

Airport Master Plan - Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #2

Date: July 17, 2014 - 8:00am to 10:00am
Location: Recreation Center, Durango
AIP Project: Airport Master Plan
Subject: Investigative Phase, Terminal Needs, Outreach and Surveys

In Attendance:

PAC Members

Bob Allen, Allen & Associates
Mike Burns, Alpine Bank
Travis Craig, Vectra Bank
Jim Davis, La Plata County Public Works
Gary Derck, Airport Commission
Mike Foutz, FCI Constructors
Ray Hagerman, Four Corners Economic Development
Marilyn Lang, Realtor
Jack Llewelyn, Chamber of Commerce
Peter Marshall, Double Tree Hotel
Ed Morlan, Region 9
Greg Munro, LPEA
Matt Muraro, Colorado Dept. of Transportation
Brian O'Donnell, Conservation Lands Foundation
Jim Ottman, Public
Steve Parker, Airport Commission
Sheri Rochford-Figgs, STEAM Park

Steve Schwartz, Fort Lewis College
Joanne Spina, La Plata County
Brad Tafoya, Tafoya Barrett & Associates /
Economic Alliance
Tom Taylor, Four Corners Economic Develop. /
NM State Representative
Jim Tencza, La Plata County Planning
Commission
Pat Vaughn, Southern Ute Growth Fund Real
Estate Group
Tim Walsworth, Business Improvement District
Jasper Welch, Durango Space
John Wells, The Wells Group
Roger Zalneraitis, La Plata Economic
Development Alliance
Christi Zeller, La Plata County Energy Council

Airport Staff

Kip Turner
Tony Vicari

City Staff

Sherri Dugdale
Ariel Wishkovsky

Consulting Team

Hilary Fletcher, Jviation
Dave Nafie, Jviation
Colleen Cummins, Jviation
Michael Spitzer, RS&H

1. Welcome/Opening Comments

Kip Turner opened the meeting by welcoming members to the PAC. Each consulting team member introduced themselves to the group. Hilary Fletcher began the meeting by reviewing meeting expectations, ground rules, and the master planning process.

2. Work-to-Date

Hilary Fletcher briefly reviewed items completed and in process which include:

- Website
- Airport Tours
- PAC Survey
- Outbound Passenger Surveys
- Tenant and User Surveys
- Working Paper One – Introduction, Inventory, and Forecast
- Preliminary Terminal Requirements

Discussion followed and PAC comments included:

- Would have liked to witness a bit more chaos during the airport tour as it was done during a quiet period in the terminal.
- Take away from tour was safety behind the scenes which currently can be compromised due to congestion.

3. Public Engagement & Education

PAC Survey

Twelve questions were distributed to the PAC via an on-line survey link, <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1714015/Durango-La-Plata-County-Airport-PAC-Survey> Approximately half of the PAC completed the survey prior to the meeting which provided a very good sample size. The survey remains open for those who would like to complete.

Hilary reviewed the results of the survey which can be found within the presentation given at the meeting, available at <http://sites.jviation.com/dro/meetings.html>.

Discussion followed and PAC comments included:

- Survey items 3 and 7 resulted in a relatively neutral response and it was determined that more information was needed to have an opinion one way or the other.
- Hilary asked what the feeling was about general aviation (GA) as an economic driver in the community.
 - Natural gas industry supports much of the GA activity and contributes to local economy.
 - FedEx and other businesses also contributors to GA activity.

- Cargo can be considered an untapped revenue source currently and may play a future role.

Outbound Passenger Surveys

Hilary and Ariel Wishkovsky completed 52 surveys on July 16, 2014. Questions asked included residence, purpose of travel, issues of airfare, convenience, reliability, ratings of quality of experience, amenities, services, etc.

- ➔ Respondents were a mix of local and visitors (50/50); recreation and business travelers (60/40)
- ➔ Local passengers were from Durango, Albuquerque (ABQ), Farmington (FMN), Cortez (CEZ), Del Norte, Hesperus, and Pleasanton
- ➔ Comments ranged from lack of food service/concessions in secure area, direct Houston flight, high airfares, wait time for bags, etc.

Discussion followed and PAC comments included:

- ➔ Inquired whether additional passenger surveys were to be done. Hilary noted that none were scheduled and 52 was a very good pool.
- ➔ Surprised that people would drive to Durango from ABQ. Reason given was due to direct flight to destination from Durango which they could not get from ABQ.

