

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of September 13, 2017

Subject: Final Crystal Airport 2035 Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council determine that the Crystal Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) conforms to the metropolitan Aviation system plan and is consistent with Council policy.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Russ Owen presented this item.

Owen answered questions from Council members: This should not increase capacity for take-offs/landings - demand levels are expected to remain steady, which can be handled by the proposed runway system; the City of Crystal has provided letters of support for the proposed plans; Whether there will be increased noise for neighbors will become more clear during the Environmental assessment but haven't had any complaints from public regarding noise - noise will essentially 'shift' not necessarily increase; the forecast suggests a couple small jets but the runway length won't attract bigger jets. Regarding whether this will affect the planned Blue Line extension project, Schreiber provided comment that in the last two years of public hearings, she hasn't heard many issues/concerns and she was impressed with public engagement process.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Reynoso and passed.

Transportation Committee

Meeting Date: August 28, 2017

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of September 13, 2017

Subject:	Final Crystal Airport 2035 Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP)
District(s), Member(s):	District 2, Lona Schreiber District 6, Gail Dorfman
Policy/Legal Reference:	MS 473.165, 473.611
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Russ Owen, 651-602-17248 Mark Filipi, Manager Technical Planning Support, 651-602-1725 Amy Vennewitz, 651-602-1058
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council determine that the Crystal Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) conforms to the metropolitan aviation system plan and is consistent with Council policy.

Background

Under MS 473.165 and MS 473.611 the Council reviews the individual LTCP's for each airport owned and operated by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) and airports in the region. The Council reviews and comments on all plans for consistency with the metropolitan development guide including Thrive MSP 2040 and the Transportation Policy Plan. There are currently four runways at Crystal Airport, three paved runways, and one turf runway. The previous plans recommended that MAC "right size" the airport, which included decommissioning two of the four runways. This LTCP focuses on refining the preferred alternative from the previous plans. The primary runway (14L/32R) is 3,267 feet long. Based on FAA guidance, along with airplane operational manuals, the recommend primary runway length should be 3,300-3,900 feet. The crosswind runway is 2,499 feet, and can accommodate the lower crosswind capable light single-engine aircraft used for personal, recreational and flight training activities. In developing the alternatives for the 2035 LTCP, MAC carried over some of the improvements recommended in the 2025 LTCP which have yet to be completed.

The MAC approved the Final Crystal Airport LTCP at its May 15, 2017 Commission meeting and authorized its submittal for Council review. The 2017 Update of the LTCP replaces the 2008 Plan and moves the planning horizon to 2035.

Rationale

Under the aviation planning process and TPP policy all airport LTCP's are to be periodically updated. The LTCP serves as the basis for identifying needed projects, maintaining funding eligibility to meet state and federal financial and plan consistency requirements, and to ensure that projects are responsive to system needs and conditions. LTCP's are used as input to the Council's update of the regional aviation system plan and community comprehensive plans.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This LTCP will continue to provide the citizens in the NW area of the region an outstanding minor airport to use for business and private flying activities (prosperity).

Funding

This action has no funding implications for the Council. Future facility development costs estimated in the LTCP will be used by MAC in preparing future annual capital improvement programs to match revenue with annual development costs.

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Known Support / Opposition

Supported by MAC and airport users. After many discussions with the airport users, the MAC refined the preferred alternative, in order to preserve the turf runway. TAB has reviewed and supports the findings and the recommended motion. Councilmembers from the city of Crystal support the plan as well.

ATTACHMENT 1

Crystal Airport 2035 LTCP Proposal

The Crystal Airport is located in Hennepin County, approximately seven miles northwest of downtown Minneapolis. The Crystal Airport is located primarily in the city of Crystal, with small portions of airport property overlapping into the City of Brooklyn Park and the city of Brooklyn Center (Attachment 1). Crystal Airport is the closest MAC airport to downtown Minneapolis.

