



COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item No. 9b

BRIEFING ITEM

Date of Meeting January 28, 2020

DATE: January 15, 2020

TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

FROM: Arlyn Purcell, Director, Aviation Environment and Sustainability
Steve Rybolt, Sr. Environmental Program Manager, Aviation Environment and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) Near-Term Projects (NTP) Environmental Review Briefing –Forecast and Schedule Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This briefing will provide an overview of the results of the forecast update conducted for the Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) Near-Term Projects environmental review and the current schedule.

SUSTAINABLE AIRPORT MASTER PLAN NEAR-TERM PROJECTS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Port of Seattle prepared the SAMP as a blueprint for changes at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac Airport) to meet future demand. The SAMP planning process was completed in 2018 and identified a set of Near-Term Projects (NTP) that are planned for construction by 2027 as well as a Long-Term Vision. The NTP are the subject of this environmental review and include more than 30 projects that would improve efficiency, safety, access to the Airport, and support facilities for airlines and the Airport.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) initiated a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Assessment (EA) and the Port of Seattle (Port) initiated a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate and disclose the potential environmental effects of the NTP.

Scoping, one of the first steps in the SAMP NTP environmental review, was completed on September 28, 2018. Scoping is an early and open process for determining the scope of issues that will be addressed in the environmental review document, soliciting input regarding the NTP and reasonable alternatives, and identifying concerns regarding the potential environmental effects of the NTP. The resulting comments provided valuable input that led to several changes to the SAMP NTP environmental review scope.

One key outcome of the scoping process was a decision to review and update the forecast originally developed in 2015 as part of the SAMP planning work.

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FORECAST UPDATE

The SAMP forecasts for Sea-Tac Airport were completed in 2015 using 2014 as the base year. Since then, strong economic growth, lower airfares, and airline competition drove passenger traffic to rise faster than originally forecast. Passenger volume at SEA increased by 40 percent between 2014-2018.

The updated demand forecast shows that the airport will reach the 2027 forecast activity levels for operations by approximately 2022, five years sooner than originally projected, and for passenger activity by 2023. However, this forecast only considers demand for services and does not consider airport constraints such as the availability of gates and aircraft parking.

Gate and aircraft parking constraints will likely limit substantial activity increases at the airport beyond 2023. In response, the Port, in collaboration with the FAA, developed estimates to illustrate slower growth scenarios based on facility constraints. There are separate scenarios for activity with and without the proposed NTP.

This constrained operating growth scenarios will be used as the basis for the SAMP NTP environmental review analysis.

The FAA approved the updated 2019 demand forecast and concurred with the constrained operating growth scenarios on January 10, 2020.

	2027		2032	
	Aircraft Operations	Passengers (millions)	Aircraft Operations	Passengers (millions)
SAMP Demand Forecast (2015)	477,000	56.0	527,000	63.0
SAMP Updated Demand Forecast (2019)	520,000	61.1	557,000	68.2
No Action Constrained Scenario	499,000	58.1	506,000	60.7
Proposed Action Constrained Scenario	508,000	59.2	524,000	63.1

Table 1 – SAMP Demand Forecasts and Constrained Scenarios

The table above shows both forecast activity demand and constrained growth scenarios. The SAMP Demand Forecast [2015] and SAMP Updated Demand Forecast [2019] are based on market demand and do not assume specific assumptions about physical, regulatory, environmental or other impediments to aviation activity growth. Conversely, the constrained growth scenarios represent known barriers to growth at Sea-Tac Airport.

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EXTENDED SCHEDULE

The forecast update and other scope changes have resulted in an extension of the schedule:

- Update to the demand forecast and development of constrained operating growth scenarios
- Continued advanced planning coordination
- Additional technical environmental analysis, in response to scoping comments
- Separation of the NEPA and SEPA documents and processes
- Continued extensive stakeholder engagement and community outreach

Key milestones include:

Oct. 2020	NEPA EA draft document released for agency and public review
Nov. 2020	NEPA EA agency and public review complete
Apr. 2021	NEPA EA final document and decision
May 2021	SEPA EIS draft document released for agency and public review
Jul. 2021	SEPA EIS agency and public review complete
Sep. 2021	SEPA EIS final document

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING

- (1) Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) Near-Term Projects (NTP) Environmental Review Briefing – Updated Forecast and Schedule PowerPoint presentation

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

- February 26, 2019 – Commission Briefing: “Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) Near-Term Projects (NTP) Environmental Review Briefing – Scoping Report”
- May 8, 2018 – Commission Briefing: “Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) Planning and Environmental Update”
- February 13, 2018 - Commission Briefing: "Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) Planning Update"
- November 10, 2015 – Commission Action: “Environmental Review (National Environmental Policy Act and State Environmental Policy Act) Personal Services Agreement for the Sustainable Airport Master Plan”