INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The Port of Walla Walla (Port) initiated an update to the Airport Master Plan ("Plan") to assess the facility and service needs of the Walla Walla Regional Airport (ALW or "the Airport"). The Plan serves as a roadmap for bringing projects, people, and funding together in a coordinated manner, and provides strategic direction regarding the Airport's 20-year capital development plan and investment of resources.

The Plan is conducted in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidance, as prescribed by grant assurances and mandated by regulatory standards. Conformance with FAA standards enables the Port of Walla Walla to apply for federal and state funding in order to support the maintenance, expansion, and upgrade of airport facilities as demand warrants and funding is available.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Airport Master Plan is primarily a 'facilities plan', with the overarching purpose of documenting the orderly development of airport facilities, services, and equipment needs. The Plan describes and illustrates the Airport's 20-year facility development needs, providing the basis for justifying improvement projects identified by airport users, the Port of Walla Walla, and community stakeholders. While the Airport Master Plan is responsive to local issues, above all, the Plan follows FAA and Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) policy in providing for a facility that is:

- Safe and efficient, in accordance with FAA design standards
- Economically viable and supported in a financially sustainable manner
- Aligned with broad local, regional, state and national planning goals

1.1 BACKGROUND

An Airport Master Plan evaluates the short and long-term improvement needs with respect to up-to-date user information, trends, facility conditions, and design standards. The Plan addresses activities conducted by commercial service, general aviation, and military users, in addition to other aviation and non-aeronautical interests located on and off-airport.

Although an 'update' to the 2002 Master Plan, this Plan is a comprehensive evaluation of Airport facility needs with respect to user demand, site development considerations, anticipated costs, and funding priorities. As planning best practices, the Airport has periodically undergone similar efforts about every 10 years, each largely to assess future activity levels, recommend facility improvements, and conform to updated FAA design standards and compliances.

DRAFT

Referenced below, the former airport planning studies are now outdated, containing data and recommendations no longer substantiated by current aviation and community growth patterns.

- 1991 Airport Master Plan (Airport Layout Plan drawings approved 1991)
- 2002 Airport Master Plan Update (Airport Layout Plan drawings approved 2003)

1.2 PLAN FOCUS

The Plan is principally used to quantify future Airport facility needs, and to resolve key planning issues. The following items, as coordinated between the Airport and the FAA, are the major actions addressed as part of this project:

- Crosswind Runway 7-25 Operational Justification and Length Requirements
- Resolve FAA Hotspots to Runway and Taxiway Geometry
- Address FAA Non-Standard Conditions on 2002 Airport Layout Plan (ALP)
- Terminal Building Facility and Functional Needs
- Airline Market Potential and Opportunities
- On-Airport Revenues and Revenue Generation; Airport Rates and Charges
- FBO Service and Facility Needs
- Future Airport Landside Development and Roadway Access
- Future Airport Property Interests
- Future Airport Agricultural Leased Areas
- Update Airport Noise Contours
- Address FAA Design and Operational Compliance Items (as applicable)
- Update ALP Per FAA Standards and Checklists
- Prepare 20-Year Project Development Plan
- Update 5-Year FAA Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

1.3 PLAN DOCUMENTATION

The following are the core components of the Master Plan.

Narrative Report: The narrative report describes the Airport decision-making leading to the recommendations depicted on ALP drawings and carried forward as part of the 20-year capital development plan. The narrative, which is organized to follow FAA master planning guidance (FAA Advisory Circular 150/5060-6B), is arranged in the following chapters.

- Chapter 1 Inventory
- Chapter 2 Aviation Demand Forecasts
- Chapter 3 Facility Developments
- Chapter 4 Improvement Alternatives
- Chapter 5 Implementation and Capital Improvement Plan

The Plan will include technical appendices that provide more detail on Plan focus areas, including Air Service, Environmental Conditions, Passenger Terminal Facilities, and cultural resources. Additional technical appendices will be added as needed.

The final component of this Plan is the ALP, which is a set of drawing sheets as prescribed by FAA guidance, graphically illustrating airport facility features and depicting recommended improvements. The ALP drawings, which serve as the Airport's official 'record of planning', are developed in accordance with FAA checklist standards and procedural requirements.

1.4 PLAN COORDINATION AND PARTICIPATION

The participation process is designed to coordinate planning objectives with the needs and concerns of the local community by providing an opportunity for information sharing and collaboration among interested participants, stakeholders, and regulatory agencies. The participation process involves technical project meetings, public open houses, and social media and traditional media outreach to inform and solicit information from the general public at key decision points.

Agency Coordination:

The FAA is the lead agency for this Plan, and primarily involved with the review of Plan documentation and formal approval of the aviation activity forecasts and ALP drawings. The Plan also involves limited agency coordination with the WSDOT-Office of Aviation, and local constituencies.

Local Stakeholders:

The Airport Master Plan involves coordination and input from multiple local governmental interests, organizations, and constituencies. The following are key stakeholders that are engaged as part of the Plan:

- Port of Walla Walla
- City of Walla Walla
- County of Walla Walla
- Walla Walla Community Air Service Coalition
- Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Visit Walla Walla
- Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance
- Walla Walla University
- On-Airport Aviation / Airline Service Providers

Planning Advisory Committee:

The Port assembled a Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) specifically for this planning project, knowing plans that involve diverse participation are more successful and widely accepted than those without. The PAC serves in an 'advisory' capacity, comprised of airport and community stakeholders focused on guiding Plan recommendations to reflect consistency with the Port's plan and vision, and community interests.

