



Planning for the future, together

DAAPS Kickoff Survey Results



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INTRODUCTION

The Denali Area Airport Planning Study (DAAPS) Kickoff Survey was conducted between March and August of 2024, as shown in Figure 1. The survey was intended to gather perspectives from a broad range of airport system users and Denali area residents, visitors, and business owners. This report summarizes the 181 responses that were received.

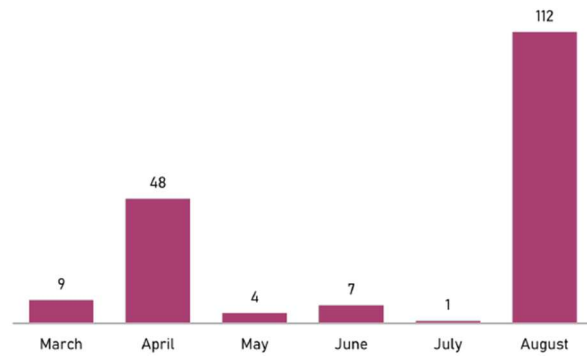


Figure 1. Number of responses by month.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Participants were asked to self-report on their primary residence or base of operations, which stakeholder groups they belonged to, and flight activities in the Denali area. The majority of participants reported living in the Denali area (Figure 2), and personal recreators were the largest stakeholder group (Figure 3).

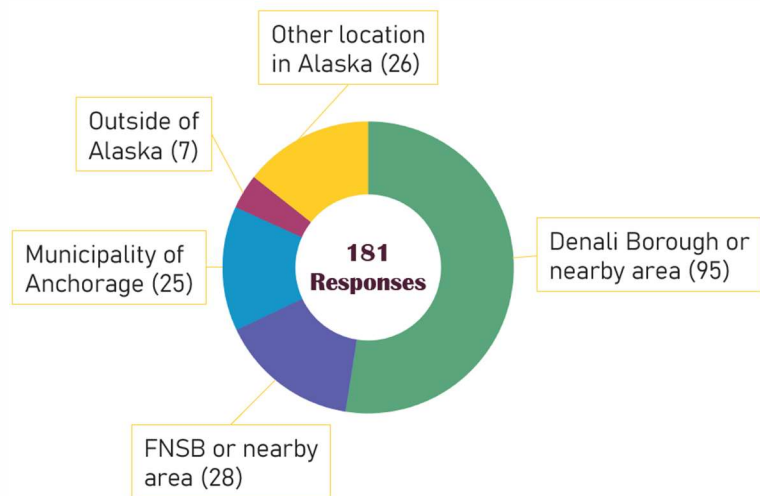


Figure 2. Primary residence or base of operations.

Personal recreator in the Denali Borough	129
Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization	73
Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency	33
Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors	32
Other	29
Non-hospitality-related business or organization owner or manager	18

Figure 3. Stakeholder groups (participants could select multiple).



AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT OPTION RANKINGS

Participants were asked to rank five potential development options in order of preference, with 1 being the most important to the participant and 5 being the least important. The following charts show the number of people who selected each ranking for each development option; the yellow bar is the most commonly selected ranking for that development option. No expansion was ranked highest by the most participants, and constructing a new airport was ranked the lowest.

