



**Coordination Meeting
Waukegan Regional Airport**

**Illinois Route 131 (Green Bay Road)
From Sunset Avenue to Russell Road
Lake County**

**Phase I Engineering
Friday, December 7, 2012**

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Attendees: see attached list

The assembled parties last met to discuss the coordination between the Illinois Route 131 (IL 131) Phase I Study and the Waukegan Regional Airport Master Plan via teleconference over the summer. The intent of this meeting is to update both study teams on project progress and discuss plans to move forward.

Illinois Route 131 Study update

A potential IL 131 alternative bypassing the proposed airport runway and taxiway extension by shifting the roadway alignment west through Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) property was presented to the LCFPD in June 1, 2012. The IL 131 project team determined that the bypass was not a feasible alternative due to LCFPD opposition to the runway and taxiway extension and IL 131 bypass option that was presented. Other feasible alternatives were to be investigated. The project team coordinated with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to explore other design options that widening IL 131 to the west away from airport property while maintaining the existing highway alignment and elevation, but the points submitted via FAA Form 7460 were found to be hazards to air navigation for both the existing and potential relocated runways. Any alternatives using the existing highway also encroach inside the Runway Safety Area (RSA).

The IL 131 project team determined that the best alternative despite the cost is the grade separation design that depresses IL 131 below the proposed improvements at Waukegan Regional Airport. The preferred alternative for the IL 131 study will be compatible with Airport Alternative 3b. Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will

contract HNTB to perform Bridge Type Studies and a Pump Station Hydraulic Study to meet IDOT Phase I Study requirements. Conceptual designs and a more developed cost estimate will be developed by the studies.

IDOT is preparing a Letter of Intent (LOI) to outline the cost sharing and long-term maintenance responsibilities between IDOT and the Waukegan Port District, the Waukegan Regional Airport operator. The FAA stated phased short term solutions to the runway safety area issue may have to be later removed during more long term solutions.

IDOT asked if a Plan “B” alternative could be developed if the ultimate proposed runway configuration at Waukegan Airport is never constructed. Two alternatives should then be documented in the Phase I Environmental Assessment (EA) and the alternative selection may be revisited during Phase II design as the feasibility of the airport’s plan goes through the NEPA process and based on the availability of funding.

Alternative Design Option – Plan “B”, IDOT Highways

The FAA indicated that federal funding for the airport improvements cannot be guaranteed and the cost of the airport preferred alternative improvements are very high for a reliever airport. This level of funding has not been historically available to reliever airports. FAA requested alternatives be explored to allow flexibility for roadway improvements to still be made if the full funding level for the airport improvements cannot be reached.

The second IDOT roadway design option will not require a grade separation of IL 131 and will be based on FAA recommendations that other alternatives to satisfy the RSA requirements be investigated by the Waukegan Regional Airport. While the relocated 7,000 ft. runway is the preferred alternative to satisfy the Purpose & Need identified in the airport Master Plan, other options including Engineered Material Arrestor Systems (EMAS) or non-standard EMAS should be included in the documentation presented to the FAA. The Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives (DOPAA) looked at 17 runway expansion options. The need for a longer runway is not disputed as Category 3 Aircraft traffic has increased (currently 15-20 per month) as forecast in the Master Plan, however the application of these other alternatives may eliminate the grade separation requirement.

Alternatives employing EMAS may require shifting IL 131 west within airport-owned land to maintain the current runway length. The most recent EMAS bed constructed at O’Hare International Airport cost \$12 million, so a similar system at Waukegan Regional Airport should cost less than the grade separation alternative. The airport study team will provide design parameters to the roadway study team for potential EMAS alternatives.

The FAA has no intention to allow the utility of the airport to decrease, but an RSA alternatives analysis is required at Waukegan Regional Airport. IDOT is also supportive of the airport plan but wants to have a Plan “B” alternative ready if adequate airport funding cannot be achieved for the airport improvements.

