



**Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport  
Master Plan: 2008-2027**

***Frequently Asked Questions***

*As of March 14, 2008*

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**1. What is an airport “Master Plan”?**

An airport “Master Plan” is required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) from any airport that plans to seek federal funding for airport development projects. An airport master plan represents actions to be accomplished for phased development of the airport that leads to an effective and efficient network of airports serving the region and the nation for current and forecast needs. Careful study goes into the development of a Master Plan. Once a master plan is developed, an airport then submits an Airport Layout Plans (ALP) package to the FAA for review and acceptance.

**2. Why is the Airport Authority already planning for a new runway when it admits it does not even need it at this time?**

While runway construction isn’t expected to begin for years, the purpose of the Master Plan is to develop a basic layout of physical improvements that will be needed if the demand and activity increase to the levels expected. The planning horizon for the Metro Airport Master plan is 20 years. This means the Plan tries to anticipate projects required within the next 20 years.

An airport Master Plan is not the detailed engineering drawings for actual development. Only after the FAA accepts an airport’s Master Plan does the extensive process of actual design, engineering and impact assessment begin.

As part of the design process, an extensive impact study would be completed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines. This federally- mandated process must consider the impacts if the development were to occur and may influence any actual development. During the NEPA process, all viable options to completing the project or projects, including doing nothing, will be considered and evaluated. Only the most appropriate facility development will be approved for construction.

**3. Have communities surrounding the airport participated in the development of the airport's new Master Plan?**

Yes. Officials from all of the airport's surrounding communities have been instrumental in the development of the proposed Master Plan for Detroit Metro Airport from the beginning of the planning process. Although not all representatives agree with the location of a proposed 5<sup>th</sup> parallel runway, input from all participants was taken into consideration.

Representatives from these communities have participated as part of both the Citizen's Advisory Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. Representatives, residents, and business owners from nearby communities have participated in six public information workshops held by the airport.

The Airport Authority has also met with city officials from communities all over Southeast Michigan to discuss the rationale behind the Master Plan and the impacts it may have on all of the communities the airport serves. Again, input from all participants was taken into consideration.

**4. The airport Preferred Development Plan map does not clearly show the area south of Eureka Road and east of Middlebelt Road. Will my property in this area be affected by the proposed Master Plan?**

No. While the specific boundaries of future airport development will not be established until after the NEPA process is completed for any proposed expansion, the proposed Master Plan does not call for the acquisition of any land southeast of the Eureka/Middlebelt Road intersection.

**5. If the Airport Authority does need to purchase my house, what am I entitled to?**

Both landowners and renters of property acquired by the airport are entitled to compensation in accordance with federal, state and local laws. More details of potential benefits available to property owners (and renters) displaced by a land acquisition project is attached ("Attachment A").

**6. If the Airport thinks it may need my land eventually, can it just come buy it now?**

No. Until the need for expansion is realized and the proper environmental studies are conducted, the airport will not be initiating acquisition of property required for projects listed in the Master Plan.

**7. So, if this new runway may not even happen for a while, why did the Airport Authority publicize the plan through the media and thereby ruin my property value and upset residents?**

Under federal, state and local laws, the Wayne County Airport Authority is required to conduct business in a transparent and open manner. While it is regrettable that conducting business in such an open and transparent manner may have some unintended consequences, the Airport Authority is committed to operating with full disclosure and in accordance with all legal requirements for sharing information about its plans.

Plus, the Airport Authority feels it is important that the surrounding communities understand the anticipated expansion plans for the Airport so they are in the best possible position to prepare for it.

**8. What happens if the airport needs to acquire the property where my business is located?**

Businesses being acquired for airport expansion are entitled to the same compensation as residents. All landowners and renters are treated equally—regardless of whether the land is zoned for commercial or residential use.

**9. When would construction begin on the runway projects proposed in this Master Plan?**

Construction of the runway project will only proceed when the need for that facility occurs. It is important to note that actual construction will be timed with *actual* demand, not projections. Based on the forecast, the new runway could be needed in the 2018-2027 timeframe. However, if traffic grows quicker or slower than anticipated, the runway construction timeframe would likely change as well.