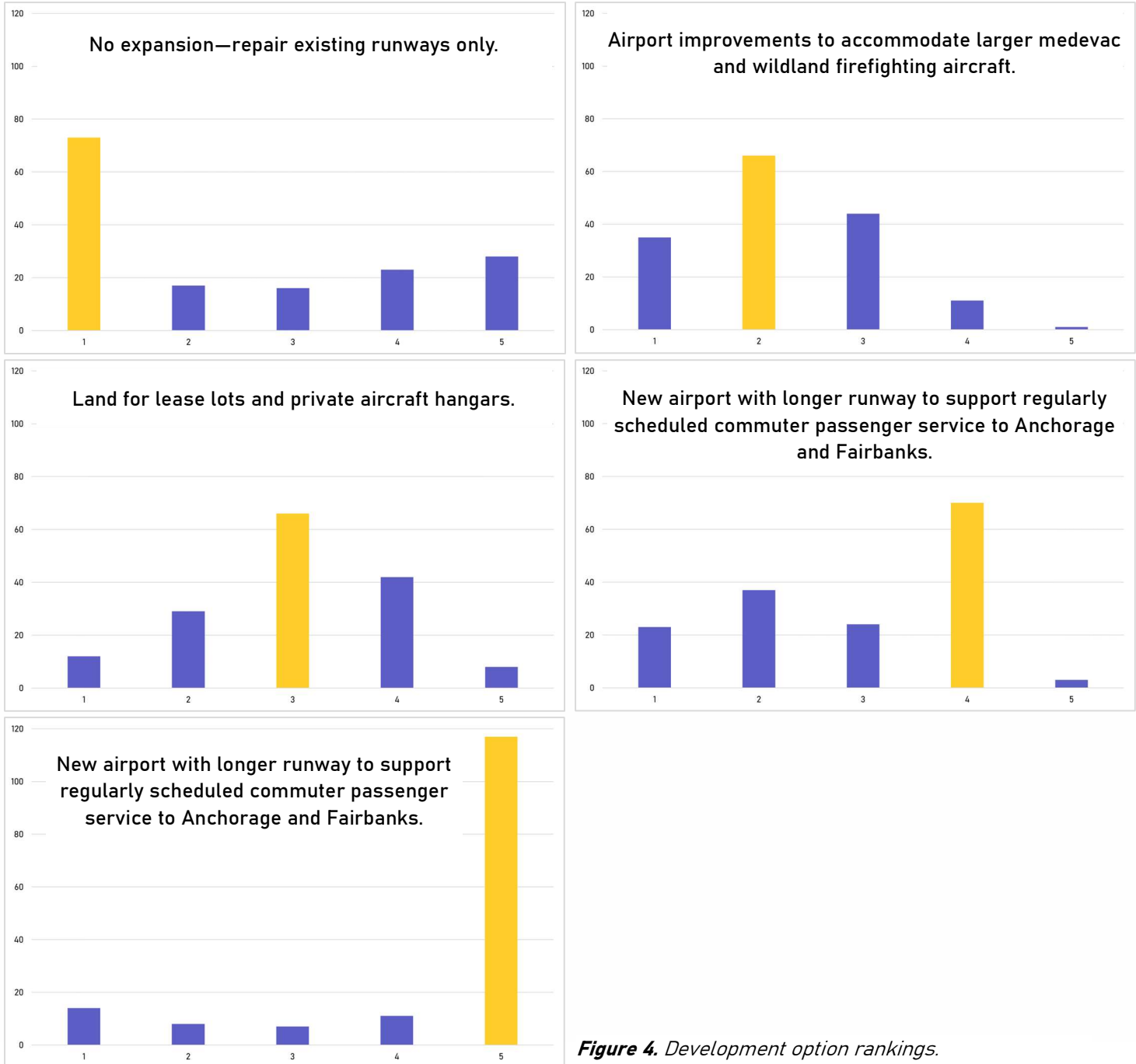


Figure 4. Development option rankings.



THEMES BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

The following tables summarize the most common themes mentioned by each stakeholder group in their responses to the open response questions. Participants were able to select multiple stakeholder groups, so some themes are counted more than once if a participant belonged to multiple groups.

Not every participant answered every question, and many themes are only represented once per stakeholder group for a given question. Only the most common theme for each group within each question is included.

The top themes across all questions and stakeholder groups indicate that the participants believe the current airports are sufficient and further development is not wanted, though there is some support for airport development and increased maintenance.



Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization

Participants in this group: 73

Rank	Theme	Number of Mentions
Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?		
1	More fuel concessions needed	6
2	Current airports meet needs	3
Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?		
1	Increased maintenance and/or funding needed	4
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	11
2	Development not needed/justified/wanted	5
Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	7
2	Maintain current airports and airstrips	5



Personal recreator in the Denali Borough

Participants in this group: 128

Rank	Theme	Number of Mentions
Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?		
1 (tie)	Regional commercial air service would improve options	6
1 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	6
2	More fuel concessions needed	5
Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?		
1	General support for airport development	8
2	Current airports meet needs	7
Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?		
1	General support for airport development	8
2	Current airports meet needs	7
Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	8
2	Maintain current airports and airstrips	7



Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors

Participants in this group: 32

Rank	Theme	Number of Mentions
Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?		
1	Regional commercial air service would improve options	5
2	Do not want more air traffic in Denali area	3
Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?		
1	General support for airport development	4
2 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	3
2 (tie)	Develop to accommodate larger planes	3
Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	10
2	Infrastructure concerns if developed	2
Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	4
2	Wind and weather concerns	3



Non-hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors

Participants in this group: 18

Rank	Theme	Number of Mentions
Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?		
<i>No theme was mentioned more than once</i>		
Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?		
1	Noise and environmental concerns	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	7
2	Environmental concerns	3
Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?		
1	Environmental concerns	3
2 (tie)	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	2
2 (tie)	Location suggestions	2



Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency

Participants in this group: 33

Rank	Theme	Number of Mentions
Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?		
1 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	2
1 (tie)	Increased weather data needed	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?		
1	Current airports meet needs	3
2 (tie)	General support for airport development	2
2 (tie)	The benefits do not justify further development	2
Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	10
2	Development not needed/justified/wanted	4
Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		



Other

Participants in this group: 29

Rank	Theme	Number of Mentions
Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?		
1 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	2
1 (tie)	Regional commercial air service would improve options	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?		
1 (tie)	Consider new location and weather	2
1 (tie)	Noise and environmental concerns	2
1 (tie)	Development to improve medevacs needed	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	12
2	Medevac improvements needed	3
Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?		
1 (tie)	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	3
1 (tie)	Negative lifestyle concerns	3
2	Location suggestions	2



THEMES WITHIN EACH QUESTION

Do the airports in the Denali Area currently meet your needs?

Total responses: 47

Theme with the most mentions overall: Current airports meet needs (15 mentions)

Rank	Theme	Number of mentions
Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization		
1	More fuel concessions needed	6
2	Current airports meet needs	3
Personal recreator in the Denali Borough		
1 (tie)	Regional commercial air service would improve options	6
1 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	6
2	More fuel concessions needed	5
Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	Regional commercial air service would improve options	5
2	Do not want more air traffic in Denali area	3
Non-hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
<i>No theme was mentioned more than once</i>		
Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency		
1 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	2
1 (tie)	Increased weather data needed	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Other		
1 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	2
1 (tie)	Regional commercial air service would improve options	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		



Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?

Total responses: 44

Theme with the most mentions overall: Current airports meet needs (16 mentions)

Rank	Theme	Number of mentions
Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization		
1	Increased maintenance and/or funding needed	4
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Personal recreator in the Denali Borough		
1	General support for airport development	8
2	Current airports meet needs	7
Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	General support for airport development	4
2 (tie)	Current airports meet needs	3
2 (tie)	Develop to accommodate larger planes	3
Non-hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	Noise and environmental concerns	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency		
1	Current airports meet needs	3
2 (tie)	General support for airport development	2
2 (tie)	The benefits do not justify further development	2
Other		
1 (tie)	Consider new location and weather	2
1 (tie)	Noise and environmental concerns	2
1 (tie)	Development to improve medevacs needed	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		



Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?

Total responses: 90

Theme with the most mentions overall: Negative lifestyle impacts (88 mentions)

Rank	Theme	Number of mentions
Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	11
2	Development not needed/justified/wanted	5
Personal recreator in the Denali Borough		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	38
2	Development not needed/justified/wanted	9
Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	10
2	Infrastructure concerns if developed	2
Non-hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	7
2	Environmental concerns	3
Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	10
2	Development not needed/justified/wanted	4
Other		
1	Negative lifestyle impacts	12
2	Medevac improvements needed	3



Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?

Total responses: 55

Theme with the most mentions overall: Development not justified, wanted, or needed (26 mentions)

Rank	Theme	Number of mentions
Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	7
2	Maintain current airports and airstrips	5
Personal recreator in the Denali Borough		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	8
2	Maintain current airports and airstrips	7
Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	4
2	Wind and weather concerns	3
Non-hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors		
1	Environmental concerns	3
2 (tie)	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	2
2 (tie)	Location suggestions	2
Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency		
1	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	2
<i>No other themes were mentioned more than once</i>		
Other		
1 (tie)	Development not justified, wanted, or needed	3
1 (tie)	Negative lifestyle concerns	3
2	Location suggestions	2



APPENDIX A. Survey Questions



Denali Area Airport Planning Study Kickoff Survey

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is conducting an aviation system planning study for airports serving the residents, visitors, agencies, and businesses of the Denali Borough. DOT&PF has contracted with RESPEC to conduct this study.