The Crystal Airport is classified as a Minor Airport in the regional aviation system. The airport's primary role in the airport system is to attract general aviation traffic away from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) to relieve congestion, which helps reduce operating costs and promotes sustainability. Crystal airport accommodates personal, recreational and some business aviation users within Hennepin County and the northwestern portion of the metropolitan area. The plan states that the airport will continue its current role in the system, and the aircraft type that the plan is designed for is not changing. There are currently four runways at Crystal Airport, three paved runways, and one turf runway. This LTCP focuses on refining the preferred alternative from the previous plans. The primary runway (14L/32R) is 3,267 feet long. Based on FAA guidance, along with airplane operational manuals, the recommend primary runway length should be 3,300-3,900 feet. The crosswind runway is 2,499 feet, and can accommodate the lower crosswind capable light single-engine aircraft used for personal, recreational and flight training activities. In developing the alternatives for the 2035 LTCP, MAC carried over some of the improvements recommended in previous plans, which have yet to be completed.

The Original Preferred Alternative (Attachment 2)

- Carry-over items from previous plans
 - Decommission existing Runways 14R/32L and 06R/24L (Turf) to reduce airfield complexity and increase safety.
 - Convert existing Runway 14R/32L into a full length parallel taxiway and add taxiway lights
 - Preserve areas for future hangar development
- Refinements included in the final draft 2035 LTCP Preferred Alternative
 - Convert existing paved blast pads on Runway 14L/32R to stopways, including edge lighting and additional runway safety area.
 - Expand fixed base operator (FBO) apron
 - Reconfigure the taxiways
 - Pursue the establishment of a new non-precision instrument approach to the Runway 32 end.

After multiple community meetings and comments from stakeholders, MAC evaluated adjustments to the original preferred alternative and developed a refined concept as follows:

- Primary Runway length: Convert portions of the paved blast pads on primary Runway 14L/32R to useable runway for a published length of 3,750 feet, with declared distances in effect.
 - Move the end of the primary runway approximately 115 feet to the northwest along its centerline to locate all of the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) at the southeast end of Runway 32R on the MAC property.

- Turf Runway: Retain a portion of the existing turf runway and operate it in a manner that will reduce runway crossing points, and airfield complexity.
- Taxiway configuration changes: The Air Traffic Control Tower and operations staff made recommendations to make the airfield more efficient and to further simplify geometry.

2035 LTCP Final Preferred Alternative Summary (Attachment 2):

The 2035 LTCP Final Preferred Alternative for improvements at Crystal Airport includes the following items:

- Items from previous plans
 - Decommission existing Runway 14R-32L to reduce airfield complexity and increase safety;
 - Convert existing Runway 14R-32L into a full-length parallel taxiway and add taxiway lights;
 - Preserve areas for future hangar development should demand arise;
 - Identify parcels for possible conversion to non-aeronautical revenue generating land uses.
- Refinements included in the 2035 LTCP Preferred Alternative
 - Update the runway designation to Utility and use small aircraft design standards to reduce RPZ dimensions;
 - Convert portions of the paved blast pads on primary Runway 14L-32R to extend useable runway for a published length of 3,750 feet with declared distances in effect, and extend taxiways to new runway ends;
 - Shift the primary runway approximately 115 feet to the northwest along its centerline to locate all of the RPZ for Runway 32R on MAC property, improving land use compatibility over the existing condition;
 - Retain a portion of the existing turf runway and operate it in a manner that will reduce runway crossing points, airfield complexity, and incursion potential while preserving turf operational capabilities at a metropolitan area airport;
 - Taxiway configuration changes;
 - Expand the FBO apron;
 - Pursue the establishment of a new non-precision instrument approach to the Runway 32 end, if feasible.

