

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: March 11, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: March 27, 2024

Business Item: 2024-67

Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport 2040 Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP)

District(s), Member(s): District 5, John Pacheco Jr, Anjuli Cameron (MAC Liaison)

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statutes 473.165 and 473.611

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Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council find that the Final Draft Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) 2040 Long-Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) has a multi-city impact as well as conforms to the Council systems and is consistent with Council policies.

Background

MSP is the main commercial service airport for the state and neighboring states and in 2023 was the 19th busiest airport in the nation. The airport has four runways, ranging from 8,000 feet to 11,000 feet in length, and can serve all types of aircraft. MSP is also home to an Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve base. MSP Airport is classified as the Major Airport in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan's regional aviation system and a Key Commercial Service airport in the state system. The airport's primary role in the airport system is to provide general commercial service for the region and state. There are additional general aviation and military operations at the airport, however, these activities constitute a small share of total operations.

The 2040 MSP LTCP anticipates steady growth in both passengers and operations through 2040 due to regional population and economic growth, and anticipated industry growth. However, this growth will not require significant new airside (runways and airfield including support facilities) improvements or major capacity enhancements. Landside improvements include targeted terminal and parking expansions, terminal circulation improvements and increased terminal connectivity. Operations are anticipated to be lower to the plan horizon than the previous LTCP and historical peaks as aircraft passenger capacity has increased over time. Airport improvements may have additional environmental impacts, it is noted that a full understanding of potential impacts will be studied in the follow-up environmental review for outlined projects found in this Plan. The public and the Council will have additional opportunities to understand and weigh in on these impacts in the future.

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) has proposed a preferred development alternative

for MSP International Airport that retains its system role as the major commercial service hub for the region and plans for modest capacity enhancements and airfield improvements. MSP's footprint is not planned to increase, its role in the regional aviation system is not anticipated to change, and the outlined projects in the Plan will maintain MSP as a major driver of the regional economy. As such, the MSP 2040 LTCP conforms to regional transportation policy and is consistent with the regional development guide.

The MAC approved the MSP International Airport 2040 LTCP at its November 20, 2023 Commission meeting and authorized its submittal for Council review. The MSP International Airport LTCP replaces the 2030 plan, approved in 2010, and moves the planning horizon to 2040.

The TAB and technical committees reviewed and discussed the LTCP at their previous meetings. Members commented on the age of previous environmental studies for MSP referring to air quality and emissions from operations, future sustainability efforts at MSP, and the planned parking structure projects. The TAB and technical committees recommended acceptance of the staff analysis of the 2040 MSP LTCP and to find the Plan conforms to the regional aviation plan and policy and is consistent with the RDG.

The full plan can be found on the MAC's website at [Long-Term Planning | MSP Airport](#).

Rationale

Under MS 473.165 and MS 473.611 the Council reviews the individual long-term comprehensive plan (LTCP) for each airport owned and operated by the MAC. The Council reviews and comments on all plans for consistency with the regional development guide including Thrive MSP 2040 and the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). The LTCP is part of the aviation planning process which outlines future needs and improvements to meet those needs. As part of the aviation planning process, conceptual improvements outlined in this plan will undergo further environmental analysis and eventual inclusion into the annual CIP, which will allow for additional review by the Council and general public in the future, and required to be approved by the Council prior to construction.

Under the aviation planning process and TPP policy, airport LTCPs are to be periodically updated. MAC plans are to be consistent with all components of the regional development guide. The MAC prepares a long-term comprehensive plan for each airport in its system regularly to update activity forecasts, identify needed projects and potential impacts to the surrounding community and environment, 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. LTCPs are used as a basic input to the Council's update of the regional aviation system plan and in reviewing compatibility with community comprehensive plans.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The improvements outlined in the MSP 2040 LTCP will allow the airport to be able to meet projected growth in demand and improve vital facilities for user comfort and access. These improvements will ensure MSP remains a national leader in facility quality and sustainability and set it up for continuing success in the future. This Plan updates key considerations for the region, will aid adjacent local governments in future planning efforts, and will advance the Prosperity Outcome of Thrive 2040 by promoting the region's economic competitiveness.

