week backlog of supplies.*

No cargo carriers so far have expressed an interest in flying bigger planes to Barrow.

- *Has building a small-craft (general aviation) airport been considered?*

No, it has not been considered, because the existing airport is only at 14% of its operational capacity.

### South Side Development

- *Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation (UIC) would like to develop its lands in tandem with the airport and possibly share a road or trade materials for land.*

This scenario makes a lot of sense from a practical point of view. However, if FAA funding is used to build the road they require that it be used for aviation purposes only. That being said, other funding sources are available.





Figure 8-2 – Suggested Road Shared by Barrow Airport and UIC

- *It is challenging to get utilities to the south side of the runway. Where would the easements be?*  
You are right, the utilities would need to be extended and it would be challenging. The easement locations have not been established because the new lease lots have not been established.
- *Hunters could be impacted by any development on the south side of the airport.*
- *Have any environmental studies been completed for the gravel sites? Geese heavily use the east site.*  
An environmental document would be necessary for either site to be developed, but this stage has not been reached yet.
- *Could you get an exemption to the taxiway requirement as in the past? Because obviously we have the exemption in place now.*  
It is highly unlikely that the exemption would be given again. (FAA confirmed this at the August public meeting.)
- *Who owns the land that the east material site is on?*  
UIC owns the land.
- *The west materials site means pulling materials out where you really want to be putting materials in.*
- *There would be less impact by developing the south side.*
- *What is the timeline for getting you UIC's input on their preferred alternative?*  
In the next couple weeks would be best. The whole master plan update will be completed by the end of the year, but there will be one more public meeting late in the year to look at the proposed preferred alternative. Comments will be taken into consideration at that time as well.

- *Are you collaborating with UIC about the material sites?*  
Yes, they provided the permits to do the test drilling.
- *Consider the Corps of Engineers' material site because birds use both of the proposed material sites.*
- *How many flights would be waved off if there were south-side development and not south-side taxiway?*  
We don't have that information at this time.
- *Why not move all the new lease lots to one end on the south side of the runway? That way there could be just a small section of taxiway built on the south side.*  
According to FAA regulations, in order to maintain the current approach minimum, a full-length taxiway would have to be built if there was any development on the south side of the runway.

### **Northeast Development**

- *Is the full-length taxiway required on the north side of the runway?*  
The taxiway is mostly there, but if more lease lots were to be developed on the northeast end, the taxiway would most likely need to be extended.
- *In Concept 2 (where new lease lots are being proposed in the northeast corner) it looks like a lot of new traffic pushed into a residential neighborhood.*
- *Three years ago the Borough tried to develop this northeast area but was quickly told that due to noise and traffic impacts to the residences it wasn't a good idea. Has that changed?*  
No, it is possibly still a concern due to the residential use, but we are presenting it to see if it is still a concern.

### **Relocation of Ahkovak Street**

- *One commenter expressed support for Concept 3 (moving Ahkovak Street to the northern airport property line) because it would mean more parking, snow storage space, and safer equipment use.*
- *How many buildings would have to be relocated if Ahkovak Street was moved to the north?*  
Five to six buildings would need to be relocated. Many of the buildings are already empty and three of the lots are parking reserves.
- *What would happen to the leaseholders if the road is moved?*  
ADOT&PF and those leaseholders would go through the formal right of way (ROW) acquisition process that includes helping businesses find suitable locations and compensating them fairly.
- *There would be more noise and the road would be closer to the residences on the next road to the north if Ahkovak Street were moved north.*

### **Leaseholders and Lease Lots**

- ➔ *Is combining the terminals part of the master plan?*

The carriers would have to decide to build a common terminal. ADOT&PF can't force leaseholders to share a building.

- ➔ *What would the effect be on current leaseholders under the proposed concepts?*

There would be no effect on the current leaseholders other than that under some of the concepts there would be the potential for them to expand.

- ➔ *Will there be a hangar for small planes?*

It would take state funding to build a pad for a small plane hangar and it would have to be requested through the state legislature.

- ➔ *Next time please bring a close-up of the lease lots.*

Next time we will bring close-ups of the lease lots, including the ones on Ahkovak Street. One of the things we are looking at in this area is opportunities to relocate parking reserves on Ahkovak Street that are in bad places or are otherwise under-utilized or under-developed.

- ➔ *Is ADOT&PF going to make sure that leaseholders have enough parking, snow storage, etc.?*

No, ADOT&PF only considers aviation use when deciding to lease a lot. We are not allowed to tell leaseholders what or how to build.

