

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Southwest Region

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Stations Consolidation Project
Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport
DFW Airport, Texas

June 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW or Airport) prepared the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) to facilitate the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) review and consideration of the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Stations Consolidation Project (Project).

The FAA is the federal agency responsible for the approval of the Proposed Action analyzed in the EA, attached hereto. The FAA must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), other applicable statutes, and the NEPA implementing regulations (40 Code of Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508) before taking any actions that are necessary prior to implementation of the project. After completing an EA, federal agencies must decide whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and approve the proposed project or prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prior to rendering a final decision on approval of a proposed project. The FAA has completed the EA, considered its analysis, and determined that no further environmental review is required. The FAA has determined that the Proposed Action will have no significant impact to the human environment. Therefore, the FAA is issuing this FONSI accompanied and supported by the EA, completing environmental review requirements for the project.

2. BACKGROUND

DFW Airport is a commercial service airport that currently encompasses 17,207 acres (approximately 27 square miles) in Dallas and Tarrant Counties. DFW Airport has five terminals (A, B, C, D, and E) and its airfield system consists of a total of seven runways separated by a spine road, International Parkway, into the east and west airfield complexes. The east airfield includes runways 13L/31R, 17C/35C, 17L/35R, 17R/35L, the west airfield includes runways 13R/31L 18L/36R, and 18R/36L. Currently, the airport has seven Department of Public Safety (DPS) facilities that support safe, efficient, and secure operations. Of the seven DPS stations, four are dedicated to Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) operations. In 2019, DFW Airport developed an Emergency Services Master Plan (ESMP) that evaluated the current conditions of the existing DPS stations.

3. REQUESTED FEDERAL ACTION

The Federal actions necessary for implementation of the Proposed Action are:

- A. Unconditional approval of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) to depict the Proposed Action as described in Section 3 of the EA pursuant to 49 USC §§ 40103(b) and 47107(a)(16).
- B. Determinations under 49 USC §§ 47106 and 47107 relating to the eligibility of the Proposed Action for federal funding under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and/or determinations under 49 USC § 40117, as implemented by 14 CFR § 158.25, to impose and use Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs) collected at the Airport to assist with construction of potentially eligible development items shown on the ALP including the proposed construction of the Proposed Action that may directly or indirectly impact FAA facilities including but not limited to utility relocations.
- C. The following determinations are prescribed by the statutory provisions set forth in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, H. R. 302, (P.L. 115-254).

Determination Regarding the Airport Layout Plan

The FAA has determined that the proposed project may materially impact the safe and efficient operation of aircraft at, to, or from the airport. Therefore, the FAA retains the legal authority to approve or disapprove changes to the DFW ALP to reflect the proposed project.

FAA's Authority to Regulate Land Use

The 12 parcels of land subject to the proposed project were acquired with federal assistance between 1967 and 1972 under the Airport Development Aid Program (ADAP). The proposed project is consistent with the intended land use when acquired. Therefore, the FAA will not require a release of obligations in order to maintain the use of the subject parcels as depicted on the currently approved ALP.

4. PURPOSE AND NEED

Pursuant to the NEPA implementing regulations and FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B, an EA must include a description of the purpose of a proposed action and the reasons it is needed. Section 2 of the EA addresses the Proposed Action's purpose and need.

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of the proposed ARFF Consolidation Project is to remove old, outdated, and dilapidated buildings and replace them with new buildings and support facilities that are sized to meet current and future needs of the airport. DFW's ESMP recommended the consolidation of the four existing fire stations into two new ARFF stations that combine the functionality of the existing facilities and improve overall efficiency and collaboration. The proposed East and West ARFF stations would be strategically located to meet federally mandated emergency response times from each facility to the airfield.

4.2 Need

The proposed consolidated ARFF stations project is needed to continue to support safe and efficient airfield operations as well as to comply with federal regulations. The four existing ARFF stations were constructed more than 45-years ago and have exceeded their useful life. The facilities need to be replaced with buildings that appropriately sized for the current and future staff and operational demands. Additionally, the consolidation of ARFF stations is needed to reduce operation, maintenance, and repair costs; these cost savings are needed to support DFW's financial self-sufficiency.

5. ALTERNATIVES

FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B set forth policies and procedures to be followed when assessing the environmental impacts of aviation-related projects, in compliance with NEPA. The FAA orders require a thorough objective assessment of the Proposed Action, No Action alternative, and all "reasonable" alternatives that would achieve the stated purpose and need of the Proposed Action. The Alternatives analysis presented in this section of the EA is consistent with the requirements of FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B.

