

# ABOUT PASO ROBLES MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Paso Robles Municipal Airport (PRB), a 1,300-acre site located about four miles northeast of downtown Paso Robles, was originally built in 1943 as Estrella Army Air Field. Although it experienced limited military activity during World War II, it laid the foundation for the region's future in aviation. The airport was transferred to the City of Paso Robles in 1973, leading to significant growth in industrial and general aviation development. **Today, the airport features two runways, nearly 500,000 square feet of industrial space, and over 40 businesses and supports 700 jobs.** PRB is considered a regional airport, according to the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). As such, PRB serves a vital role in accommodating all forms of general aviation traffic, including corporate aviation, flight training, emergency medical flight services, charter flights, and recreational flying, among many others. The airport serves an area of over 2,000 square miles and is home to nearly 200 based aircraft. PRB plays a key role for the California Department of Forestry, California Highway Patrol, and various general aviation, military, charter, and medical aviation operations. Paso Robles Municipal Airport is poised for continued growth and will remain a vital transportation hub for the region.

# WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recommends that airports update their long-term planning documents every seven to 10 years, or as necessary, to address local changes at the airport. The last master plan update for PRB was completed in 2004. The City of Paso Robles, the sponsor of the airport, has received a grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and California Department of Transportation Division of Aeronautics (Caltrans) to update the airport master plan.

The sponsor is responsible for funding capital improvements at PRB, as well as obtaining FAA and Caltrans development grants. The master plan is intended to provide a **true vision for how PRB is developed**, **guidance for future development**, and **justification for projects** for which the airport may receive funding through an updated capital improvement program, which will demonstrate the future investments required by the City of Paso Robles, Caltrans, and the FAA.

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The airport master plan follows a systematic approach outlined by the FAA to identify airport needs in advance of the actual need for improvements. This is done to ensure the city can coordinate environmental reviews, project approvals, design, financing, and construction to minimize the negative effects of maintaining and operating inadequate or insufficient facilities. An important outcome of the master plan process is a recommended development plan, which reserves sufficient areas for future facility needs. Such planning will protect development areas and ensure they will be readily available when required to meet future needs. The intended outcome of this study is a detailed on-airport land use concept that outlines specific uses for all areas of airport property and includes strategies for revenue enhancement.

#### Some common questions regarding what a master plan is / is not are answered in the graphic below.

### AN AIRPORT MASTER PLAN IS... A comprehensive, long-range study of the X airport, including all air and landside components, that describes plans to meet FAA safety standards and future aviation demand. Required by the FAA to be conducted every 7-10 years to ensure plans are up to date and reflect X current conditions and FAA regulations. The last master plan for PRB was completed in 2004. Funded 90% by the FAA's Airport Improvement Program (AIP). The remaining 10% is funded by the City of Paso Robles and Caltrans. X A local document that will ultimately be presented for approval from the City of Paso Robles City Council. The FAA approves only two elements of the master plan: the aviation demand forecasts and the airport layout plan X (ALP) drawing set. An opportunity for airport stakeholders and the public to engage with airport staff on issues related to the airport, its current and future operations, and environmental and socioeconomic impacts. Three public information workshops will be conducted during the master plan process.

#### AN AIRPORT MASTER PLAN IS NOT ...

A guarantee that the airport will proceed with any planned projects. Master plans are guides that help airport staff plan for future development; however, the need/demand for certain projects might never materialize.

- A guarantee that the City of Paso Robles, Caltrans, or the FAA will fund any planned projects. Project funding is considered on a case-by-case basis and requires appropriate need and demand. Certain projects may require the completion of a benefit-cost analysis.
- A binding or static plan. Elements of the master plan may be updated to reflect changes in aviation activity at the airport, economic conditions of the region, or the goals of the City of Paso Robles.
- Environmental clearance for specific projects. The master plan includes an environmental overview, which identifies potential environmental sensitivities per *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA) guidelines. Most planned projects will require a separate environmental study prior to construction. Appropriate documentation will also be prepared to satisfy *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA) requirements for master plan approval.

The preparation of this master plan is evidence that the city recognizes the importance of the airport and the associated challenges inherent in providing for its unique operating and improvement needs. The cost of maintaining an airport is an investment that yields impressive benefits to the local community. With a sound and realistic master plan, the airport can maintain its role as an important link to the regional, state, national, and global air transportation systems. Moreover, the plan will aid in supporting decisions for directing limited and valuable city resources for future airport development. Continued investment in the airport will ultimately allow the sponsor to reap the economic benefits.

