

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The following describes methods used to ensure meaningful public involvement in the AMP update, helping to inform plan recommendations. Public Involvement materials and meeting summaries are included in Appendix D.

6.1 Public Involvement Plan

A Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed at the beginning of the project to outline the team approach for engaging with the public to develop an Airport Master Plan that meets the needs of the DOT&PF, airport users, adjacent landowners, stakeholders, and the surrounding community. The PIP identified a range of tools and techniques used to engage and inform potentially interested parties, provide opportunities to gather input early and often, and apply participant feedback when preparing AMP recommendations and alternatives. The PIP provided a framework to help ensure that stakeholders and members of the public:

- Are adequately informed about the project throughout development.
- Have ample opportunity to actively participate in the planning process.
- Receive timely, meaningful responses to questions, comments, and concerns.
- Provide data and input for the project team to assess current and projected facility needs.

Goals identified in the PIP:

- Develop a clear process for identifying and prioritizing different stakeholder groups, including establishing a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) comprised of priority stakeholders.
- Implement a variety of tools to engage and keep stakeholders and the public informed. Create diverse opportunities for sharing feedback, with a strategic focus on the most efficient and effective ways to reach priority stakeholders.
- Update the public throughout the planning process by providing clear, accessible information by sharing emerging findings, concepts, and recommendations.
- Listen and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input has influenced project outcomes to ensure the AMP considers their needs and interests.

6.2 Stakeholder Advisory Group

A SAG was formed at the beginning of the project, which was comprised of pilots, major landowners, managers, and other key stakeholders. The group engaged in review of findings and recommendations from the planning effort, provided input, and generally served in an advisory role to the project team. The SAG also offered guidance and input into the public involvement effort to help identify, shape, and share outreach opportunities such as public meetings. Five SAG meetings were held throughout the planning process. Each meeting was documented in a written summary.

6.3 Public Meetings

The purpose of the public meetings was to facilitate stakeholder input through the presentation of emerging findings. The team coordinated efforts to prepare meeting materials, conduct outreach, develop visual aids, lead presentations, and engage stakeholders in providing feedback. Four

public meetings were held throughout the planning process. The team documented each public meeting in a written summary.

6.4 Outreach Methods

6.4.1 Project Website

A project website (<https://dot.alaska.gov/creg/birchwoodamp/>) was created with the goal to engage the public, make project information accessible, and provide opportunities to provide feedback. The website allowed stakeholders, the public, and other interested parties to access and share information about the project. It also served as a project document library where interested parties could access the most current documentation, review SAG and public meeting materials, sign up to be added to the project stakeholder database, and provide comments on the project.

The website was organized into the following sections:

What's New – An update on where the team is at in the master planning process.

Meetings and Frequently Asked Questions – An overview of outreach completed to date and materials presented at each meeting.

- Project Overview – An overview of the master planning process and the project specifically.
- Schedule – A current depiction of the project schedule.
- How to Get Involved – A place to sign up for project updates and/or submit comments on the project.
- Project Documents – Links to documents completed to date.
- Contact Us – Project team contact information.

6.5 Stakeholder and Public Engagement

6.5.1 Stakeholder Interviews & Small Group Discussions

The project team conducted interviews and small group discussions with a representative group of key stakeholders, including airport users and tenants, adjacent landowners, and user group associations, as determined in partnership with the DOT&PF and the SAG.

6.5.2 Stakeholder Survey

A stakeholder survey was prepared to assess stakeholder support of draft alternatives. The project team analyzed and provided a written summary of the survey results.

6.5.3 Advertisements

Each public meeting was announced in the Anchorage Daily News. Affidavits of publication for advertisements are included in.

6.5.4 Social Media

Social media updates were developed regarding the planning process, upcoming meetings, and project milestones for sharing on appropriate social media outlets. Posts were made on DOT&PF's Facebook page.

6.5.5 Flyers

Informational flyers were developed that included a summary of the project purpose, timeline, project website address, and contact information. Flyers were distributed periodically throughout the life of the project in association with public meetings.

6.5.6 Brochure

An 11” by 17” brochure was created that summarized Airport Master Plan recommendations and general airport safety information.

6.5.7 Stakeholder Advisory Group

A SAG was formed at the beginning of the project that represented a diverse community of interests relative to airport development and long-range planning. The SAG’s role was to provide advisory input related to aviation, community, political, and planning. SAG members were tasked to review study documents, contribute technical input, share feedback from the organizations they represented, and engage their constituents to participate in public open houses. Table 29 lists those individuals who participated on the SAG.

Table 29: Stakeholder Advisory Committee Members

Entity (in alpha order)	Representative
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association	Rob Stapleton
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities	Philana Miles
Alaska Railroad Corporation	Brian Lindamood
Birchwood Airport Association	Abe Harman
Birchwood Community Council	Val Jokela
BSRP	Jim Stoneking
Civil Air Patrol	Wally Parks, Jeff Banks (also representing glider community)
Eklutna, Inc.	Kyle Smith
Native Village of Eklutna	Carrie Brophil, Marc Lamoreaux
Talon Hangar Association	Dennis Serie

Five SAG meetings were held over the course of the project, including a final meeting to share a summary of public comments received on the February 2024 Public Review Draft and related revisions that were incorporated into the final plan. Table 30 lists the meeting dates.

Table 30: SAG Meeting Dates and Locations

SAG Meeting Date	Location
Meeting 1 – February 9, 2021	Virtual via Zoom
Meeting 2 – October 12, 2021	Virtual via Zoom
Meeting 3 – December 14, 2022	Virtual via Zoom
Meeting 4 – March 22, 2024	Virtual via Zoom
Meeting 5 – August 7, 2024	Virtual via Zoom

6.5.8 Public Meetings

Four public open houses were held over the course of the project (Table 31). The focus of the meetings was to inform the public and interested stakeholders about the ongoing status of the project and to solicit public comment.

Table 31: Public Meeting Dates and Locations

Public Meeting Date	Location
Meeting 1 – March 4, 2021	Virtual via Zoom
Meeting 2 – October 27, 2021	Virtual via Zoom
Meeting 3 – November 12, 2022	Birchwood Civil Air Patrol 20100 Birchwood Spur Road, Chugiak, Alaska
Meeting 4 – March 30, 2024	Birchwood Civil Air Patrol 20100 Birchwood Spur Road, Chugiak, Alaska