

West Michigan Airport Authority

Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) Action Plan

March , 2021

Mission Statement

To provide the community with state-of-the-art global air access to strengthen the local economy and improve the area's quality of life.

Fiscal Year 2022 Action Plan

Operations

- **Review & revise Airport Standards:**

The Airport will review all of it's existing standards related to operations, building and development and so forth to ensure these are up-to-date regarding MDOT & FAA requirements, are in alignment with the soon to be adopted Airport Zoning Code, and the strategic objectives of the Airport Authority.

- **Review Airport Master Plan:**

FAA recommends reviewing and updating Airport Master Plans every five years or so; however, this is not a requirement. The current Airport Master Plan was last revised in 2008. The Authority will review the existing Master plan to identify which initial goals are currently still in alignment with operations and what other goals could be incorporated. Additionally, the plan will be reviewed within the current climate reflecting impacts of COVID-19 n operations and other major impacts. Staff will work closely with the Airport's Consultant (M&H) on how best to approach this work (based on priorities identified by the Board). A full re-write is likely not necessary at this time.

- **Outline strategic goals for Airport, post COVID**

The Airport Authority board will be holding a strategic planning session likely in early March to identify key priorities for the Authority moving forward. This is a good practice on an annual basis in general; however, even more-so in the current climate. COVID-19 has been a major disruptor across all sectors and has effected operations at every level. The impacts on travel and aviation are felt very acutely at the moment and will likely echo long into the future. The Authority will work to get an understanding of what the current impacts are, what short/mid term trends will look like moving forward, and will work to identify it's role in a "post COVID" world moving forward.

- **Establish ongoing maintenance & budget schedule for:**

Over the past four years, the Authority has become more focused on heading off significant maintenance expenses by establishing robust reserves for such projects. Staff have been working to approximate when key repairs may come due; however, for budgetary reasons, it would benefit the airport to plot out these expenses as best and consistently as possible; and have a standing schedule for when these repairs are likely to occur. The airport has done this already with Airport Business Center reserve fund, pavement Crack Sealing, and Paint markings, but there are other items as well it may benefit the authority to schedule out. Repairs will still only occur on a needs basis. Staff will work to identify other common repair items (such as fence repair, brush clearing etc.) and review similar best practices from other Airports.

- **Update standing agriculture leases:**

The Airport Authority holds multiple leases with local farmers to farm and maintain several fields around the Airport. These leases are all handled (administratively) slightly different with each farmer. Staff will develop a consistent lease, with consistent language for each lessee which will in turn reduce administrative oversight associated with managing these leases. Lease rates have been determined based on a number of factors associated with each parcel; current lease rates will remain in place.

Communications

- **Expand direct outreach engagement efforts with Airport Users:**

Staff will work with Airport Communications Consultant (Boileau Communications) to establish channels to directly engage with current airport users (T-hangar tenants, private hangar lease holders, other users). The goal is to provide an avenue for their engagement in overall operations and to be provide insight and feedback.

- **Expand outward facing engagement on happenings at the Airport**

One primary goal of the Airport is to broaden outward communications with the surrounding communities as to the goings on of the airport as well as the economic impact of this community resource. By expand on the current priorities of the communications strategy, staff will continue to work with Boileau communication to provide meaningful content to Airport member communities as well as establish channels for those member communities to provide insight and feedback to the Authority.

- **Incorporate economic impact and development opportunities as part of Airport Branding**

Making the economic impact of the Airport a consistent and core part of our overall branding is a critical step in outreach and engagement efforts. Highlighting the return on investment of our member communities is critical to show the airport as a true public asset as well as critical piece of regional infrastructure that needs to be maintained and serves the public interest. Having this consistently reinforced as public knowledge serves the Authority in building buy-in around future millage votes or in attracting new partner communities.

- **Develop Marketing Materials targeted at Aviation related businesses and operations**
As the Airport Authority wants to continue to target current users and constituents, it is also important to target messaging at would be developers looking to relocate to a strong economic hub like west Michigan. By working with Boileau, and other Economic Development groups in the region, the authority can align it's messaging to better engage and attract new businesses to the airport.
- **Review youth/student engagement opportunities post COVID-19**
Youth/student engagement is critical as these young minds will eventually be the voters, policy makers, and businesses which engage with and support the airport. These are also the innovators and visionaries who can help guide the authority into the future. COVID has disrupted "traditional" outreach efforts through schools, youth organizations, etc. The Authority will work with Boileau as well as establish partnerships with other youth focused organizations to identify new outreach strategies in a post COVID landscape.
- **Maintain up-to-date information on COVID impacts of Airport operations**
This will remain an ongoing effort as providing updated information on COVID and maintaining best practices assures our users that we are taking responsibility to ensure that their travels are as safe as possible.

Capital Projects

- **Complete design for North Hangar Park Taxilane**
- **Wetland Mitigation for North Hangar Park Taxilane**

Economic Structuring

- **Build engagement & partnership with potential new Airport Authority member communities:**

The Authority will rely on the support of key advocates to make these initial engagements with community partners identified as strong candidates for potential Authority membership. These efforts will be rooted in ongoing education around the economic impact of the Authority as well as around the Authorities strategic priorities.

- **Draft Business Development Plan for the Airport Authority**

As part of the airport's priority in attracting new business and development on airport property, staff will work closely with regional economic development partners to produce a Business Development Plan for the Airport Authority. This plan would focus on the following key areas:

- Attract new aviation businesses
- Attract new developers on Airport property
- Establish a process for getting Airport property development ready
- Identify opportunities in new tech at the Airport
- Identify mid and long term land use opportunities for vacant airport property

- **Coordinate with Economic Development Partners in the region:**

Beyond development at the airport staff will work closely with Economic Development Partners in the region to identify opportunities for the airport to support local and regional businesses. The focus would be for the airport to expand it's role in serving the economic interests of its member communities and establish it's voice key policy decisions moving forward. Part of this effort will also include engagement with other similar travel focused entities in the region.

- **Continue to pursue land release with FAA for Parcel K:**

Staff will remain focused and engaged with partners at Mead & Hunt and MDOT to secure a land release of Parcel K from the FAA. Due to it's location, there likely won't be an aviation use for Parcel K, and given the ongoing commercial development in the surrounding area, there is likely significant untapped revenue generating opportunity in this parcel. By releasing the parcel, FAA would provide a key tool to the Airport in generating additional revenues to support ongoing operations and new opportunities.

- **Review impact of "drone" services on future airport operations**

Advancement in drone technology charges forward and we are effectively on the cusp of largescale adoption of drone delivery services, as well as other uses that are not far

behind. It is in the best interest of the Airport Authority to get up-to speed on current the trends and get in front of new applications of this growing technology. Whether or not drones have a place at the airport is not necessarily the focus, but, rather, understanding how the airport will operate, and what opportunities might present themselves as drones become more present in day-to-day life.