Advantages of this preferred alternative include:

- Primary Runway 14L/32R is extended to 3,750' consistent with FAA runway length guidelines
- All Runway RPZ's will be on airport property and comply with FAA compatibility criteria
- Runway 6/24 alignment retains optimal wind coverage
- Turf Runway will still be usable,
- Taxiway and runway incursion spots are all but eliminated.
- Existing airport operational footprint is maintained with no additional property acquisition
- Current Minor Airport classification does not change

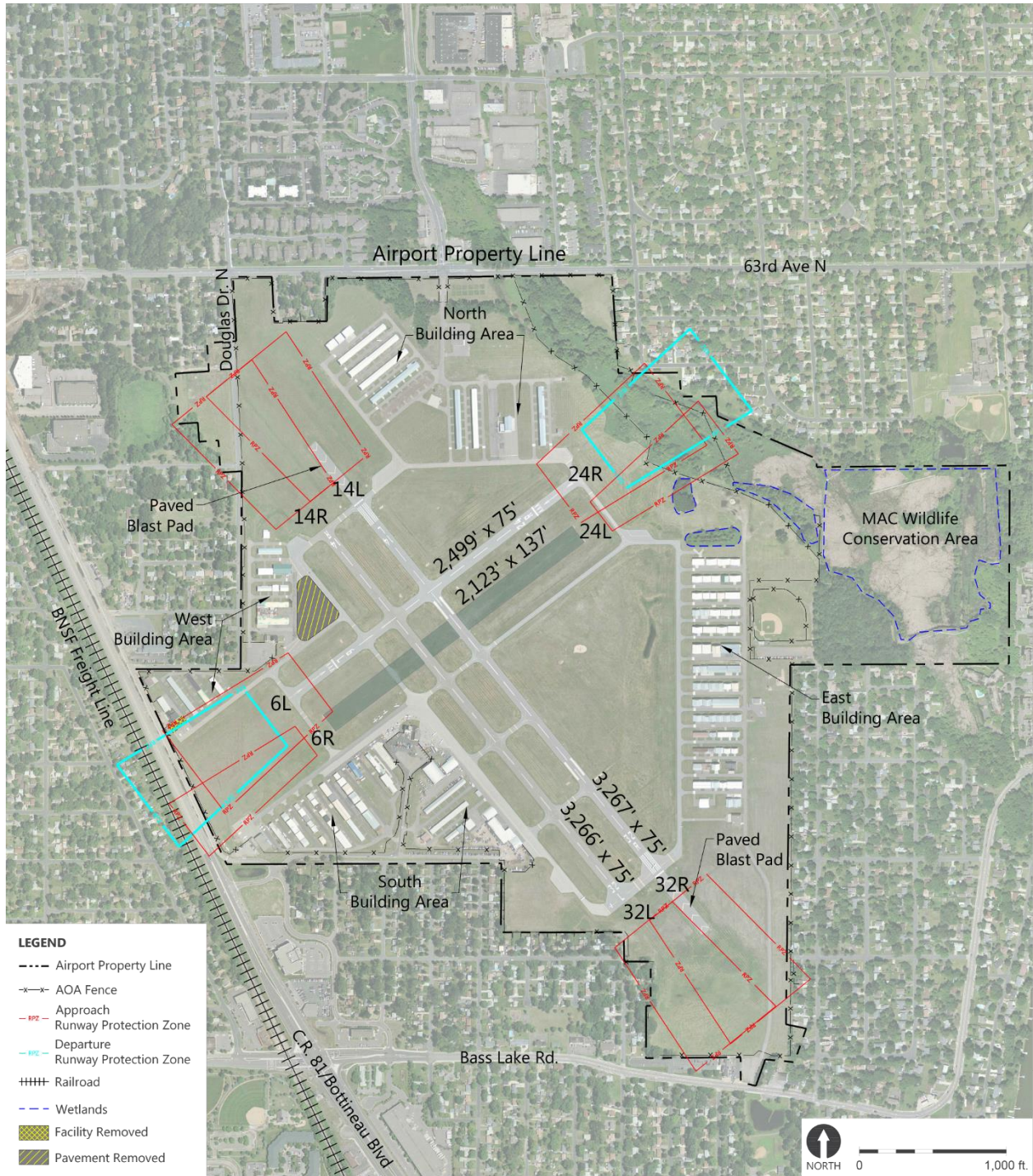
Disadvantages of this preferred alternative include:

