

Chapter 1 – Introduction and Project Overview

The City of Pendleton updated the Airport Master Plan for Eastern Oregon Regional Airport (PDT) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to address the airport’s needs for the next twenty years. The Airport Master Plan provides specific guidance in making the improvements necessary to maintain a safe and efficient airport that is economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable.



Study Purpose

The purpose of the Airport Master Plan is to define the current, short-term, and long-term needs of the airport through a comprehensive evaluation of facilities, conditions, and FAA airport planning and design standards. The study will also address elements of local planning (land use, transportation, environmental, economic development, etc.) that have the potential of affecting the planning, development and operation of the airport. FAA Advisory Circular 150/5070-6B “Airport Master Plans” defines the specific requirements and evaluation methods established by FAA for the study.

Project Need

Eastern Oregon Regional Airport is included in the federal airport system—the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). Participation in the NPIAS is limited to public use airports that meet specific FAA activity criteria. There are currently 3,331 NPIAS facilities including airports, heliports and seaplane bases.¹ The FAA recognizes that NPIAS airports are vital to serving the air transportation needs of the public and that access to the nation’s air transportation system is not limited to commercial air service.

¹ 2015-2019 National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems

The primary division for NPIAS airports is “Primary” and “Nonprimary.” The 389 Primary airports account for about 12 percent of the overall NPIAS system, but provide the majority of commercial air service throughout the system. The 2,942 Nonprimary airports include General Aviation, Reliever, and Nonprimary Commercial Service (2,500 to 10,000 annual passenger enplanements). Additional designations reflect the airport’s functional (asset) role (e.g., national, regional, local, basic) and service level (e.g., commercial, reliever, general aviation).

According to current NPIAS report (2015-2019), Eastern Oregon Regional Airport has the following NPIAS classification/designation:

- Category: **Non Primary**
- Asset Role: **Regional**
- Service Level: **Commercial Service – Nonprimary**

Eastern Oregon Regional Airport currently provides the only scheduled commercial air service in eastern Oregon with daily flights to Portland International Airport. The air service is partially subsidized through a federal Department of Transportation Essential Air Service (EAS) grant. The nearest other commercial air service airports are located in Pasco and Portland. Additional information about commercial air service is provided in the Aviation Activity Forecasts (Chapter 3).

NPIAS airports are eligible for federal funding of improvements through FAA programs such as the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). However, to maintain eligibility for funding, the FAA requires airports to periodically update their master plans as conditions change in order to maintain current planning that is consistent with applicable FAA technical standards, policies and regulations.

This project updates the 2002 Airport Master Plan,² which has provided the primary airport planning guidance for the Airport over the last thirteen years. As conditions have changed in recent years, the need exists to update the long-term planning for the Airport. In addition to addressing changing local conditions, updated FAA standards, current trends within the aviation industry, and the recent addition of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) activity has been reflected in updated airport planning. The 2015-2035 Airport Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan (ALP) replaces the previous master plan and meets the FAA’s requirement to maintain current planning.

² “Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at Pendleton.” *Airport Master Plan* (2002), prepared by David Evans and Associates, Mead & Hunt Inc., and Pavement Services Inc.

Project Funding

Funding for the Airport Master Plan Update is provided through an FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grant (95%) with a local match (5%) provided by the City of Pendleton. The AIP is a dedicated fund administered by FAA with the specific purpose of maintaining and improving the nation's public use airports. The AIP is funded exclusively through fees paid by users of general aviation and commercial aviation and the funds can only be for eligible aviation related projects.

Airport Ownership

The City of Pendleton is the owner and operator of Eastern Oregon Regional Airport (PDT). As the airport owner (sponsor) of record, the City of Pendleton is responsible for conforming to all applicable FAA regulations, design standards, and grant assurances.

History of Airport and Development

According to local accounts, the original Pendleton airport site was developed in 1934 on approximately 200 acres. Oregon Historical Society³ records indicate that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed Pendleton Field/Pendleton Army Air Base on the site in 1941, which included new runways, hangars, and other facilities. In June 1941, the U.S. Army Air Force 17th Bombardment Group was transferred to Pendleton Field. Members of this group later participated in the World War II, Doolittle raid on Tokyo. In February 1942, the Bombardment Group was transferred and Pendleton Field became a training airport for fighter pilots. The airport was converted to a civilian airport after the war ended in 1945 and ownership was transferred to the City of Pendleton. In 1953, the airport terminal and administration building was constructed and has since been expanded. Other major improvements include the airport fire station (1960) and the airport maintenance facility (1984). The City of Pendleton has continued to modernize every part of the airport including: the runway-taxiway system, aircraft parking aprons, airfield lighting, weather observation and navigational aids, terminal building, support facilities, and utilities. Improvements completed since the last master plan update includes the closure of Runway 16/34, which was converted to a taxiway (Taxiway G) with pavement sealcoat and new taxiway markings; installation of new perimeter fencing; Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) building expansion; acquisition of a new ARFF vehicle; and pavement maintenance.

