

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

CENTRAL REGION - DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES DIVISION
AVIATION DESIGN SECTION

SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

4111 AVIATION AVENUE
P.O. BOX 196900
ANCHORAGE, AK 99519-6900
(907) 269-0895 (FAX 907-243-4409)

December 21, 2009

RE: Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport
South Airpark Access Road Development Project
Response to Community and Public Comments

Dear Community Resident,

Thank you for providing comments on the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' (DOT&PF) proposal to construct an access road to the South Airpark at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA), in Anchorage, Alaska. DOT&PF and TSAIA are charged with responsible development of airport property and are working to make your airport a more economically viable centerpiece of both Anchorage and Alaska's economy.

The project's purpose is to provide access to the west-side of Taxiway Z for additional airport related commercial development. This is referred to as Phase 1 of development west of Taxiway Z. Future phases will be investigated in the next Airport Master Plan. Development of the lease lots accessible by the new road will be by individual airport tenants.

Public involvement efforts related to this project were conducted between March and June of 2009. Public input was solicited through public notices published in the Anchorage Daily News and on the DOT&PF Online Public Notice webpage, public meetings, open houses, and local community council meetings. Numerous comments expressing a wide variety of topics were received. The comments were tabulated and grouped into categories, which are discussed below. Please understand that some comments were not directly related to the project, and were not included in this discussion.

COORDINATION WITH THE MASTER PLAN

Master planning efforts have been stalled during the last year due to a fluctuating economy and a variety of other factors. For those reasons this project was not vetted to the public within the context of a master planning effort, but rather at a more grass-roots level of direct interaction with affected communities surrounding the airport.

TRAFFIC IMPACTS

In response to comments concerning traffic impacts, a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) was completed in November 2009, in accordance with the Alaska Administrative Code and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Traffic Department Policies. The analysis included a review of DOT&PF and MOA Traffic Volume data, collection of current traffic data, an assessment of the proposed project's compatibility with local planning efforts, Traffic Forecasts using AMATS travel demand model and a capacity analysis of background conditions and conditions with site traffic.

The draft TIA was presented to the public at a meeting on November 12, 2009, and is currently available for review at the following website:

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/anc/about/SouthAirparkDraftOct09v4.pdf>

At this time TSAIA has not leased any of the lots which would become accessible via the proposed south airpark access road. Traffic generated by future development must therefore be estimated. Future traffic was estimated based on the assumption that *future* development will be similar to *existing* south airpark area development.

It should be recognized that the basis for measuring existing traffic was a Municipal machine count conducted in July of 2009, which exhibited inconsistent directional volumes and therefore may be in error. The highest direction Municipality count was used as the basis of forecasts in order to present a "worst", or most conservative case. If the State count conducted in September 2009 were to be used, then the background component would be substantially less, and future AADT would fall below 10,000 vehicles.

In addition to present traffic – estimated at 3800 trips per day – the TIA indicates approximately 7,200 trips per day would be generated upon final development (phases 1, 2 & 3) of South Airpark. Capacity analysis determined traffic impacts would require mitigation at three locations: the intersection of Sand Lake Road-Raspberry Road-South Airpark Drive, the southbound approach of the proposed access road to Raspberry Road, and the southbound approach of Carl Brady Drive intersection with Raspberry Road.

Selection of specific mitigation for future traffic impacts will depend on actual traffic conditions. Implementation of the ultimate mitigation solution must be coordinated at some future point in time between MOA and DOT&PF. Please refer to Section 8 of the TIA for additional information on the mitigation alternatives identified thus far.

Please review the TIA and send your comments to Scott Thomas, DOT&PF Regional Traffic Engineer, by phone at 907-269-8406 or via email at scott.thomas@alaska.gov and Robert Kniefel, MOA Traffic Engineer, by phone at 907-343-0870 or via email at KniefelRE@ci.anchorage.ak.us.

VISUAL IMPACTS/ FUTURE AESTHETICS & LANDSCAPING

Conceptual plans for constructing a berm and associated vegetative landscaping were developed to obscure the development from the view along Raspberry Road and mitigate visual impacts associated with future development. The plan was presented to the public at a meeting on November 12, 2009, and is currently available for review at the following

website: <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/anc/about/community.shtml>. Based on public comment, the height of the berm was increased 5' and a temporary screening fence was added to the top of the berm to improve screening until the trees have grown.

Please send your comments to Wolfgang Junge, DOT&PF Project Manager, by phone at 269-0608 or via email at Wolfgang.junge@alaska.gov.

NOISE POLLUTION

The TSAIA Noise Compatibility Program is designed to reduce noise impacts on the surrounding community. The program includes measures to reduce noise generated at the Airport and to mitigate impacts off airport when possible and reasonable. The airport's noise team is currently implementing a residential sound insulation program. The airport has also installed a flight track & noise management system to quantify noise levels in the community and to assist with responding to complaints. The airport team researches and responds to noise complaints, communicates with local planners about appropriate land use to encourage compatible development surrounding the airport, and works cooperatively with the air traffic control tower, the airlines, and the local community to minimize impacts whenever possible. Please refer to the TSAIA Noise Compatibility Program webpage for more information: <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/anc/business/noise/compatibility/index.shtml>.

AIR POLLUTION

The Clean Air Act requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. The EPA has set a NAAQS for six principal pollutants including carbon monoxide, airborne particulates, airborne lead, sulfur dioxide, ozone and nitrogen dioxide. Previously, carbon monoxide (CO) levels in the MOA exceeded NAAQS standards, but in June 2004, the EPA reclassified the MOA from a CO non-attainment area to a maintenance area. As a maintenance area, Anchorage is now considered in compliance with the CO NAAQS. Anchorage has not violated the CO standard since 1996 and CO concentrations have dropped by approximately 60% from peak levels experienced in the early and mid-1980's. Moreover, the Municipal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) prepared a CO maintenance plan that demonstrates that Anchorage should remain in compliance through at least 2023.

LIGHT POLLUTION

Access road lighting was designed in accordance with AASHTO's IGRL. This is equivalent to the standard utilized for a MOA local road. Thus, lighting should not contribute to levels of light beyond that already in existence along standard streets within the municipality.

WETLAND IMPACTS

On March 9, 2009, the United State Army Corps of Engineers determined the proposed project would not involve placement of fill material into waters of the U.S. under their regulatory jurisdiction. One identified pond in the project area is isolated, therefore, no permit or wetland mitigation is required.

WILDLIFE IMPACTS

Wildlife near airports interferes with safe aircraft and airport operations. To deter wildlife from the airport, TSAIA developed a wildlife management program designed to discourage and minimize any wildlife that could impact the safety and operation at the airport. Any wildlife displaced by the project will be easily displaced and/or relocated to adjacent undeveloped areas and parks.

TREE REMOVAL/CLEARING

Clearing and removal of trees, vegetation, and organic ground cover is an expected part of the project. Some in the community have requested access to downed trees for personal use as firewood. Disposal of the cleared vegetation will be at the construction contractor's discretion. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that this request will be accommodated.

Again, thank you for participating in the project development process. Your cooperation and patience is appreciated. If you feel this letter does not adequately address your concerns, please contact Wolfgang Junge, DOT&PF Project Manager, by phone at 269-0608 or via email at Wolfgang.junge@alaska.gov.

Respectfully,



Lucas Smith
Consultant Coordinator