

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Master Plan Report Update is to document the existing conditions of the Birchwood Airport, determine its current and forecasted uses, and identify areas that need to be improved to increase safety and better meet the needs of the airport operators, users, and other stakeholders.

Birchwood Airport (Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] identifier: BCV) is a general aviation (GA) airport located in southcentral Alaska, approximately 20 miles northeast of Anchorage, in the unincorporated community of Chugiak within the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). The airport serves a regional role for the Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak, Palmer, and Wasilla GA communities. Commercial operations on the field include aircraft manufacturing, maintenance, fuel sales, and aircraft storage facilities. Operations mostly consist of small GA aircraft mixed with ultra-light, glider, Civil Air Patrol (CAP) search and rescue, and occasional air taxis. The existing airport layout is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Existing Layout of Birchwood Airport**

The airport is owned by the State of Alaska and is managed by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). It is classified as a Non-Primary GA Airport by the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). The Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP) identifies Birchwood Airport as a Local High Activity airport. Local Airports generally serve the GA community in and around the urban areas in Alaska and supplement communities by providing

access to primarily intrastate and some interstate markets. The “High Activity” designation means that the airport is included in the NPIAS; does not meet the definition of an International, Regional, or Community class airport; and has 20 or more based aircraft.

The most recent Airport Master Plan (AMP) for Birchwood Airport was completed in 2005 (HDR Alaska Inc., 2005). Since the completion of the AMP, private development at the airport has continued with the construction of individual and multiple-unit hangars, reducing the developable land available for lease.

The last Airport Layout Plan (ALP) update occurred in 2016. The ALP identifies the Airport Reference Code (ARC) for Birchwood Airport as B-II, which meets the requirements of aircraft with approach speeds up to 121 knots and wingspans as large as 79 feet (DOT&PF, 2012). The public-use aprons are designed for aircraft with wingspans up to 49 feet (Design Group I aircraft).

The DOT&PF currently manages and maintains the airport using maintenance personnel that perform these duties along with their other highway-related maintenance responsibilities. The airport is unmanned and is currently managed by a DOT&PF Maintenance Foreman. Leasing of lease lots and tie-downs is handled by DOT&PF’s Office of Aviation Leasing. The tie-down program at Birchwood Airport is coordinated by a Statewide Aviation Airport Leasing Specialist located in DOT&PF’s Fairbanks office. The Statewide Airport Leasing Program Manager makes programmatic decisions and is located in DOT&PF’s Anchorage office.

Airport improvements at Birchwood are funded through a combination of appropriations through the State of Alaska General Fund and Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants from the FAA. In general, the FAA provides \$150,000 in yearly AIP entitlement funding for Non-Primary GA Airports. However, the FAA also allows DOT&PF to pool the entitlement funding for all of their Non-Primary Airports and use the total amount to construct prioritized improvements across their entire Non-Primary Airport network. The FAA can provide additional support to a particular improvement by allocating “discretionary” AIP funding to the project if the AIP program funding designated by the U.S. Congress exceeds the level necessary to meet the commitments of the entitlements. Projects funded through the AIP program are subject to a 6.25% local DOT&PF match. The DOT&PF Airport Project Evaluation Board meets annually or semi-annually to evaluate Non-Primary Airport improvement projects and establish funding priorities.