

# Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Environmental Assessment BOCC Update

October 2017



ASPEN/PITKIN COUNTY AIRPORT  
**IMPROVEMENTS**  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



ASPEN/PITKIN COUNTY AIRPORT  
OWNED AND OPERATED BY PITKIN COUNTY

# Meeting Goals

- ➔ **Update BOCC on:**
  - ➔ EA Public Comments
  - ➔ Public Process going forward
  - ➔ Approximate Timeline
  - ➔ Next Steps



# EA Reminders

- **Two Proposed Projects, and Purpose and Needs**
  - Eastside Terminal and Associated Landside Improvements
  - Relocate Runway 80 feet to the West to accommodate D-III Category Aircraft
- **Evaluated Through Public Process Two Terminal Design Concepts and Associated Landside Improvements**
- **Design would be completed in next steps**
- **No Commitment from Airlines Concerning Actual Aircraft Types or Flights**
- **Federal preemptive restrictions**

# Draft EA Conclusions

- ***No Federally Defined Thresholds of Significance Exceeded other Than Wetlands***
- **Minimal Wetlands Displacement Due to piping of Owl Creek**
  - Will require an individual Section 404 permit issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers and will require mitigation
  - Will be applied for after detailed plans prepared for runway shift

# Summary of Responses



## Air Quality and Noise Comments

- **Based on this evaluation, no significant noise or air quality impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project relative to federal thresholds**
  - Analysis looked at reasonably foreseeable conditions and fleet mix, including larger aircraft
  - No mitigation is required, no significant impacts
  - However, there are options to include potential non-required reduction measures such as the noise wall, preconditioned air hook ups, etc. in final design that could reduce noise and GHG footprint
  - These elements would be examined during design phase
  - Additional GHG reduction measures are being examined as part of a separate process (Climate Action Plan)
- **The Airport cannot restrict aircraft from flying in and out of ASE, as it is a public use airport**
- **Airport must meet FAA design requirements**
- **Proposed project does not include the changing the general aircraft arrival and departure patterns (generally arrive from the north and depart to the north)**

# Summary of Responses



## Terminal Comments

- Most comments related to elements that will be dealt with in the design phase (sizing, concessions, expense, features, sustainability, jet bridges, walkability).

## Planning, Regulation and Site Questions etc.

- **Emergency preparedness**
  - In terms of emergency preparedness and response, the Airport fully meets all Federal mandated staffing equipment and training requirements for any aircraft incidents.
- **Question of losing commercial service is not valid/FAA should make exceptions:**
  - Jet aircraft with wingspans under 95 feet being phased out of fleet mix; could retain turboprop commercial service; Based on best assumptions and coordination with aircraft manufacturers
- **Comments on existing/potential intersections**
  - Site plan does not include any new intersections; assumes no new intersections in the planning period
- **Question on parking, transit etc.**
  - Site plan includes space for retaining the same number of spots as today; Recognizes that parking is a valley wide concern that may require separate study from a local level
  - Site plan includes more initiative link to transit
- **Concerns that traffic may be impacted**
  - Analysis showed no significant impact relative to Level of Service at the intersections
- **Concerns about light pollution**
  - Lighting impacts were analyzed and found to have no significant impact; Final design will need to meet design guidelines and Highway 82 corridor requirements

# Summary of Responses



## Water Comments

- **Comments on impact to Owl Creek**
  - Owl Creek impacts will require a permit with Army Corps of Engineers and require mitigation; mitigation will be coordinated with the Corps and locally (with interested parties such as Pitkin County Open Space) to identify a project to offset impacts

## Other Comments

- **Aspen Airport is the economic lifeline of the community**
  - Economic analysis in the EA indicated that loss of jet commercial service would result in negative socioeconomic impacts to the valley
- **Request to have runway improvements completed first**
  - The timing of the projects will depend largely on availability of funding
- **Question on why voters are not allowed to vote on the airport expansion, as it affects small town character**
  - This action requires approval of the BOCC, but does not require a direct vote by the community.
- **Request for more time to comment; thought notification was inadequate**
  - Notification included newspaper ads, emails to stakeholders, social media, radio
  - Comment period was 45 days, above the normal 30 day comment period
  - Two public hearings held and online comment forum for ease of commenting

# Public Process/Next Steps

- **Second Reading/BOCC hearing November 15**
- **Submit to FAA if BOCC approves**
- **FAA issues findings**
- **Solicitation and Contracting with Consulting Team**
  - Program Management
  - Program Financial Feasibility
  - Design Team
  - On call Planning and Environmental
  - On call Engineering
  - On call Financial
- **Submit Application for Federal Funds**