4. Review of Inventory

Colleen Cummins provided the PAC with an overview of the Inventory conducted which included:

- ➔ Airport Reference Code & Airfield Design Standards
- ➔ Airfield/Airspace
- ➔ Commercial Passenger Facilities
- ➔ Airport Certification & Regulations
- ➔ GA Facilities
- ➔ Airport Equipment & Support Facilities
- ➔ Access, Circulation, & Parking
- ➔ Meteorological Data
- ➔ Utilities
- ➔ Regional Setting & Land Use
- ➔ Environmental Overview

Discussion followed and PAC comments included:

- ➔ Question was asked if Ute Indian contact/coordination would be completed since DRO falls within their boundary. Colleen noted that the FAA would initiate coordination with the tribe per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). However, no formal consultation is required during the planning process.
- ➔ Discussion about gas wells and other environmental conditions on east side of airfield ensued. Colleen noted that the entire airport was being reviewed for environmental categories including wetlands, cultural resources, hazardous materials, etc.

- Request for additional information on surrounding property owners (tribal, residential, commercial, etc.).

5. Review of Forecasts

Dave Nafie continued with a review of forecasts which were prepared including sources and methods. Data used was based on the metropolitan statistical area (MSA) which captures a larger area including Durango and surrounding areas. Historic enplanement growth was shown to demonstrate the continued upswing at DRO since 2003. Dave discussed the forecast comparisons and methods used for passenger enplanements which resulted in the preferred enplanement forecast. Commercial operations, GA operations and based aircraft forecasts were also discussed.

Discussion during the presentation included:

- It was asked if the Woods and Poole data used in the forecast was available to the public.
 - Dave responded that it was but only available for purchase. However, the Forecast chapter, which will be distributed to the PAC, contains a large portion of the data used.
- Discussion about how/why DRO is bucking trend by continually increasing enplanements when other similar CO airports are decreasing (reference to Passenger Enplanement comparison slide).
 - Possibly due to the fact that other airports (Aspen, Eagle-Vail, Hayden, etc.) are closer to Denver.
 - Many small businesses have been established in area whose owners fly frequently.
 - Farmington has been steadily losing passengers so increase at DRO may be those passengers.
 - Many airports are supported by ski season but DRO has other drivers that bring people to the area year round (business, year-round tourism, etc.).
 - It would be beneficial to add CEZ, FMN, and ABQ to chart for comparison.
- Is trend of increasing enplanements sustainable? How much can we afford?
 - Regardless of forecasted enplanements, the existing terminal does not meet current needs and should be expanded. The forecast does show the recent growth slowing down in the future. The financial analysis will follow alternatives.
- Does data exist that shows the number of passengers going to airports other than DRO?
 - Yes, a study was published in 2013 which details passenger demand. It has been uploaded to website (www.flydurango.com) for reference.
- Comparison of economic drivers for DRO and other airports.
 - CDOT Aeronautics Department completed and Economic Impact Study (2013) which has been added to website (www.flydurango.com) for reference.
- Population growth of 2½% was questioned as seemed to high.
 - PAC member commented that the Four Corners Region is complicated by numerous state and county boundaries, thus making population and economic projections difficult.
 - Dave explained the data was pulled from Woods and Poole and is based upon past growth rates and projections and was for Durango. *This population growth rate has been confirmed at 2.5% by the state demographer.*

- It was noted that it is possible to only have a 1% increase in population but a 2% increase in enplanements due to the affluent nature of population.
- What does wealth index include (reference to comparison of forecast methods used)?
 - Dave noted he was unsure and would need to check. *The wealth index is a weighted measure of income derived from investments rather than employment. Normal is to remain at the benchmark.*
- Population and retail are not the only drivers of enplanements, i.e. if a direct Houston flight starts it would increase enplanements.
 - Concern that if direct Houston flight occurs prior to expanded facilities that there wouldn't be room to accommodate. Kip noted that we cannot invite them to begin that service until adequate accommodations exist.
- It was asked when Frontier began service at the airport.
 - Frontier previously flew into DRO but resumed service in 2008.
- Concern about plan for next few years until terminal can be properly addressed.
 - Operations would continue as is and as noted previously, no additional airlines can be invited until adequate space exists.
- PAC felt growth rate of 3.5% was too high for DRO and that a rate of 1.5% - 2% would be more reasonable.
 - Dave explained that we should focus on existing need and that a percentage point would not drastically change future terminal needs.
 - FAA is reviewing forecasts and needs to approve so forecast may change based upon their comments.
- Discussion about how another major distribution center could impact enplanements, i.e. a sudden increase of 10% could occur but then it could settle at 1½% increase.
- Should the FAA change requirements for current Airport Reference Code (ARC) of D-IV does DRO have any wiggle room?
 - Dave noted that it would depend on what requirements changed. Current pavement widths meet standards and if increased they would need to be increased. There is some space if safety areas were to increase from current standards.
- Many moving parts when it comes to future growth and they are hard to get a handle on. Businesses come and go; we have four colleges currently in southwest Colorado but that may be reduced in years to come (i.e. loss of Fort Lewis College). Also, the oil and gas industry is very volatile.

