

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

**GREAT LAKES REGION  
DETROIT AIRPORTS DISTRICT OFFICE  
ROMULUS, MICHIGAN**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**for**

**EXTENSION OF RUNWAY 17-35**

**and**

**TAXIWAY C REALIGNMENT**

**at**

**KALAMAZOO/BATTLE CREEK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN**



**April 2024**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the extension of Runway 17-35, which is currently 6,502 feet, and Taxiway C Realignment at the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport (Sponsor).

In accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*; FAA Order 5050.4B, *NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*, and based on the evaluation of the Final Environmental Assessment (Final EA), there are no potential significant impacts associated with the Sponsor's Proposed Project. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared and a FONSI is being issued. This FONSI provides a review of the Sponsor's Proposed Project and the basis of the FAA's finding. Expected environmental consequences of the Proposed Project and mitigation commitments are defined and described further in the Final EA.

## **II. AIRPORT SPONSOR'S PROPOSED PROJECT & FEDERAL ACTION**

The Sponsor's Proposed Project is the extension of Runway 17-35, extension of parallel Taxiway B, realignment of Taxiway C, relocation of railroad spur, acquisition of aviation easements, obstruction clearing, relocating existing navigational aids (NAVAIDS), and developing new aircraft departure procedures for Runway 17-35.

The FAA analyzed the project's nexus to Section 163 of the 2018 FAA Reauthorization Act for FAA's NEPA review. The Sponsor's Proposed Project requires the following Federal Actions from the FAA, which are subject to NEPA review:

- Unconditional approval of portions of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) depicting those portions of the Sponsor's Proposed Project subject to FAA review and approval pursuant to 47107(a)(16)(B).
- Determinations under 49 U.S.C. §§ 47106 and 47107 regarding eligibility of the Sponsor's Proposed Project to receive Federal funding under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).
- Design and implementation of the relocation/replacement of FAA facilities as a result of the proposed project.
- Amendments to existing instrument approach and departure procedures including:
  - Instrument Landing System (ILS) approach to Runway 35
  - Area Navigation (RNAV / GPS) approach to Runway 17
  - Area Navigation (RNAV / GPS) approach to Runway 35

## **III. PURPOSE & NEED**

The purpose of the project is to meet the runway takeoff and landing length requirements of aircraft that currently operate at AZO, which are projected to gradually increase operations over time, and to enhance safety and improve aircraft movement by correcting airfield geometry deficiencies associated with the intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17. The proposed action is needed because the existing length of the primary runway (Runway 17-35) constrains the operations of commercial and private aircraft and limits the Airport's ability to serve the air transportation needs of the region. Also, the intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17 has a history of runway incursions and needs to be reconfigured to provide taxiway geometry that meets FAA design criteria.

#### IV. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, the Final EA (Chapter 2) identified and evaluated all reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project. The following Final EA alternatives were reviewed for the extension of Runway 17-35.

##### No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative assumes that no action would be taken to extend Runway 17/35 or to correct taxiway geometric deficiencies at the intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17. The No Action Alternative does not meet the Sponsor's purpose and need for the project; however, it has been included in the analysis per NEPA and FAA Order 1050.1.F. The No Action Alternative would be carried forward as a baseline alternative for environmental consequences to be compared to the preferred alternative.

##### Alternative 1 – 1,000-Foot Extension of Runway 17/35 with a Reconfigured Intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17

This alternative would extend Runway 17/35 by 150 feet to the north at the approach end of Runway 17 and 850 feet to the south at the approach end of Runway 35. This alternative also proposes to shift and reconstruct Taxiway C so that it intersects Runway 17/35 at a 90-degree angle. This alternative would result in Runway 17/35 having a usable runway length of 7,502 feet. This alternative provides 7,502 feet of runway length, thus failing to meet the runway length requirements outlined in the purpose and need, as further explained in Appendix C of the Final EA. However, it does correct the Taxiway C intersection geometry deficiency. Although Alternative 1 partially meets the project's purpose and need by reconstructing the intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17/35, it is removed from further consideration since it does not provide 7,650 feet of runway length needed by aircraft that currently use the Airport and are projected to use the Airport in the future.

##### Alternative 2 – Airport Sponsor's Proposed Project (Preferred Alternative)

The Sponsor's Proposed Project is the alternative that meets the need to provide a total usable length of 7,650 feet of Runway 17-35 and the need to enhance safety and meet FAA design standards on Taxiway C.

The proposed project includes the following actions:

- Extending Runway 17 end by 150 feet
- Extending Runway 35 end by 1,000 feet
- Realigning Taxiway C at the approach end of Runway 17
- Extending parallel Taxiway B to match Runway 17/35 extensions
- Relocating an existing railroad spur (owned by Norfolk Southern Railroad) on the south end of the Airport, including land acquisition
- Acquiring avigation easements/land acquisition in both Runway 17 and Runway 35 approaches for obstruction clearing
- Clearing obstruction(s) in Runway 17/35 approaches
- Relocating existing airfield NAVAIDs
- Developing new aircraft approach and departure procedures for Runway 17/35

### Alternative 3 - 1,000-Foot Extension of Runway 35

This alternative would extend Runway 17/35 by 1,000 feet to the south at the approach end of Runway 35. This alternative would not shift and reconstruct the Taxiway C and Runway 17/35 intersection but results in Runway 17/35 having a usable length of 7,502 feet. This alternative is removed from further consideration because it does not fully meet the project's purpose and need. Specifically, this alternative does not address the Taxiway C and Runway 17 intersection in accordance with FAA design guidance nor does it provide a usable runway length of 7,650 feet, thus failing to meet the needs of existing and future users.