The process followed in identifying the range of initial alternatives to be considered are described in this section. Only those alternatives that would satisfy the purpose and need were carried forward in the environmental impacts analysis.

5.1 No Action Alternative

Under the *No Action Alternative*, DFW Airport would not complete the ARFF Consolidation Project. The airport would not be able to remove the old, outdated infrastructure, and would incur significant maintenance and repair costs. Furthermore, DFW would not consolidate mission critical infrastructure. The No Action Alternative does not meet the stated purpose and need for this project.

5.2 Action Alternative #1

The *Action Alternative #1* would include the construction of the ARFF Consolidation Project as turnkey project delivered by a design-build firm. The project scope would include the demolition of four existing DPS Stations (Figures 3 through 6 of the EA), demolition of the old Fumigation building (Figure 7 of the EA), construction of the East ARFF Station (Figure 8), construction of a West ARFF Station (Figure 9 of the EA), and construction new Fumigation building (Figure 10 of the EA). The ARFF Stations Consolidation program would require demolition and construction of multiple facilities as such DFW will develop and deliver the project in different phases. The proposed construction phasing is summarized in Table 3.1 of the EA; the Design-Build Contractor may further refine the delivery phases and project schedule.

5.3 Action Alternative #2 (Sponsor Preferred Alternative)

The *Proposed Action Alternative #2*, the Sponsor's Preferred Alternative would include the demolition of DPS Stations 1, 2, 3, 4, and the old Fumigation building and the construction of

the East ARFF Station (~49,000 square feet), West ARFF Station (~49,000 square feet), and new Fumigation building (up to 10,000 square feet). The Proposed ARFF Consolidation project would be delivered as a turnkey project constructed by a design-build firm. The demolition of DPS Station 1 received NEPA Environmental clearance in 2019; FAA issued a FONSI in October 2019. DFW has elected to combine the demolition scope of the four DPS stations to reduce procurement costs. Similar to Action Alternative #1, the Sponsor Preferred Alternative requires the demolition and new construction of multiple facilities. As DFW and the Design-Build contractor continue to develop this project, phasing plans will evolve and adapt to meet DFW's overall project goals.

Under *Proposed Action Alternative #2*, the East ARFF Station was moved approximately 175 feet south to avoid impacting the FAA fiber communications ductbank, that supports some of the east airfield navigational aids and connect the FAA East Air Traffic Control Tower to the northeastern quadrant of the east airfield (Figure 11 of the EA). In accordance with FAA's recommendations and comments from subject matter experts DFW elected to move the proposed East ARFF Station building 175 feet south to avoid potential disruptions to FAA ATCT function, airfield operations, and the overall National Airspace System (NAS). Relocating the proposed building and apparatus bays eliminates the potential for building foundations to compromise the structural integrity of the communications ductbank.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The environmental impacts, if any, of the proposed alternatives were examined in the attached EA according to the FAA Orders 5050.4B and 1050.1F. The environmental impacts of the No Action and the Proposed Action alternatives are summarized in this section.

The analysis included in Section 5 of the attached EA demonstrates that many resource categories will not be impacted by implementation of the Proposed Action. In particular, Section 4.1 of the EA indicates that the following resource categories were not evaluated further in the EA because the resources were not located in proximity to the proposed project area: Biological Resources, including Fish, Wildlife, and Plants; Coastal Resources; Department of Transportation Section 4(f); Farmlands, Water Resources, including, Wetlands, Surface Waters, and Groundwater; Land Use; Natural Resources and Energy Supply; Noise and Noise Compatible Land Use; Socioeconomic Impacts, including Environmental Justice and Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks; Visual Effects; and Wild and Scenic Rivers. In addition, other resource categories will not be discussed in detail in this FONSI because, as documented in Section 5 of the EA, there is not the potential for significant impact (see FAA Order 1050.1F, Paragraph 4-3.3 and Exhibit 4-1 for information on significance thresholds and factors to consider in evaluating significance for an environmental impact category). These categories include: Climate; Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention; and Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources.

Implementation of the proposed action has the potential to impact the following resource category:

6.1 Air Quality

The DFW metropolitan area is currently designated as a “serious” nonattainment area under the 2008 8-hour, 0.075 parts per million (ppm) ozone (O³) standard, and has not yet been designated for the 2015 8-hour, 0.070 ppm standard (USEPA, 2017). Under the reclassification of “serious”, the DFW metropolitan area is required to meet the 2008 ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as expeditiously as practicable, but no later than July 20, 2021. The DFW metropolitan area remains in attainment for all other criteria pollutants.

