

SELAWIK AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS PUBLIC MEETINGS SUMMARY

Meeting Facilitators:	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) DOWL		
Meeting Subject:	Selawik Airport Improvements IRIS No. NFAPT00766		
Public Meetings Dates:	Monday, May 12, 2025 – Kotzebue, AK Tuesday, May 13, 2025 – Selawik, AK		
FACILITATOR:	ROLE & ORGANIZATION:	FACILITATOR:	ROLE & ORGANIZATION:
Christopher Johnston	Project Manager, DOT&PF	Melissa Osborn	Project Manager, DOWL
Ryan Parks	Assistant Project Manager, DOT&PF	Melissa Jensen	Environmental Analyst, DOT&PF
Calvin Schaeffer	Maintenance & Operations Superintendent, DOT&PF	Jessica Della Croce	Aviation Planner, DOWL
Andrew Greene	Maintenance & Operations, DOT&PF	Robin Reich	Public Involvement Lead, Solstice Alaska
ATTENDEES:			
- Three (3) members of the public attended the May 12th Public Meeting in Kotzebue. 15 members of the public attended the May 13th Public Meeting in Selawik.			
MEETING OVERVIEW:			
The second set of public meetings were held for the Selawik Airport Improvements Project on May 12, 2025 and May 13, 2025 in Kotzebue and Selawik, respectively. The meeting in Kotzebue was held in the evening using an open forum discussion format, since it was only attended by three members of the public who came prepared with comments and questions. The meeting in Selawik was held over lunchtime (12:00-2:00 pm). It was attended by 15 members of the public and was organized as a presentation where questions and comments were taken during and after the presentation. Refreshments were provided at the meetings. The presentation displays are attached.			
MEETING OUTLINE:			
<u>No.</u>	<u>Public Meeting Element</u>	<u>Lead Person</u>	
1.	Local Welcome (in Selawik)	Clyde Ramoth	
2.	Welcome & Introductions	Christopher Johnston	
3.	Existing Facilities and Conditions – a refresher on why the project is needed	Jessica Della Croce	
4.	Project Actions to Date	Jessica Della Croce	
5.	Preferred Concept – Layout Concept 1	Jessica Della Croce	
6.	Layout Concept 2	Jessica Della Croce	
7.	Layout Concept 4	Jessica Della Croce	

9.	Layout Concepts Evaluation	Jessica Della Croce
10.	Next Steps	Christopher Johnston
11.	Questions and Comments – Use Comment Sheets provided, check website to find information and comment	Christopher Johnston
12.	Open House Style Time – Attendees able to speak with and ask questions of project team members	Open Forum
PUBLIC COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, & DISCUSSION:		
Comment or Question – By Subject		Discussion and Response
Runway Length		
Does the end of the runway get closer to the cemetery?		Chris Johnston said that the runway would not be extended, but the runway safety area embankment could be closer to the cemetery than it is now. It is too early in the design to have determined the precise footprint of embankments.
Closing the Crosswind Runway		
Removing the crosswind runway could lead to landing during crosswind conditions, which is scary.		Chris Johnston said that a wider runway would help alleviate safety concerns associated with landing in crosswinds.
We have 16 miles per hour prevailing west wind. Closing the crosswind runway gives me concern.		Chris Johnston said having the second runway does give you other landing options, but the airport funding is limited and shared with other state-owned airports. Upgrading the crosswind runway to current standards would cost about \$20 million, an amount which could fund a whole other needed project in a different community. If the project is too expensive, it will be pushed out further in schedule. In addition, having a second runway has associated maintenance costs, which are difficult to fund.
Did you get maintenance costs from staff that do the work at the airport?		Andrew Greene said that Concept 1 would take an estimated 800 gallons of fuel per year to maintain. Concept 4 (with crosswind runway) could take an estimated 2,000 gallons to maintain each year.
Runway Design		
Will the runway have turn arounds at the ends? It is currently very hard to turn around on the runway. Rocks mess up props when turning. This is not as much of an issue for the caravan. It doesn't seem to be an issue at other airports.		Chris Johnston said that the runway will not have turn arounds; however, it will be widened, which will provide additional space for turnarounds.
Can the runway be paved?		Chris Johnston said paving would be difficult because: 1) ground under the runway would need to be very stable, which is not the condition in Selawik; 2) it is very expensive to transport and operate an asphalt plant in the community for initial paving and routine maintenance.
Can we put concrete on the apron?		Chris Johnston said concrete would be expensive to install. The soils/geotechnical conditions in Selawik