- ➔ *Does ADOT&PF have any ability to enforce fire marshal codes for terminals?*

It is up to the lessee to comply with the fire codes.

- ➔ *How much land is available for expansion and development?*

The airport property is over 700 acres. In the concepts that are currently being discussed, new lease lots will be 300 by 300 feet. Under some of the concepts, ADOT&PF can also make the existing lease lots larger.

- ➔ *Will there be a crackdown on folks using their lease lots for non-aviation uses?*

Anyone with a concern about misuse of lease lots can report it to the airport manager or ADOT&PF.

### **U.S. Coast Guard**

- ➔ *What kind of presence would the Coast Guard have?*

The USCG needs a place to house their planes and helicopters on the northern coast of Alaska. They need to monitor any offshore drilling and increased use of the Bering Strait. This base could be in Barrow, but that hasn't been determined yet.

- ➔ *Is a residential military facility being considered in the master plan?*

The Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the USCG have been working with us to establish how much space they would need.



- *Can you speak to the Coast Guard presence in Barrow?*

Yes—we have been working with them. At this point the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, which is working with the USCG to develop facilities at Barrow, has no means to get a lease.

### **Master Plan Development and Forecasts**

- *If it weren't for the oil companies would ADOT&PF be doing the master plan update?*

Yes, there is an immediate need for a building to store a new de-icing chemical and a projected increase of use and size of aircraft. If the oil industry was not planning on investing, the proposed development would be scaled back.

- *Is there a correlation between oil industry science activities and research that impacts the forecast?*

We did get numbers related to the Shell travel last year from Miami Air, but it is difficult to sort out the travel directly related to science & research.

- *The forecast only showed 2012 but we are in 2013.*

The base year is 2012 because the 2012 data is complete.

- *Are you just looking at passengers and facilities?*

We forecast based on passengers and cargo.

- *Which airport growth rate are you using to establish the alternatives?*

We are using the medium growth forecast because it fits the current level of use and development the most accurately.

- *How did you calculate the growth rate?*

The growth rate was calculated from a combination of factors including passenger enplanements, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), population, price of oil, and tourism.

- *How does this forecast compare to the forecast in the last master plan?*

The high growth rate for this master plan is 3%; for the last master plan, the high growth rate was 2%.

- *Has tourism been considered? We have them by busloads. A new three-story hotel with 70 rooms will be built next year so that Barrow can accommodate more visitors.*

Yes, tourism has been taken into account; we received tourist numbers from local tour companies and the visitor center. It represents a small percentage of the enplanements at this time.

- *Who are the key stakeholders involved in the master plan to date?*

UIC, USFW, local government, Native groups, DEC, etc.

### **Preferred Alternative**

- *How is the preferred alternative picked?*

An evaluation process considering various factors such as cost, environmental, etc., A matrix with weights and scores will be used during a day-long work session with ADOT&PF and the consultant team. The team will rank the alternatives.

- *Where does the preferred alternative go and is it what is going to happen?*

Ultimately the preferred alternative will go into the new master plan, but the alternatives are not set in stone and there are many factors that could be cause to revisit the plan. These might be the start of onshore or offshore oil and gas production, decreased exploration, population trend change, etc.

### **Funding**

- *Where does the funding originate?*

More than 90% of new construction is federally funded; maintenance and operations is funded by the state.

- *Has the industry been asked to foot some of the bill for improvements or for building a crosswind airstrip?*

No. Unlike at Anchorage and Fairbanks, there is no landing fee here. Also, a crosswind airstrip would be useful only 7% of the time, since the wind lines up with the existing airstrip 93% of the time. If the industry decided to build a facility, it would be driven by industry, not ADOT&PF.

### **Emergency Use of Barrow Airport**

- *Can a Coast Guard C-17 land on the existing runway?*

Yes, they are designed for short landing and takeoff.

- *Can big jets land here in an emergency during over-pole flights?*

Airlines are working on their own emergency plans, but we know that Barrow and Deadhorse are under consideration for emergency landings. Jeff Roach indicated that ADOT&PF has been in contact with an Asian carrier and is working with them to identify emergency landing areas such as Barrow.

### **Security**

- *Will increased use of the airport change FAA security requirements or procedures? What is stopping terrorist attacks?*

The current numbers don't change the level of security. A substantial increase in the number of passengers per plane would warrant a security increase. FAA decides when to put in a control tower, and they are not planning on adding any towers. The master plan update will consider more fencing for security.

### **Other Comments**

- *One commenter pointed out that in Barrow nothing is cost-effective.*

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