# WHO IS PREPARING THE MASTER PLAN?

The City of Paso Robles has contracted Coffman Associates, Inc. to undertake the airport master plan. Coffman Associates is an airport planning and consulting firm that specializes in master planning and environmental studies. Coffman Associates will lead the planning team, with support from the following firms:

- Martinez Geospatial aerial photography, ground survey, and geographic information systems (GIS) products to meet FAA 5300-18B requirements for Airports GIS data submittal
- SWCA Environmental Consultants biological and cultural resource studies
- Tartaglia Engineering project cost estimating and engineering support

The airport master plan will be prepared in accordance with FAA requirements, including Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5300-13B, *Airport Design* (as amended), and AC 150/5070-6B, *Airport Master Plans* (as amended). The plan will be closely coordinated with other planning studies relevant to the area and with aviation plans developed by the FAA and Caltrans. The plan will also be coordinated with the City of Paso Robles and other local and regional agencies, as appropriate.

# STUDY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ASSUMPTIONS

The primary goal of this master plan is to provide the framework needed to guide future airport development that will satisfy aviation demand in a cost-effective way while considering potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts. Accomplishing this goal requires an evaluation of the existing airport to decide what actions should be taken to maintain a safe, adequate, and reliable facility. A long-range planning study also requires several baseline assumptions that will be used throughout the analysis. Specific objectives and assumptions for this study are as follows.

### **STUDY OBJECTIVES**

### **Aviation Demand Forecasts**

- Research factors likely to affect all air transportation demand segments at PRB over the next 20 years, including the development of forecasts of general aviation operational and basing demand.
- Determine the airport's current and future critical design aircraft per FAA AC 150/5300-17, *Critical Aircraft and Regular Use Determination*.
- Determine projected needs of airport users for the next 20 years, taking into consideration recent revisions to FAA design standards and the airport's conformance requirements (i.e., airfield geometry), instrument approaches or other new technology, aviation trends, and the impact of general aviation fleet transitions on design standards.

### Facility Requirements

- Analyze the airfield system to determine the existing and ultimate runway and taxiway conditions
  required to satisfy the airport's critical aircraft. This analysis will include future improvements
  necessary to aid in supporting forecast demand. The analysis will also consider the potential for
  closure and removal of any airfield pavement(s) not deemed necessary and/or justified for future
  capital expenditures.
- Recommend improvements that will enhance the landside area's ability to satisfy future aviation needs, taking into consideration non-aviation uses to maximize airport revenue streams.

#### **Development Alternatives**

- Evaluate the highest and best uses of airport property.
- Recommend landside improvements that satisfy the anticipated operational growth, including fixed base operator (FBO) and specialty aviation service operator (SASO) operations.
- Review future use and zoning of airport property and approaches to each runway for future protection. This will involve the development of new noise exposure contours.

### **Development Plan and Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

- Establish a schedule of development priorities and a program for improvements proposed in the master plan consistent with the FAA's capital improvement program planning.
- Consider sustainability efforts, specifically waste and recycling improvements, as part of the FAA's standards.
- Consider the spaceport initiatives being prepared under a separate process (Part 420 application) in relation to existing and proposed aviation and non-aviation development potential that results from the master plan study.

### Airport Layout Plan (ALP) Update

- Produce accurate base maps of existing and proposed facilities, as well as updated ALP drawings consistent with FAA Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) 2.00 and 3.00.
- Analyze all opportunities and develop strategies for incompatible land use encroachments.

#### **BASELINE ASSUMPTIONS**

A long-range planning study requires several baseline assumptions that are used throughout this analysis. The baseline assumptions for this study are as follows.

- PRB will continue to accommodate general aviation tenants, as well as itinerant and local aircraft operations by air taxi, general aviation, and military operators, through the 20-year planning period.
- The aviation industry will develop through the planning period as projected by the FAA. Specifics of projected changes in national aviation industries are described in Chapter Two.
- The socioeconomic characteristics of the region will generally change as forecasted (Chapter Two).
- A federal and state airport improvement program will be in place through the planning period to assist in funding future capital development needs.

## MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS AND PROCESS

The master plan has nine elements that are intended to assist in the evaluation of future facility needs and provide the supporting rationale for their implementation. **Figure iA** provides a graphical depiction of the process involved in the study.