The PAC, which confers with the Airport / Port and consultant throughout the Plan, is charged with reviewing interim materials, attending project meetings, providing comment on project findings, and encouraging awareness and adoption of the Airport Master Plan recommendations. PAC feedback is incorporated, as appropriate, into the final Plan documentation.

Public Outreach and Participation:

Public outreach is an important element of the public involvement process and serves as the opportunity for the public-at-large to learn about the Airport Master Plan progress, interact with stakeholders, communicate concerns, and provide feedback. Public meetings are strategically held at key project milestones, with public insights and suggestions integrated into the final Plan.

1.5 STRATEGIC EVALUATION

As a strategic planning process, the Airport Master Plan is structured to be responsive to the Port's overall mission, while being inclusive of broader community needs. The Airport has been identified as one of the Port's most important community economic assets, with scheduled commercial air service of paramount importance. The Port, as a public agency, has the mission to maintain multi-modal transportation assets and long-term infrastructure, such as the Airport, and charged with spurring economic development, creating jobs, expanding the region's tax base, and providing leadership for diverse economic growth.

SWOT Analysis:

As part of the strategic planning process, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted with the PAC to determine the appropriate strategic visions for the Airport, and specific goals and objectives to be addressed throughout the Plan. SWOT is a process for synchronizing strategic decision-making factors, and helps categorize the Airport's internal and external characteristics, qualities, and merits. When compiled, the SWOT factors help formulate Plan goals, provide the basis to pragmatically assess recommendations, and guide the Plan's overall developmental policy.

SWOT TABLE

		Helpful	Harmful
		To Achieving the Objective	To Achieving the Objective
Internal Origin	Attributes Within Airport Influence	Strengths	Weaknesses
External Origin	Attributes Outside of Airport Influence	Opportunities	Threats

Strengths:	characteristics that provide an advantage over others.
Weaknesses:	characteristics that create a disadvantage compared to others.
Opportunities	outside potential that the Airport could capitalize on.
Threats:	outside risks that could be detrimental to the Airport.

The following SWOT factors were identified by the Planning Advisory Committee during the project kick-off meeting held November 5, 2015.

Strengths:

1. Abundance of WWII Airport facilities and infrastructure, good facilities to offer and make available
2. Ease of Airport access; proximity to city
3. Available Airport property for development
4. No automobile parking lot fees
5. Modern passenger terminal building, with conference room
6. Underpinnings of Port airport ownership; proactive Port
7. Local economy is growing
8. Airport zoning makes development easy
9. Airport serves as central location for wineries
10. Apron availability, perhaps to construct future buildings/hangars
11. Airport Business Park opportunities
12. Airline passenger growth; increasing enplanements

Weakness:

1. Responsiveness to aircraft fuel availability
2. Not a full-service fixed base operator (FBO); fragmented lines services for processing general aviation aircraft and pilots, capital costs, lease costs, suitable building
3. Airline competition, single destination
4. Availability of courtesy car; rental car hours
5. Port focused on return on investment
6. Alaska flight reliability due to winter fog
7. Terminal and landside building conditions
8. T-hangars are full
9. Airport landside building availability; additional 10 buildings (2,500± SF) for new commerce
10. Port view of Airport as part of overall transportation mission
11. Weather, fog conditions
12. Restaurant stability; multiple operators, currently unused, occupies key terminal space

Opportunities:

1. Unique Airport, terminal building conference room to attract and provide various users
2. Attract aviation oriented businesses, offer more retail in Airport Business Park
3. Develop fee structure to differentiate between 'aviation' and 'industrial park/non-aviation'
4. Desired Los Angeles/Central California airline flight destination
5. Seattle (SEA) Airport: 60% connecting passengers, 40% final destination passengers – once a 50%-50% split, but now SEA used for more connecting ALW passengers
6. Pasco (PSC) Airport benefit to ALW Airport; compliments ALW services due to Walla Walla remoteness
7. Installing runway centerline lights may improve minimums; improve access during fog conditions
8. Air Traffic Control Tower services
9. College Flight Program; train pilots, perhaps other aviation curriculums.

Threats:

1. Aircraft mechanic (A&P) on airfield nearing retirement. Need an A&P mechanic, or more than one.
2. Need new business buildings, incubators; Port is turning away prospective business due to a lack of building stock; however Port is perceived competition with private sector investment and pricing
3. Ability for businesses to own land/building, versus existing leaseholds
4. Pasco (PSC) Airport represents threat to ALW due to traveler proximity, Highway 12 improvements; PSC and ALW common airline provider, service, and capacity; expanding PSC market destinations
5. Airport needs to become more financially self-sufficient
6. Airline cancellations during winter season, fog conditions; travelers tend to transition to PSC.
7. Radar service capabilities at ALW
8. ATCT viability
9. Lack of private investment into new hangar development