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.

Known Support / Opposition

The Plan is supported by the MAC and airport stakeholders. Community engagement efforts have solicited community opinions around the airport and its future plans. The Plan included a 60-day



public comment period (July – August 2023) in addition to in-person and virtual engagement sessions from 2019 to 2023. Citizens and adjacent communities expressed support for the plan and MSP in general. A majority of public comments received included considerations for noise impacts, carbon emissions and air quality impacts from ongoing and future aircraft operations at MSP, and roadway congestion at the terminals. The TAB and its technical committees have reviewed the Plan and support the findings and recommended motion.



Attachment 1

MSP 2040 LTCP Preferred Alternative Summary

The MAC examined three overall “families” of alternatives for the airport terminals, two updating and expanding upon the 2030 preferred alternative and one which would establish a unified terminal by connecting both Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 with a direct airside connection behind security. Additionally, multiple alternatives were examined for the airfield, separate from the terminal alternatives. These alternatives covered aircraft taxiways, de-icing facilities, remain-overnight parking (RON), air cargo facilities, and fixed-based operator facilities. Finally, three families of landside alternatives were considered for improvements to parking and transit facilities, terminal curbside use, airport access and non-aviation revenue generating opportunities. These various alternatives were evaluated against each other in how they meet different evaluation criteria including passenger convenience, terminal, landside, airside, operation and capital expenses and mission/goals of the MAC.

Through the evaluation process, the MAC selected alternative 3.1A which incorporates multiple elements from each of the three preliminary alternatives and the balance between airside, landside and terminal functions. The preferred alternative was then vetted and refined with extensive stakeholder input from airlines, airport tenants, MAC staff, other agencies, the stakeholder advisory panel and members of the public.

Projected growth in passenger and freight activity, obsolete facilities, and airport circulation improvements (both landside and airside) dominate the outlined improvements found in the preferred alternative. The 2040 Final Preferred Alternative is split between near, medium- and long-term improvements. The preferred alternative includes general taxiway, deicing and other minor airfield improvements in addition to the following major items:

Near-Term:

- Terminal 2 South Expansion
- US Postal Service Site Redevelopment
- Orange and Purple Ramp Expansions
- Terminal 2 Curb Frontage Improvements

Medium-Term:

- Reconstruct Concourse A and F, Demolish Concourse B
- West Cargo Apron and Facility
- Fixed Operator Base Relocation
- Terminal 1 Roadway Reconstruction
- Green and Gold Ramp Reconstruction including new Federal Inspection Service Facility
- 34th Avenue Parking Development
- TH5 Interchange Reconstruction

Long-Term:

- Terminal 2 North Expansion
- Concourse G South Expansion and Concourse E Reconstruction
- Terminal 2 Curb Frontage Improvements
- Terminal 1 and 2 Airside Connection

Full details of the preferred alternative concept can be found in the full Plan linked previously.

Advantages of this preferred alternative include:

- Current airport classification does not change.
- Expanding operations capacity without the growth of the airport grounds or runways.
- Right sizing terminal facilities to accommodate changing aircraft types.
- Improved circulation and access to both Terminals.



- Maintaining and expanding federal inspection facilities at both terminals to allow for maximum flight flexibility.
- Providing an airside connection between terminals to enhance connectivity between terminals.
- Future activation of a street corridor (34th Ave S) with non-aviation and potential active uses.

The refined preferred alternative is responsive to the most prominent stakeholder concerns while still meeting the stated planning objectives. The preferred alternative is designed to meet the projected demand through 2040. Flight volumes and overall activity are driven by Federal policies and commercial aviation demand in the nation and the world. Impacts from aircraft operations at MSP are thus not dictated by the MAC. The preferred alternative balances the needs of operators at MSP and mitigating potential impacts, when possible, to surrounding communities and the environment. The 2040 MSP LTCP underwent an extensive public engagement process that began prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued in 2021 after a year hiatus. The full list of public events and stakeholder meetings held can be found as an appendix item in the Plan.

