

# Grove Field Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC)

## Meeting #4

July 27, 2009

Port of Camas-Washougal Conference Room

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

### Attendees:

**EAAC Members:** Dave Luse, Jim Ludwig, Linda S. Busch Pfeifle, Lynn Johnston, Pete Capell and Richard Hamby

**Port of Camas-Washougal:** David Ripp, Scot Walstra and Mary Murphy

**WHPacific, Inc:** Rainse Anderson and Sarah Lucas

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### Welcome and Introductions

David Ripp and Rainse Anderson welcomed all EAAC members and the public to the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and their association with the airport.

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### Overview of Project Alternatives

Rainse Anderson and Sarah Lucas presented the project alternatives remaining for consideration. In addition to the No Action Alternative, overviews for Alternatives 5, 6 and 7 were given.

**Alternative 1: No Action.** This alternative does not change the existing deficiencies in runway/taxiway centerline separation, runway width, runway length, or object free area (OFA) penetration. A cost for 20-year pavement maintenance is included in the analysis. The advantages of this alternative are: there is no property acquisition or environmental impacts. However, the disadvantage is the airport would not meet Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards. The overall project cost is \$887,500.

**Alternative 5: Runway relocation and extension to 3,070', Delp Road relocated on Port-owned property.** This alternative would relocate runway to meet 150' separation standard, extend runway by 450', and widen to 60'. It would require 0.3 acres of right-of-way acquisition. Key points to this alternative are no penetration to the runway protection zone (RPZ) or approach surface, would meet all FAA design standards, no new stream crossing, minimal right-of-way acquisition and three curves may be perceived as a traffic safety hazard. The project cost related to this alternative is estimated at \$6,219,964.

**Alternative 6: Runway relocation and extension to 3,070', Delp Road relocated to the North.** This alternative would relocate the runway to meet the 150' separation standard, extend runway by 450' and widen it to 60'. It would require 0.6 acres of right-of-way. The key features to the alternative are no penetration of the RPZ or approach surface, would meet all FAA design standards, avoids driveway impacts and includes right-of-way

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acquisition. Estimated cost for this alternative is \$6,789,782.

**Alternative 7: Runway relocation and extension to 3,070', Delp Road in tunnel.** This alternative would relocate runway to meet the 150' separation standard, extend the runway by 450' and widen the runway to 60'. Delp Road would remain in its current configuration, but would be tunneled under the runway and taxiways. Key features related to this option are no penetration of the RPZ or approach surface, would meet all FAA design standards, no new stream crossing, no property acquisition and detour requirements necessary while installing the tunnel. Overall costs for Alternative 7 are estimated at \$10,379,155.

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**Discussion of Alternatives**

General comments from the EAAC members was that Alternative 7 had the least social impacts and that the Port's share for funding the option is a minimal increase over the other two build alternatives. It was also mentioned that money is money, no matter how much or little is being spent.

Several EAAC members reported they hear people saying that nothing is needed at the Airport. One member even said he would not support any build alternative, because he did not want the airport to become federally-obligated and will abstain from selecting a preferred built alternative. He urged others to do the same.

Pete Capell said he comes from a different perspective, as a representative of the County. He agrees the airport needs to be preserved, since there are not many other airports in the County, and believes it needs to meet FAA design standards. He could support any build alternative, but with the County doing the maintenance on Delp Road he prefers Alternative #6. The tunnel (Alternative #7) has some long-term maintenance implications and that is why he does not prefer it.

It was also mentioned that since the Airport hasn't had many accidents, it doesn't mean there haven't been close calls, which reiterates the need to improve the airport.

While the committee generally supports the airport, it was asked what if everyone abstained from voting for a preferred alternative (since they couldn't vote for the No Action Alternative). WHPacific said that if no preferred alternative was selected and the No Action was preferred, there would be no need to continue the EA. The No Action Alternative does not meet the EA's purpose and need.

It was mentioned the public hasn't been brought into this project or educated on the purpose of the proposed projects. WHPacific reminded the committee this isn't a typical EA process and that the project was designed

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to include additional public involvement (numerous EAAC meetings and Open Houses). At this point, the committee member clarified that it was the Airport Layout Plan Update process that wasn't transparent enough. The Port commented they have spoken with several service groups in an effort to educate the public and will continue to do so.

A committee member wanted to remind everyone that pilots pay for much of FAA's funding, so they should receive some of the funding rather than having it sent off to other airports.

A comment was made that the airport may cease to exist if these improvements aren't made. Clarification of this comment was that without being federally-obligated, the Port would be responsible for all maintenance and funding from the state would not be an option. It was felt the Port would not be able to sustain the airport without funding assistance, at which time it could be sold.

It was asked if the City of Camas expands its UGB, what would happen to the Airport. At this time it is unlikely the City would annex the airport and if it did, the airport is appropriately zoned "Airport Environs." Additionally, the County and state have designated the airport as an Essential Public Facility.

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**Public Discussion of Alternatives**

The public was given an opportunity to comment, which were:

- Maintenance costs for all alternatives should be presented.
- Some people think not becoming federally-obligated would make the airport better and wouldn't upset neighbors.
- The higher good of the community should be considered. It was this person's opinion that if nothing was done the airport would close and an airport is better than high density development. He also reminded people the airport is an essential part of the national airspace system.
- A nearby resident was concerned about real-estate value, since trees on her property are in the approach surface to the airport and have been identified for modification. *This resident was assured she would be involved in this process and reminded that an aviation easement compensates land owners.*
- Since the Runway 7 threshold is moving away from the mobile home park, aircraft would actually be higher over homes on approach to landing.
- People are only looking at short-term social impacts, not the long-term impacts. The proposed improvements will allow for more operations at the airport. *The proposed improvements do not increase operations and noise contours are being prepared for the build alternatives, so people can see the noise impacts associated*

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*with them.*

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**Selection of Preferred Alternative**

Since three EAAC members said they would abstain from voting for a preferred alternative, it was decided two votes would be taken with the later being the vote presented to the Port Commission.

Vote 1 (preferred alternative, including No Action as an option)\*

No Action – 3

#5 – 0

#6 – 0

#7 – 3

**Preferred Alternative Vote\*\***

#5 – 0

#6 – 1

#7 – 5

Abstain – 1

\*Vote 1 had six votes, while the Preferred Alternative Vote had seven votes. The discrepancy is due to an absent member casting his vote prior to the meeting.

\*\* Not represented in this tally is a vote from an absent EAAC member, who emailed Sarah Lucas on 7/31/2008 stating his preference for Alternative 7.

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**Future meeting dates and times**

The next meeting will be scheduled to coincide with the completion of the Draft EA public review comment period, to gather the EAAC's input.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.