Because of the nonattainment status for the 2008 8-hour O³ standard, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) prepared a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to help guide the area into meeting the 8-hour NAAQS by 2017. The SIP is the cumulative record of all air pollution control strategies, emission budgets, and timetables implemented or adopted by government agencies within Texas to bring nonattainment areas into compliance with the NAAQS by a designated deadline. The SIP focuses on reducing the two primary pollutants that lead to O³ formation: volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x).

6.1.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not involve any construction activities; therefore, no construction emissions would be associated with the NAA.

6.1.2 Proposed Action

Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions from construction of the Proposed Project were analyzed for anticipated construction years 2022 to 2024. The Proposed Action would result in temporary air quality effects during demolition and construction activities. An air quality analysis was completed to determine the potential impact of the Proposed Action. The methodology used to prepare the emissions inventories is consistent with the requirements outlined in the latest *FAA Air Quality Handbook and Guidance Document*.

Construction equipment used to complete the Proposed Action would cause a short-term increase in air emissions such as NO_x and VOCs, the two primary precursors to O³ formation. The estimated construction emissions on-road mobile sources and non-road mobile sources such as automobiles, light-duty and heavy duty trucks, and construction equipment used to support the Proposed Action were modeled the using the Environmental Protection Agency’s Motor Vehicles Emissions Simulator (MOVES) (2014b). Table 5-2 of the EA shows the estimated construction emissions; as depicted in Table 5-2 of the EA, the project-related emissions are well below the *de minimis* threshold of 50 tons per year for either NO_x or VOCs (see Appendix E of the EA for detailed Air Quality Analysis report).

7. AGENCY COORDINATION

Agency coordination was conducted with the affected agencies based on an analysis of the project’s potential effects. During the development of this Draft EA, DFW consulted with the FAA National Airspace System (NAS) Planning and Engineering Services lines of business (Appendix H-Agency Coordination Documentation), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the Texas Historic Commission (THC), see (Appendix C of the EA).

8. CONDITIONS AND MITIGATION

As prescribed by 40 CFR § 1505.3, the FAA shall take steps as appropriate to the action, such as through special conditions in grant agreements, property conveyance deeds, releases, airport layout plan approvals, and contract plans and specifications, and shall monitor these as necessary to assure that representations made in the EA and FONSI will be carried out. Specific conditions of approval associated with this project are listed below:

- The airport will comply with TCEQ's Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit. A Notice of Intent will be required. A Storm water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared and implemented, and a construction site notice will be posted on the construction site. The SWPPP will include, among other items, identification of appropriate erosion and sediment controls and storm water best management practices.
- The contractor shall be required to pay special attention to dust control when earthwork or hauling operations are in progress, and/or when wind or weather conditions cause excessive blowing of dust.

9. FINDINGS

Throughout the development of the airport, including the proposed improvements described above, the FAA has made every effort to adhere to the policies and purposes of NEPA, as stated in the NEPA implementing regulations. The FAA has concentrated on the truly significant issues related to the action in question. The FAA determined that the Proposed Action is in compliance with FAA Order 1050.1F 6-3.b(2), and is consistent with community planning as documented in the Master Plan¹. In its determination on whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or process the EA as a FONSI, the FAA weighed its decision based on an examination of the EA, comments from Federal and state agencies, as well as all other information available to the FAA.

As required by 40 CFR 1506.5, the FAA has independently and objectively evaluated this proposed project. As described in the Final EA, the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative were studied extensively to determine the potential impacts and appropriate mitigation for those impacts. The FAA provided input, advice, and expertise throughout the analysis, along with administrative and legal review of the project.

The following determinations are prescribed by the statutory provisions set forth in the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, as codified in 49 U.S.C. §§ 47106 and 47107. They are preconditions of FAA's approval of airport funding applications for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) eligible airport development.

- a. 49 U.S.C. § 47106(a)(1). The Proposed Action is reasonably consistent with existing plans of public agencies for the development of the area surrounding the airport.

¹ DFW International Airport, Airport Master Plan Update, November 2020.

- b. 49 U.S.C. § 47106(b)(2). The interests of the communities in or near which the project may be located have been given fair consideration.
- c. 49 U.S.C. § 47107(a)(10). Appropriate action, including the adoption of zoning laws, has been or will be taken to the extent reasonable to restrict the use of land next to or near the airport to uses that are compatible with normal airport operations.

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives of Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and, with the required mitigation referenced above, and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. As a result, FAA has determined that preparation of an EIS is not necessary for this proposed action and is therefore issuing this FONSI.

RECOMMENDED
FOR APPROVAL:

_____ Date: _____
John MacFarlane
Environmental Protection Specialist
Texas Airports District Office

APPROVED:

_____ Date: _____
Jesse Carriger
Manager, Texas Airports District Office