³ Howdysshell, Bus. "Pendleton Field." *Oregon History Project*. Ed. Cain Allen. 1 Jan. 2005. Web. 21 Jan. 2015.

History of Airport Planning

Planning for Eastern Oregon Regional Airport has been updated on a regular basis since the 1970s. The city's sustained commitment to long-term planning is reflected in the condition, configuration, and functional capabilities of the airport. The current airport master plan was completed in 2002 and the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) drawing was last revised in 2007. These documents will serve as primary data sources for this project. The previous airport master plan, completed in 1996,⁴ project design drawings, aerial photography, available mapping and survey data, and local planning studies will also be used as primary information sources for preparing the updated Airport Master Plan and ALP.

Study Organization

Work in progress on the Airport Master Plan Update was documented in a series of technical memoranda (presented as draft chapters). The chapters were prepared to document progress in the study, facilitate the review of preliminary results, and to obtain input early and throughout the master planning process. At the end of the study, the draft chapters were updated as needed, and incorporated into the draft final Airport Master Plan technical report.

The draft chapters and supporting documents were prepared over a period of approximately 18 months. Each draft chapter was reviewed locally, and by the FAA and Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) for consistency with federal and state regulations, policies, and standards.

The 2015-2035, Eastern Oregon Regional Airport Master Plan includes the following chapters:

- *Chapter 1 – Introduction and Project Overview*
- *Chapter 2 – Inventory of Facilities*
- *Chapter 3 – Aviation Activity Forecasts*
- *Chapter 4 – Unmanned Aircraft Systems Evaluation*
- *Chapter 5 – Demand-Capacity & Facility Requirements Analyses*
- *Chapter 6 – Environmental Review*
- *Chapter 7 – Airport Development Alternatives*
- *Chapter 8 – Airport Layout Plan and Terminal Area Plans*
- *Chapter 9 – Land Use Planning*
- *Chapter 10 – Airport Financial Plan/CIP*
- *Chapter 11 – FAA Compliance Review and Solid Waste Recycling Plan*
- *Appendix – Wildlife Management Plan*
- *Technical Appendices*

⁴ Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at Pendleton, Master Plan Update (Bucher, Wills & Ratliff, 1996)

Local Citizen Participation

The City of Pendleton is committed to an inclusive, transparent planning process and made all project work products available for public review. The public involvement element of the Airport Master Plan Update provided several ways for all interested individuals, organizations, or groups to participate in the project.

First, all draft work products developed during the project were available for public review and comment. Links to the documents were posted on the City's webpage to allow for convenient access, review and comment. Copies of the draft work products were also available for public review and comment at the Airport Administration office throughout the project. Comment forms were available for both electronic and printed versions of the draft work products.

Second, a series of public meetings were held during the project to facilitate public participation. The public meetings included periodic study sessions and briefings with the City of Pendleton and separate project meetings and open houses. The project team presented information, provided updates on study progress, and identified upcoming decision points during these meetings. The project team utilized a variety of tools to encourage citizen participation, including surveys, project newsletters, and project updates posted on the City's webpage.

Third, a local planning advisory committee (PAC) was formed by the City of Pendleton to assist the project team in reviewing draft technical working papers and to provide input into the planning process. The composition of the PAC was intended to provide an effective blend of community members including representatives of the City's Airport Commission, airport users, neighbors, local business, local government representation, and other interests. Representatives from the FAA Seattle Airports District Office and the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) served as ex officio members of the PAC. The PAC met throughout the project, reviewed and commented on draft work products, discussed key project issues and provided local knowledge and expertise to the planning process.

The PAC meetings were open to public; however, since the meetings are organized as work sessions, the time allocated for public comment was limited. Expanded public comment periods were provided in the public meetings that coincide with specific PAC meetings to ensure that all interested stakeholders had an opportunity to participate in the project.

Summary

The FAA-defined airport master planning process required a sequential, systematic approach, which has led to a selection of a preferred development option for the airport that was integrated into the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) and Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP). To meet this goal, the Airport Master Plan Update:

- *Provided an updated assessment of existing facilities and activity;*
- *Forecasted airport activity measures (design aircraft, based aircraft, aircraft operations, etc.) for the current 20-year planning period;*
- *Examined previous planning recommendations (2002 Airport Master Plan) as appropriate, to meet the current and projected airport facility needs, consistent with FAA airport design standards;*
- *Determined current and future facility requirements for both demand-driven development and conformance with FAA design standards;*
- *Provided consistency between airport planning and land use planning to promote maximum compatibility between the airport and surrounding areas;*
- *Prepared an updated Airport Layout Plan (ALP) drawing set to accurately reflect current conditions and master plan facility recommendations;*
- *Developed an Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) that prioritizes improvements and estimates project development costs and funding eligibility for the 20-year planning period; and*
- *Evaluated airport sponsor compliance with FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grant assurances.*



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