Without documenting a second alternative, the environmental process for the airport study would have to start over at the beginning and much of the current study effort would be wasted.

Anticipated Schedules

The IL 131 Phase I Study completion and Design Approval (DA) are anticipated by the end of 2013. The key steps to reach that goal are determining the preferred alternative, resubmitting the Environmental Study Request (ESR) to include the pump station outlet area, and holding a Public Hearing in fall 2013. DA clears the project to start land acquisition and contract plan preparation, but land acquisition, design, and construction are not in the Highway Improvement Program at this time. It is likely that a project the size of IL 131 would be packaged in multiple segments so the timing of construction of the area near the airport could be flexible as funding becomes available for each project.

For the Waukegan Airport study, the ongoing Master Planning process is equivalent to the IDOT Phase I study. A preferred alternative finding will be made with an environmental study before detailed design begins. The public and environmental process is just starting now and could take between 6 and 18 months. If the preferred alternative receives a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), then it becomes eligible for design funding.

The next steps for the airport study team are to submit alternatives to determine which will be carried forward, prepare environmental documentation, and present the preferred alternative at Public Hearing before clearing the environmental document.

Bridge and roadway work would be advance work for the airport improvements, which could help coordination of the IL 131 and airport projects if the timing of airport funding lags behind roadway funding.

If funding were available, IDOT Phase II contract plan preparation and land acquisition could take 12-24 months and Phase III construction would begin at the completion of Phase II activities.

Next Steps

The FAA, IDOT Division of Aeronautics (Aeronautics), and the Waukegan Port District require a LOI to move into an environmental study. The LOI will be a record of cooperation between IDOT and the Waukegan Port District. IDOT anticipates completing the preliminary LOI around the beginning of 2013. It will then be sent to the Waukegan Port District. Once the Phase I study is completed, a final LOI will be sent that has a more accurate breakdown of the project costs.

The airport study team will analyze additional alternatives to satisfy the RSA requirements. IDOT will need a second alternative to report back to the public and stakeholders on the IL 131 study. The Waukegan Regional Airport project team will investigate construction equipment heights and roadway usage with regard to runway hazard analysis with assistance from the IL 131 project team.

Technical Discussion

Hanson Professional Services, consultant to the airport study, and HNTB, consultant to the IL 131 study, will schedule a meeting to discuss the pump station hydraulic report, drainage and detention requirements, land acquisition requirements, bridge type studies, and environmental analysis coordination. HNTB noted that the pump station drainage area should be minimized to include only the IL 131 roadway drainage requirement area. No additional drainage requirements for the airport runway and taxiway extension should be included in the pump station drainage area.

(Post note: a technical coordination meeting was held on Friday, December 13, 2012.)

Lake County Forest Preserve Coordination

The alternative presented at the June 1, 2012 meeting with the LCFPD resulted in impacts that make the alternative unacceptable. Therefore the Port District, IDOT Aeronautics, and IDOT determined that other feasible alternatives were to be investigated.

Each study will follow up with the LCFPD independently.

Organization Roles

IDOT Aeronautics is the lead organization on projects involving general aviation facilities in Illinois such as the Waukegan Regional Airport. The FAA advises as necessary.

Future Meetings

The FAA, IDOT, and Aeronautics shall be notified of all meetings between the IL 131 and airport project study teams. A follow up meeting will occur after the airport team completes its alternatives analysis.

Prepared by: HNTB Corporation, Derek Johnson



Illinois Department of Transportation

Attendance Roster

Bureau: Programming Section: Project Studies

Project/Topic: IL 131 - Waukegan Airport Coordination Meeting

Date: December 7, 2012

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: District One - Training Room "A" - Lower Level

	Attendees	Representing	Phone Number	Email Address
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17.	Mike Hine	FHWA		
18.	Terry Schaddel	IDOT-DOA		
19.	via teleconference			
20.	Amy Hanson	FAA		
21.				
22.				
23.				