Figure iA – Project Workflow

**Element 1 – Study Initiation and Organization** includes the development of the scope of services, schedule, and study website. Study materials will be assembled in a workbook format. General background information will be established that includes an outline of the goals and objectives to be accomplished during the master plan.

**Element 2** – **Inventory of Existing Conditions** focuses on collecting and assembling relevant data pertaining to the airport and the area it serves. Information regarding existing facilities and operations is collected. Local economic and demographic data are collected to define the local growth trends, and environmental information is gathered to identify potential environmental sensitivities that might affect future improvements. Planning studies that may be relevant to the master plan are also collected.

**Element 3** – **Aviation Demand Forecasts** examines the potential aviation demand at PRB. The analysis utilizes local socioeconomic information and national air transportation trends to quantify the levels of aviation activity that can reasonably be expected to occur at PRB over a 20-year period. An existing and ultimate critical design aircraft based on AC 150/5000-17, *Critical Aircraft and Regular Use Determination*, is also established to determine future planning design standards. The results of this effort are used to determine the types and sizes of facilities that will be required to meet the projected aviation demand at the airport through the planning period. The forecasts result in estimates of demand for annual aircraft operations and based aircraft. This element is one of two elements that are submitted to the FAA for approval.

**Element 4 – Facility Requirements** determines the available capacities of various facilities at the airport, whether they conform with FAA standards, and what facility updates or new facilities will be needed to comply with FAA requirements and/or projected 20-year demand.

**Element 5 – Airport Development Alternatives** considers a variety of solutions to accommodate projected airside and landside facility needs through the long-term planning period. An analysis is completed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each proposed development alternative, with the intention of determining a single direction for development.

**Element 6 – Recommended Master Plan Concept** involves coordination with airport staff and the planning advisory committee to result in the selection of a recommended development concept. The airport's noise exposure and land use compatibility will also be evaluated. An environmental overview will identify any potential environmental concerns that must be addressed prior to the implementation of the recommended development program.

**Element 7 – Capital Financial Plan** analyzes the benefits and costs associated with the recommended plan. Specific project costs are established for the development of a capital improvement program that ensures logical staging of improvements.

**Element 8 – Airport Plans** will be developed to depict the recommended development concept. The drawings will meet the requirements of FAA SOP 2.00, *Standard Procedure for FAA Review and Approval of Airport Layout Plans (ALPs)* (effective October 1, 2013). The updated ALP set will be included as an appendix to this study.

**Element 9 – Final Reports** produces the draft final report and ALP drawings in print and digital formats. These materials will be presented to the City of Paso Robles, Caltrans, and the FAA for review and approval. Once approved, a final report will be prepared and made available in print and digital formats.

**Element 10 – California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Documentation for Master Plan Approval** involves providing the sponsor, community, and public officials with proper guidance regarding CEQA environmental documentation for the future development as outlined in the master plan. This element

will include the development of an Initial Study (if the City of Paso Robles chooses not to pursue a categorical exclusion for adoption of the master plan) and/or the preparation of a negative or mitigated negative declaration, if appropriate.

**Element 11 – Spaceport Considerations/Integration** includes the memorialization of efforts by the City of Paso Robles, the airport, the city's economic development group, and California Polytechnic State University in the development of a proposed spaceport; however, all aspects of the spaceport licensing are being undertaken by other entities separate from this master plan through the Part 420 application process. This element will evaluate the facility requirements and safety/setback standards being established for the spaceport to ensure compatibility with existing and planned aviation/non-aviation developments and operations at PRB.

# **COORDINATION AND OUTREACH**

This study is of interest to many within the local community and region, including local citizens, local businesses, community organizations, city officials, airport users/tenants, and aviation organizations. As a component of the regional, state, and national aviation systems, PRB is of importance to both state and federal agencies responsible for overseeing the air transportation system.

To assist in the development of the master plan, a planning advisory committee (PAC) has been established to act in an advisory role. PAC members will meet up to four times at designated points during the study to review study materials and provide comments to help ensure a realistic, viable plan is developed.

Draft phase reports will be prepared at various milestones in the planning process. The phase report process allows for timely input and review during each step within the master plan to ensure all issues are fully addressed as the recommended program develops.

Three open-house public information workshops are also planned as part of the study coordination and outreach efforts. Workshops are designed to allow all interested persons to become informed and provide input concerning the master plan process. Notices of meeting times and locations will be advertised through local media outlets. All draft phase reports, meeting notices, and materials will be made available to the public on a study-specific website: PRB.airportstudy.net.



#### The PRB.airportstudy.net Website

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