6. Review of Terminal Facility Requirements

Michael Spitzer presented the preliminary terminal requirements which were based upon the forecasted enplanements. A review of the existing airport layout was followed by illustration of the existing terminal layout and the six pinch points (deficiencies) that exist: ticket counter queuing, baggage claim area, passenger departure lounge, security screening checkpoint, baggage make-up area, and the airside baggage loading area.

The daily commercial flight forecast was reviewed specifically noting the peak hour of 4:00 PM. Level of service (LoS) was discussed and it was explained that an LoS "C" (very good) is the normal planning level in the industry. Currently DRO is below the standard LoS as terminal size doesn't meet current demand. Michael compared the needs of 2013, 2014, and the future out year of 2034 to

demonstrate the deficiencies. Terminals from other airports with DRO's terminal overlaid on them where shown to better illustrate the current and future needs.

An aerial overview of existing development and use, approach/airfield areas, and available land was shown to give the PAC a better understanding of existing constraints.

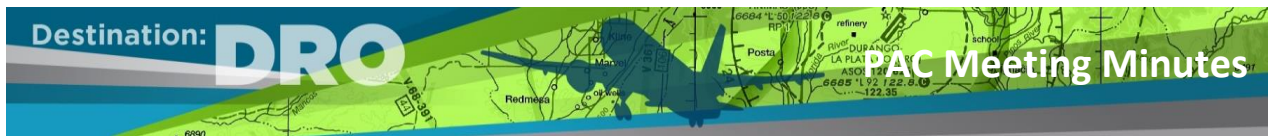
Discussion followed and PAC comments included:

- Is there a review of items that may improve efficiency with in terminals which may result in a reduced size?
 - Michael noted that efficiency is definitely considered but certain standards in the industry do not allow for much tweaking. However, in other areas it is quite possible to reduce size through space saving/efficient plans.
- Question about why we only plan for peak hour when often times we are well below peak hour.
 - Planning for the peak hour ensures that the facility will efficiently operate at the proper LoS. Under-designing will result in periods of unwanted congestion and passenger delays.
 - Comment was made that for every seat on a plane you have at least six people in terminal (baggage, ticketing, restaurants, enplaning passenger, deplaning passenger, greeters, ground transportation support, airline, etc.) to service that one seat.
- Consider moving U.S. Forest Service to east side of airport as they have different needs and would be much more cost efficient.
- Curious if Bozeman experienced an increase in enplanements after new terminal was built.
 - When construction started enplanements were at 250,000 and they are currently at 400,000.
 - Enplanements grew through construction period which added three gates to their existing six and the terminal size increased from 75,000 square feet to 220,000 square feet.

7. Next Steps

Dave provided a brief overview of upcoming items including review of Working Paper One which will be distributed to PAC for review and comment. Comments are due by August 1, 2014. Other upcoming items include:

- Tenant / User Surveys
 - To be distributed via e-mail in the next month. Surveys will aid in completion of facility requirements.
- Facility Requirements and Alternative Analysis.
 - Sections are pending receipt of FAA grant.
- Stakeholder / Focus Group Meetings – August 21, 2014 (*scheduled per request from PAC to have more time to ask questions regarding Forecast and Terminal Requirements*).



- Joint Study Session – September 9, 2014
- PAC Meeting – September 18, 2014

Hilary closed the meeting by thanking the PAC members for their participation and emphasizing the PAC’s role in representing the community, as this will be vital to the success of the Master Plan. Kip also expressed appreciation for everyone’s participation.

Discussion followed and PAC comments included:

- Request to handout copies of presentation at beginning of meeting for note taking purposes.