	are not conducive to concrete lasting long and would be expensive and difficult to maintain.
Where and how would you widen the runway? If you move it to one side, it might be able to avoid a hill.	Chris Johnston said it is likely that it will be widened on both sides of the runway, but that will be considered in more detail with further design.
The runway has potholes. How will you keep that from continuing to happen?	Chris Johnston said that DOT&PF will build a good runway, and after it settles, it will be maintained with gravel.
Will the runway be raised?	Chris Johnston said that the runway will be raised as far as possible, with cost in mind.
What will be done about dust?	Chris Johnston said that DOT&PF will spray dust palliatives on the runway and apron to reduce airborne dust.
Would you use a compactor on the runway?	Chris Johnston said the runway and apron would be compacted.
Have you considered extending the runway for C130s?	Because there are not many C130s landing at the Selawik airport, it is not justified to extend the runway to accommodate them. The runway would be widened and the runway safety area would be extended.
Lighting/Electrical	
It would be good to have an external electric plug so aircraft can plug in when sitting there for 3-4 hours.	Calvin Schaeffer said that operators can set up their own meter base. This would require coordination with the airport manager and DOT&PF leasing.
The existing lighting is an issue.	Chris Johnston said that all lighting will be upgraded with the project.
Have you considered power outages and associated lighting issues?	Calvin Schaeffer said that airports do not typically have backup generators. DOT&PF has emergency portable lights that they can deploy to communities.
What will be done about lighting? How much for one lamp?	Chris Johnston said that all lighting will be upgraded as part of this project. The lighting upgrades for the project are estimated to cost about \$2 million.
Existing Runway Conditions/Maintenance	
In the winter, even with plowing, the runway gets very narrow as the snow comes in. There needs to be better snow removal at the airport.	Calvin Schaeffer said that DOT&PF will work with the maintenance crew to fix that problem.
There is a hump at the end of Runway 4.	Chris Johnston said the project team would take a look at it when in Selawik for the public meeting.
Project Construction Materials	
If more gravel is needed for the project, where would it come from?	Chris Johnston said that some of the material would come from the abandoned runway, but more material would be needed. At this point in the project, DOT&PF does not know where material would come from. It will likely fall on the contractor to determine where the material is sourced.
Could the airport project occur at the same time as other community projects that need material to help reduce the cost?	DOT&PF will keep the community up to date with the anticipated timing of the project so that they can plan community projects accordingly.

Clyde Ramoth said that the community is going to talk over their transportation plan implementation to see whether other community projects might be constructed at the same time as the airport.	Chris Johnston said that it will be a few years until the airport project is constructed.
Water Issues	
There is a lot of water around Runway 9-27 that is due to the way it was built and melting permafrost. It is very deep.	Chris Johnston said that the permafrost under the runway is melting at the toe of the slope because the vegetation is gone. Other airports experience the same issue. Construction methods will be used to mitigate this occurrence to the greatest extent possible, but some thaw and ponding can ultimately be expected.
Airport Alternatives	
Have you talked about moving the airport to another location?	Chris Johnston said it was considered but would be very expensive.
Have you considered a heliport? Helicopters sometimes fly into Selawik.	Chris Johnston said that a heliport was not considered, but that helicopters could land on the runway.
Existing Conditions	
Is there any bedrock under Selawik?	Chris Johnston said that we haven't completed geotech analysis yet, but it doesn't seem like there is.
What about asbestos? I hear that it might be around Ambler?	Chris Johnston said that asbestos has not been brought up as an issue on this project, but DOT&PF generally tests for asbestos during project development. DOT&PF will test for asbestos on this project.
Would the new road to the apron be a good way to access the cemetery? During Memorial Day, people sometimes drive down the runway to get to the cemetery. The new access might be a better way to get to the cemetery.	Chris Johnston reiterated that the proposed new access road and apron would be closer to the cemetery and could improve access.
Construction	
Will there be local hire for this? Should folks be working on their CDL (commercial driver's license)?	Chris Johnston said that DOT&PF will design the project and then put it out for bid to contractors. The contractors could hire local workers. It is unlikely that a CDL would be required.
What would happen to the equipment when the project is completed?	Chris Johnston said that the contractor would be responsible for their equipment.
Next Steps	
At the Selawik meeting, Chris Johnston shared that the next steps would be to refine Concept 1, update the airport layout plan, complete field studies (geotech, cultural resources), conduct the environmental analysis, and prepare the final design.	
ATTACHMENTS:	
1.	Photos from Selawik Public Meeting
2.	Presentation Displays (separate file)



DOT&PF's Chris Johnston presenting at the May 13th Selawik Airport Improvements Public Meeting.