### Alternative 4 - 1,000-Foot Extension of Runway 17 with a Reconfigured Intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17

This alternative would extend Runway 17/35 1,000 feet to the north at the approach end of Runway 17. This alternative also proposes to reconstruct the intersection of Taxiway C and Runway 17/35 to connect at a 90-degree angle at the relocated threshold. No extension is proposed at the Runway 35 end. With this alternative, Runway 17/35 would have a usable length of 7,502 feet. Although Alternative 4 partially meets the project's purpose and need of correcting the geometric deficiencies of the Taxiway C and Runway 17/35 intersection, it fails to provide 7,650 feet of usable runway length as further explained in Appendix C of the Final EA. Therefore, it was removed from further consideration.

## **V. PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENT**

Public involvement and agency coordination (Appendix D) was conducted by The Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport at the beginning of the EA process.

The Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA and notice for a Public Hearing was published in the local newspaper, The Kalamazoo Gazette on January 28, 2024. Written statements were accepted from January 28, 2024 through March 27, 2024. Physical copies of the Draft EA were available for public review at the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport during normal business hours as well as an electronic copy available on the Airport's website.

The Sponsor held two public meetings on February 26, 2020, and October 19, 2022. The sponsor also held a public hearing on March 11, 2024. Details on the public meetings and hearing can be found in Appendices O and P of the Final EA. Details on public comments can also be found in Appendices O and P.

## **VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES & MITIGATION**

The Final EA (Chapter 3) describes the environmental consequences of the Sponsor's Proposed Project and proposed avoidance and mitigation measures. The Sponsor shall implement the following mitigation measures as a condition of environmental approval of the Proposed Project listed in this FONSI.

### **1. Biotic Communities / Threatened and Endangered Species**

The Sponsor will implement the following mitigation:

- Tree clearing only allowed between October 1 – April 1 to minimize impacts to any potential bat populations.

- Vegetation/brush clearing only allowed between October 1 – April 1 to minimize impacts to protected migratory birds.
- Prior to any tree removals, a permit is needed from the City of Kalamazoo. The permit will require compliance with their Natural Features Protection Overlay standards, Subsection F (found in Appendix H - Tree Removal Ordinance). Additional coordination between the Airport and the City of Kalamazoo is required in the selection of replacement trees because tree varieties that have the potential to grow tall and become obstructions in the future are not allowed in the runway approaches.

## **2. Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources**

The Sponsor will implement the following mitigation:

- A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Sponsor, FAA, and Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that stipulates the FAA will ensure the following mitigation measures are implemented:
  - Tree Replanting: This measure would mitigate adverse effects to the district through a tree-for-tree replacement program proposed for removal, replacing them with a lower-growing species.
  - Research Sharing: This consists of packaging and sharing digital copies of research materials on the local development history of the Bloomfield Subdivision with the City of Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo County Historical Society, to benefit each entity's respective historic preservation mission.
  - Local History Report: Some project stakeholders responded favorably to a narrative history of the district. This report would be distributed to property owners and the City of Kalamazoo to assist with the Kalamazoo County Historical Society historic preservation efforts.

## **3. Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f)**

The Sponsor will implement the following mitigation:

- A MOA between the Airport, FAA, and SHPO, to ensure the following measures are carried out to mitigate for adverse effects to the historic District. Mitigation measures include:
  - Tree replanting
  - Bloomfield Subdivision Historic District research
  - Bloomfield Subdivision Historic District history report

## **4. Land Use**

The Sponsor will implement the following mitigation:

- The relocated Runway 17/35 RPZ would introduce new incompatible land uses. The Preferred Alternative requires the acquisition of new easements over these land uses.
- The existing Norfolk Southern rail line would also be within the relocated Runway 35 RPZ and would need to be relocated outside the new RPZ.

**5. Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, or Children’s Environmental Health and Safety Risks**

The Sponsor will implement the following mitigation:

- Property owners within the Bloomfield Subdivision Historic District with trees on their property considered obstructions to the Runway 17 40:1 approach will receive a one-time replacement with a low-growing species to help mitigate tree impacts to their property. Specific mitigation and tree species will be determined during final design in coordination with the property owner, the FAA, and the Airport.

**6. Water Resources**

The Sponsor will implement the following mitigation:

- Proposed mitigation for wetland impacts is expected to include an EGLE Part 303 Wetland Protection permit and mitigation of 0.60 acres (1:1.5 ratio). Mitigation will include the purchase of wetland credits at an EGLE approved mitigation bank. During final design of the Preferred Alternative, modifications will be considered to lessen the impacts on regulated wetlands.
- Final mitigation requirements are at the discretion of EGLE and USACE and will be incorporated into the required wetland permit.

**VII. FAA FINDING**

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained in the Final EA, the undersigned finds the proposed Federal Actions are consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101(a) of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements, and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. As a result, the FAA will not prepare an EIS for these Federal Actions.

Having met all relevant requirements for environmental considerations and consultations, the proposed Federal Actions are authorized to be taken at such time as other requirements are met.

These decisions are taken pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 40101, et seq. The FAA finding regarding the proposed airport improvements and funding for the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport, constitute an order of the Administrator, which is subject to review by the Court of Appeals of the United States, in accordance with the provisions of Section 1006 of Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended, 49 U.S.C. § 46110.

APPROVED: X \_\_\_\_\_

DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_



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John L. Mayfield Jr., Manager  
Detroit Airports District Office  
Federal Aviation Administration

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April 16, 2024

Date