The Metropolitan Airports Commission, owner and operator of Crystal Airport (located just north of Bass Lake Road off Bottineau Boulevard in the City of Crystal) has commenced a study to determine environmental effects associated with improvements it is proposing for the airport. The MAC adopted the improvement plans in 2017 after concluding a long-term planning process that resulted in a Long-Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for Crystal Airport. The LTCP was developed with input from stakeholders and the public and provides guidance and a roadmap for possible improvements over the next 20 years.

The environmental effects study (also referred to as an environmental assessment – or EA) is being led by the MAC and its consultants Mead & Hunt. Together they make up the “project team.” Over the past several months, the team has developed a statement outlining the purpose and need for the improvements, and identified a preferred plan – also known as a preferred alternative (more on the purpose and need and alternatives inside this newsletter). The project team is also researching and collecting information regarding environmental and socioeconomic resources that may be affected by the project. That research includes in-person surveys of wetlands, identification of any historical structures near or on the property that could be affected, and other resources that may be affected by the preferred alternative.
The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the lead federal agency for this environmental review, has determined that an environmental assessment (EA) is what’s needed to make a determination.

The state of Minnesota also requires an environmental review, under the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and related Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) guidelines. Therefore the MAC must complete an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) process for the Crystal Airport improvements. Specifically, an EAW is required because the preferred alternative plan includes a runway/taxiway extension and the expenditure of more than $2,000,000. Because both processes are required, the MAC will complete the state EAW requirements simultaneously with the Federal EA, with the combined report referred to as an EA/EAW.

The NEPA process covers 14 environmental categories that include related social and economic effects. The categories include:

- **Air Quality**
- **Biological Resources (including fish, wildlife, and plants)**
- **Climate**
- **Coastal Resources**
- **Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f)**
- **Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention**
- **Historic, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources**
- **Land Use**
- **Natural Resources and Energy Supply**
- **Noise and Compatible Land Use**
- **Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children’s Environmental Health and Safety**
- **Visual Effects (including light emissions)**
- **Water Resources (including wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, groundwater, and wild and scenic rivers)**

### Noise and Compatible Land Use
The environments where noise impacts could occur include residential areas.

### Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children’s Environmental Health and Safety
The purpose of the proposed improvements at Crystal Airport: Develop land for non-aeronautical use.

### Visual Effects (including light emissions)
- Preserve and improve operational capabilities for aircraft
- Use the Airport

### Water Resources (including wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, groundwater, and wild and scenic rivers)
- Reduce length of Runway 06R/24L (turf) to clear Taxiways D & F
- Establish a straight-in GPS instrument approach to Runway 32R
- Convert Runway 14R/32L to Parallel Taxiway
- Perform runway improvements and repairs and aircraft would still operate at the airport.

### Air Quality
- Decommission Runway 06R/24L & convert to parallel taxiway
- Convert portions of Runway 14L/34R blast pads to usable runway
- Reduce length of Runway 06R/24L (turf) to clear Taxiways D & F from the runway safety area
- Establish a straight-in GPS instrument approach to Runway 32R
- Remove various taxiways and construct new taxiways
- Expand the fixed base operator (FBO) aircraft parking apron
- Develop airport land for non-aeronautical use along 63rd Avenue North

### Why are the Airport Improvements Necessary?
Purpose and Need statements are included in every federal EA. These statements clearly and concisely explain the justification for the project and therefore become the foundation of the document.

### The PURPOSE of the proposed improvements at Crystal Airport:
- Better align available runways, taxiways, and aprons with existing and forecasted activity
- Preserve and improve operational capabilities for aircraft using the Airport
- Enhance safety by simplifying the runway and taxiway layout.

### The NEED for the proposed improvements at Crystal Airport:
- Simplify airfield geometry
- Provide adequate runway length for aircraft using the Airport
- Enhance aircraft approaches and minimize obstacles for the main runway
- Improve Airport ground vehicle circulation
- Increase aircraft apron parking capacity
- Develop excess Airport property for non-aeronautical use

### The Preferred Alternative
A federal EA typically evaluates more than one alternative, while a state EAW does not require analysis of alternatives. Because much of the proposed project was evaluated and refined in the most recent UTCP efforts, this EA/EAW will explain the previous alternatives that were examined and how the preferred alternative was reached. The impacts of the preferred alternative will be compared to the no-action alternative, which represents what would occur if the MAC were to make no changes to the existing airport layout. A no-action alternative does not mean that there would be no impacts, because existing infrastructure would need repairs and aircraft would still operate at the airport. The preferred alternative includes the following improvements:

- Decommission Runway 14R/32L & convert to parallel taxiway
- Convert portions of Runway 14L/34R blast pads to usable runway
- Reduce length of Runway 06R/24L (turf) to clear Taxiways D & F from the runway safety area
- Establish a straight-in GPS instrument approach to Runway 32R
- Remove various taxiways and construct new taxiways
- Expand the fixed base operator (FBO) aircraft parking apron
- Develop airport land for non-aeronautical use along 63rd Avenue North

### Air Quality
- Decommission Runway 14R/32L & convert to parallel taxiway
- Convert portions of Runway 14L/34R blast pads to usable runway
- Reduce length of Runway 06R/24L (turf) to clear Taxiways D & F from the runway safety area
- Establish a straight-in GPS instrument approach to Runway 32R
- Remove various taxiways and construct new taxiways
- Expand the fixed base operator (FBO) aircraft parking apron
- Develop airport land for non-aeronautical use along 63rd Avenue North
Stay Involved

The best way to keep current on what’s happening with the project is to sign up to receive updates via our e-news subscription list. Go to the project website, www.metroairports.org/General-Aviation/Crystal-Airport-Environmental-Assessment/Overview.aspx, to sign up. Regular updates will be sent to this email list, including notices about public events. You can also find up-to-date information such as public event details, public project documents (reports, newsletters, presentations, etc.), answers to frequently asked questions, and information about how to provide public comment on the project website.

You can also share your questions and comments throughout the process. Look for the Contact Project Team section of the website, where you’ll find instructions for submitting questions and comments.

Please Plan to Attend the First Community Event!

Tuesday, October 30, 2018
6:00 to 8:00 p.m. (Presentation at 6:30)
Crystal Community Center
4800 Douglas Drive N
Crystal, MN 55429

We want your input! The purpose of this first public meeting is to provide information and to give community members an opportunity to ask questions about the Crystal Airport EA/EAW process. Here you will learn more about: Why the proposed improvements are necessary, what specific improvements are being considered (preferred alternative) and the next steps for public comment.

The event begins at 6:00 p.m. with a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m. Community members will have an opportunity to ask questions as part of the question and answer period, or by speaking with individual team members.