- Taxiway extension add pavement to maintain
- Operational impacts during construction
- May require obstacle (tree) removals
- Runway extensions move departing aircraft closer to the airport boundary, possibly increasing ground noise for neighborhoods closest to the airport boundary

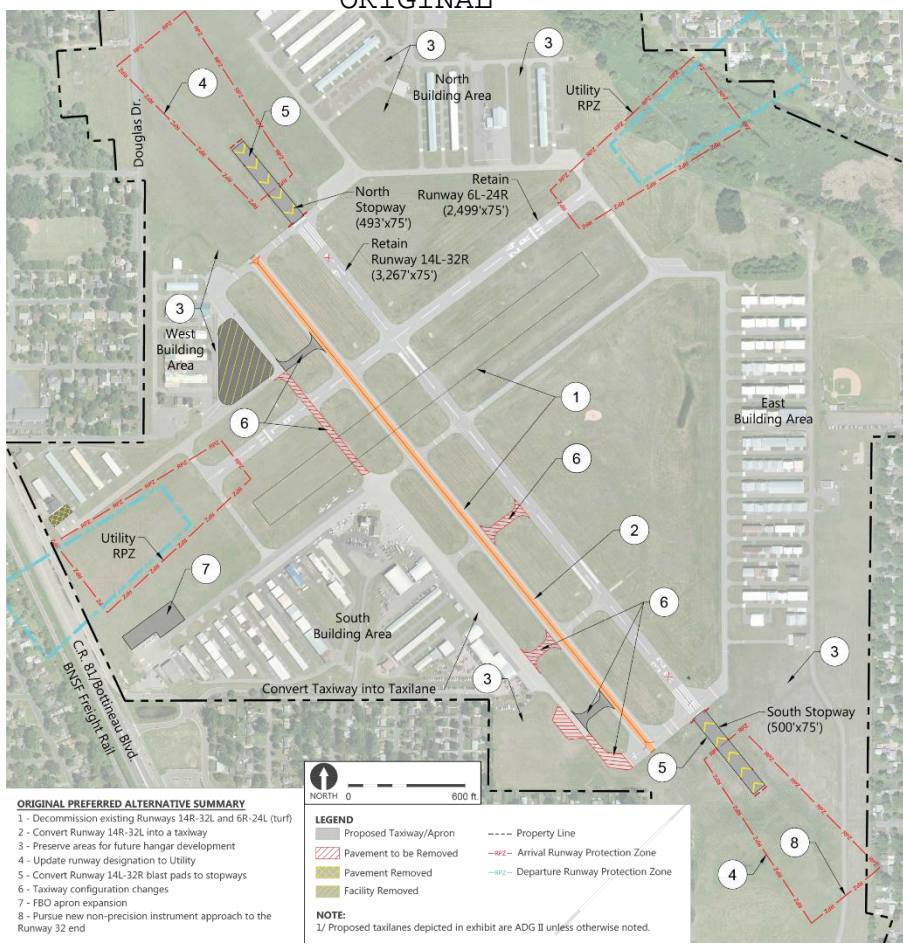
The refined preferred alternative is responsive to the most prominent stakeholder concerns while still meeting the stated planning goals to: 1) better align airfield infrastructure to match existing and forecasted activity levels; 2) preserve and, if possible, improve operational capabilities for the current family of aircraft using the facility; and 3) enhance safety by simplifying the airfield movement area configuration.

This plan will also give the surrounding communities assurance of the airport's future footprint for comprehensive community planning. MAC staff will continue discussions with the city of Crystal about non-aeronautical revenue-generating opportunities on airport property, and will work with the surrounding communities to ensure proper zoning exists.

Figure ES-1: Existing Airport Layout



ORIGINAL



FINAL

