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About the Runway 17-35 Project

Project Description

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The City of Philadelphia is proposing major improvements to the Airport to increase airfield capacity at PHL in order to reduce existing and forecast delays. The FAA has concurred that a capacity and delay problem exists at PHL and that projects for alleviating this problem are subject to the preparation of environmental impact statements (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The City proposes two projects to address immediate and long-term needs. One project, known as the Runway 17-35 Extension Project (the Runway 17-35 Project) would provide a more immediate delay reduction for several years by extending the length of Runway 17-35. The second project, referred to as the Capacity Enhancement Program, which is the subject of this Web Site, is a major airfield redevelopment project that would provide greater relief from delay over a much longer period. The FAA, as the lead federal agency, at the City of Philadelphia's request, has opted to prepare a separate EIS for each project because the Runway 17-35 Project will address the need for delay reduction at PHL in the short term while the Capacity Enhancement Program will provide a more comprehensive and longer term delay reduction. The FAA will prepare the EISs concurrently and will take into account the potential cumulative impacts of both projects.

Alternatives Being Considered

The EIS will address a range of alternatives that would reduce existing and forecasted delays at PHL, including demand management alternatives and alternatives that are not within the jurisdiction of PHL or FAA, such as greater use of regional airports or other transportation modes. Within this range, the alternatives being considered for the Runway 17-35 Project are the No Build Alternative and a build alternative. The EIS will also evaluate alternatives identified during the Scoping process that would reduce existing and forecasted delays at PHL.

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative assumes that only periodic maintenance and minor enhancements needed to maintain safe operations at the Airport would occur. It serves as the basis for assessing the impacts of the other alternatives being considered.

Build Alternative

The Build Alternative would extend Runway 17-35 to the north by 600 feet and to the south by 440 feet, to a total length of 6,500 feet. The Build Alternative potential requires the relocation of State Route 291.





Relationship of the Runway 17-35 Project to the Capacity Enhancement Program

To provide relief from the existing delays as soon as feasible, the proposed improvements to the Airport have been divided into two separate projects, the Runway 17-35 Project, which is the subject of this Web Site, and the Capacity Enhancement Program. FAA agreed with the City to separate the Runway 17-35 Project and the Capacity Enhancement Program because the Runway 17-35 Project, alone, will provide substantial interim relief from the existing delays at the Airport and would remain in operation for a substantial number of years into the future.

Furthermore, it appears that the Runway 17-35 Project will generate fewer environmental impacts and that the impacts will be of lesser magnitude than the impacts from the Capacity Enhancement Program. The EIS and permitting for the Runway 17-35 Project are, therefore, anticipated to be completed in a much shorter time frame than the EIS for the Capacity Enhancement Program.

Information on the Capacity Enhancement Program is available at www.phl-cep-eis.com.