



Real People. Real Solutions.

Willmar Municipal Airport Master Plan Advisory Group Meeting #2



Thursday, February 9, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.
Willmar Municipal Airport
6600 Highway 40 West
Willmar, MN 56201

MEETING NOTES

ATTENDEES

Aaron Backman, Economic Development Commission
Megan DeSchepper, Airport Manager
William Fry, Airport User
Mel Odens, County Public Works Director
Eric Rudningen, FBO/Airport Operations Supervisor
Eric Weiberg, EAA
Kevin Carlson, MnDOT
Cody Miller, Airport User
Melissa Underwood, Bolton & Menk, Senior Aviation Planner
Christopher Gardner, Bolton & Menk, Aviation Planner

1. Welcome & Introductions

The goal of the meeting was to present the results of the user surveys, review the airport inventory, and present the based aircraft operations forecast data for the group to discuss. Each member of the group received a meeting packet to be used throughout the course of the meeting. The packet includes a meeting agenda, a copy of the presentation slides, as well as a copy of the meeting minutes from the first meeting. All members present introduced themselves. Follow up and action items are represented in **bold** throughout the meeting minutes.

2. Project Status Update

The project workflow was reviewed. We have completed the draft based aircraft and operations forecast and will send the first three chapters for the group to review in a couple of weeks. After approval from the MPAG, the information will be submitted to FAA and MnDOT for review. The FAA approves the forecasts within the Airport Master Plan.

3. Airport Inventory

The existing airport layout as well as the existing building area figures were presented for review purposes. The airport inventory photos collected prior to MPAG Meeting # 1 were presented to the group using the Bolton & Menk Inc. Photo Cataloger Application. This information will be included in the inventory chapter and throughout the Master Plan Report.

4. Airport User Survey Results

Select results of the Airport User Survey and Business User Survey were presented. The response rate for the Airport User Survey was 16%. Our goal was to get a 10% response rate. 13 users reported having aircraft based at BDH. There were 24 total responses. Some of the main issues indicated by the user survey included the need for improved drainage in the building areas, additional hangar space, additional ground transport, a pilot shop, and aircraft charter.

At the time of the meeting 3 Business User Surveys had been returned out of 35 surveys sent. Two additional surveys were given to Bolton & Menk at the meeting. The group determined they would like to try and obtain additional business surveys. The group gave out specific contact information for some of the businesses they were interested in contacting. **Bolton & Menk will contact additional businesses discussed to increase the number of business surveys returned.**

Of the business surveys received, all businesses reported use of BDH with corporate aircraft. Business users indicated the need for additional aircraft storage, ground transport, and aircraft charter.

The need for additional hangar space as well as aircraft charter sparked the discussion amongst the group as to why the airport may not have adequate charter and aircraft storage. It was explained that the airport does not have a charter service due to the high cost. Charter service is referred to Marshall (MML). In addition, the existing FBO hangar is not always large enough to fit all transient aircraft due to the door size. The group discussed the benefits of larger transient hangar storage and that transient aircraft operator's look for airports to use that have that type of service. **A larger transient hangar will be discussed in greater detail in the facility requirements and alternative analysis chapter.**

5. Based Aircraft Forecasts

There are currently 57 based aircraft at the airport, including: 40 single-engine piston, 9 multi-engine piston, 2 single-engine turboprop, 3 multi-engine turboprop, 1 helicopter, and 2 jets. The 20 year forecasted growth of based aircraft was determined by averaging the annual growth rates of based aircraft at the four key airports surrounding BDH. According to the State Aviation System Plan, key airports have runways greater than 5,000 feet. The airports used in this analysis were the Southwest Minnesota Regional Airport (Marshall), New Ulm Municipal Airport, St. Cloud Regional Airport and the Alexandria Municipal Airport. The average growth rate of the surrounding key airports is 1.21%. Therefore, that number was used to determine the growth of based aircraft to 76 over the next 20 years.

Other assumptions made for the based aircraft growth included an additional jet aircraft in 2020 based on the plan to expand the apron in the future. In addition, a single-engine aircraft was added in 2023 and 2028 to account for additional private hangar development in the future. This is based on the results of the user survey and the need for additional hangar space at the airport.

6. Annual Operations Forecasts

To determine the annual operations forecast, we started with the confirmed operations we know about at the airport. The airport user survey results had 1,884 operations reported by

pilots. The Traffic Flow Management System Count for 2015 (an FAA database of operations by aircraft that file IFR flight plans to BDH) reported 2,697 operations with 281 jet operations. 123 of those operations were from ARC C jet aircraft. The state aviation system plan and the FAA Terminal Area Forecasts (TAF) both report 17,850 annual operations at BDH. The FAA TAF does not show any operation growth at BDH over the next 20 years. Because there is no Air Traffic Control Tower at the airport, the most common way to report operations at the airport by using the Operations Per Based Aircraft (OPBA) method. To keep the forecasts consistent with the based aircraft growth, the average OPBA was calculated for the key airports around BDH including New Ulm Municipal Airport, St. Cloud Regional Airport, and the Alexandria Municipal Airport. The reason the Southwest Minnesota Regional Airport was not included in this average is due to the amount of air taxi operations they have at the airport. The OPBA at the Southwest Minnesota Regional Airport is 692 which is extremely high for a general aviation airport. The OPBA for the remaining key airports is 416. This number fits within the range given by FAA of an OPBA of 350 for rural airports and an OPBA of 450 for busy general aviation airports in a metropolitan area. This number was used to calculate the operations forecast at BDH. The 2016 existing operations would equal 23,712 (416 x 57 based aircraft), growing to 31,616 (416 x 76) operations in 2036. This is an annual growth rate of 1.45%.

The existing critical design aircraft at the airport is a C-II aircraft which is projected to remain the same over the next 20 years.

7. Identify Next Steps

The next steps are to send out the inventory and forecast chapters to be reviewed by the MPAG and then MnDOT and FAA. This will ensure we are moving forward in the right direction when reviewing facility requirements.

The group brought up the need to look at the paved crosswind runway during the facility requirements discussion. Paving the crosswind runway is one of the objectives of a key airport in the current State Aviation System Plan. **Paving the crosswind runway will be discussed in greater detail in the facility requirements and alternative analysis chapter.**

After the FAA approves the forecast, we will schedule the next MPAG meeting. It is anticipated this meeting will be held in April. We can go out and tour the airfield at this time if necessary to look at the facilities being discussed during the meeting.