The Denali Area Airport System Planning Study (DAAPS) is a dynamic process which requires ongoing participation and feedback from all stakeholders. The following survey is the first of many efforts that will be used during the process to identify stakeholders, gather information, identify issues, document concerns, and solicit ideas.

There are no foregone conclusions in the study process. We will gather information and data, assess the airport conditions and constraints, document needs, and consider Federal and state policies and priorities for funding infrastructure improvements. Recommendations may range from “do nothing” to an airport closure or relocation, or anything in between. Additional information can be found at <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/denaliairportstudy/>.

As a resident of the Denali Borough or a visitor, business, or aviator that works or recreates in the Denali Borough, your participation in this survey is a crucial step in the process.

Protection of your Information: Your name and information will NOT be shown in survey results, public documents, or reports. Your contact information will be collected at the end so that the RESPEC team may provide direct notification of future meetings, review documents, and project updates. You are not required to provide this information. Survey answers will be kept completely confidential and survey results will be anonymous. All survey responses will be assigned an anonymous code before storage in a password-protected folder, and survey responses used for analysis will have all identifiers deleted and answers will be reported out in aggregate/summary only.

Questions can be directed to DenaliAirportStudy@RESPEC.com

We estimate this survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.



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Please mark the location of your primary residence or base of operations.

- Denali Borough or nearby unincorporated areas
- Fairbanks North Star Borough or nearby unincorporated areas
- Municipality of Anchorage
- Outside of Alaska
- Other location in Alaska

Please mark all stakeholder groups that describe you.

- Pilot, air carrier, or member of an aviation organization
- Personal recreator in the Denali Borough
- Hospitality-related business owner or manager, including sole proprietors
- Non-hospitality-related business or organization owner or manager
- Employee of a local, state, or federal government entity or agency
- Other

How often do you fly to Denali Area airports (see map on the last page)?

- Never
- 1 to 5 times a year
- 6 to 11 times a year
- 12+ times a year (once a month or more)

Please list all airports and airstrips you operate to and from within the Denali Area (name and/or location identifier):

Please indicate your primary reason for flying to/landing at one or more of the Denali area airports.

- Flightseeing or recreation
- Hunting
- Aircraft parking or refueling
- Business
- Other

Do the airports in the Denali Area (see map on the last page) currently meet your needs?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Please explain:

Which of the following regularly scheduled air services would benefit you? Mark all that apply.

- Business travel
- Vacation travel
- School travel
- Package/cargo
- Medical-related travel
- Transportation of business clients to/from the area
- I would not benefit from regularly scheduled air service
- Other (use space below to specify)

Do you see a need for airport development (for example, constructing a new airport or expanding an existing airport) in the Denali Area?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

If airport development were to occur in the Denali Area, how would you rank these options? Please number 1 through 5, with 1 being the most important to you.

- No expansion—repair existing runways only.
- New airport with longer runway to support regularly scheduled commuter passenger service to Anchorage and Fairbanks.
- Land for lease lots and private aircraft hangars.
- Airport improvements to accommodate larger medevac and wildland firefighting aircraft.
- New airport with a longer runway to accommodate larger passenger jets capable of providing service directly to the Lower 48.

Do any of the existing airports in the Denali Area need improvements (for example, runway rehabilitation, lighting replacements, general repairs, additional navigation aids, weather reporting)?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

If yes, please provide the airport name or location identifier and a description of the needed improvements:

Do you have any concerns about airport development or improvements in the Denali Area?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

Please explain:

Do you have any other ideas or concerns you would like to share with the Denali Area Airport Planning Study team?

We want to keep you informed about the project. Providing your contact information will allow us to contact you for additional input or notify you of public involvement events and opportunities. By providing the information below you agree to receive project-related mailings and emails. Your responses to this survey will remain anonymous and you may leave any of these sections blank.

Name: _____

Company/affiliation: _____

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____

Mailing address: _____