**10. Why hasn't the Airport Authority answered many of the questions from surrounding communities regarding how the proposed development might impact public safety, the environment, local schools, etc.?**

Several communities have come forward with very good questions about how the proposed development may impact various aspects of city services, business traffic and quality of life. The airport has responded to as many of those questions as possible and will continue to address additional questions as they arise.

Under the airport planning process prescribed by the federal government, airports must first submit its plan that outlines future projects for FAA review and acceptance before the impacts can be investigated in detail. Only after the FAA accepts an airport's Master Plan does the extensive process of actual design and engineering begin.

Some of the questions that local communities have posed regarding environmental and social impacts of airport expansion cannot be answered as part of the Master Plan, but will instead be addressed as part of a federally-mandated environmental study that will occur before any construction begins.

**11. Why didn't the Airport Authority share its plan for a new, fifth-parallel runway at the airport with local communities prior to January 2008, as some local cities claim?**

Local communities were presented with the proposed fifth-parallel runway location at a Technical Advisory Committee meeting back in July 2007.

Additionally, Airport Authority CEO Lester Robinson personally visited with the editorial boards of all major newspapers in the region to discuss the Master Plan in detail and provided each publication with a copy of the Preferred Development Plan, which showed the fifth parallel runway east of the current airfield in fall 2007.

Articles about the airport's proposed expansion, some with maps showing the proposed location of the new runway, have been featured in the *Detroit Free Press*, *The News Herald* *The Observer* newspapers, *The Little Paper*, *Crain's Detroit Business*, *The Oakland Press*, and others.

Also, in November 2007, the Airport Authority held its sixth public information workshop where details of the proposed Master Plan were presented. The meeting was attended by several local elected officials as well as area residents.

**12. Has the Airport Authority responded to questions from surrounding communities regarding those communities' Master Plan concerns?**

Several communities near the airport have sent letters to the Airport Authority detailing their concerns about the airport's proposed Master Plan. The Airport Authority has and will continue to provide detailed responses to the letters it receives.

Copies of all communication between these communities and the Airport Authority are a matter of public record and available on the Airport Authority's Web site or upon request.

**13. How has the Airport Authority pro-actively communicated with the surrounding communities, their residents and business owners regarding the Master Plan?**

The Airport Authority held six public workshops between December 2006 and November 2007, three of which were held at the Metropolitan Hotel in Romulus, where detailed information about the Master Plan process and studied alternatives was presented.

In addition to written correspondence, Airport Authority CEO Lester Robinson also presented details of the proposed Master Plan to the Greater Romulus Chamber of Commerce (February 19, 2008) and the Southern Wayne County Chamber (February 4, 2008).

The Airport Authority also published two newsletters about the Master Plan that were mailed to residents of the Oakbrook subdivision, the Greater Romulus Chamber and city officials from all of the surrounding communities, among others. The newsletters were mailed in September and November 2007.

**14. Were the master plan public information workshops open to the public and where were they advertised?**

The Airport Authority held six public workshops between December 2006 and November 2007, three of which were held at the Metropolitan Hotel in Romulus, where detailed information about the Master Plan process and studied alternatives was presented.

The meetings were all open to the public and notices for each meeting appeared on the airport Web site, *The Detroit News*, *The Detroit Free Press*, and on local cable information channels. The Airport Authority also requested officials and staff of local communities relay the meeting dates and times to local residents and businesses.

**15. Does the Airport Authority recognize the impact that any future airport development will have on the City of Romulus and its residents?**

The Airport Authority absolutely recognizes that any future development will have both positive and negative impacts on the City of Romulus and its residents. The proposed new runway included in the airport's revised Master Plan will most definitely require that some residents and businesses be relocated—and the Airport Authority has pledged on several occasions to work with the City to relocate displaced residents and businesses within Romulus.

**16. Why does the Airport need more capacity? Doesn't it already have excess capacity?**

Thanks to the foresight and wisdom of past planning effort, Detroit Metro Airport has capacity to handle today's air traffic and that of the immediate future. However, the airport will be unable to accommodate the growth anticipated over the next 20 years with the current facilities. Given the long lead time required to plan for and build additional infrastructure, the airport must look beyond the immediate future and plan for the airport's capacity needs through the 20 year planning horizon.

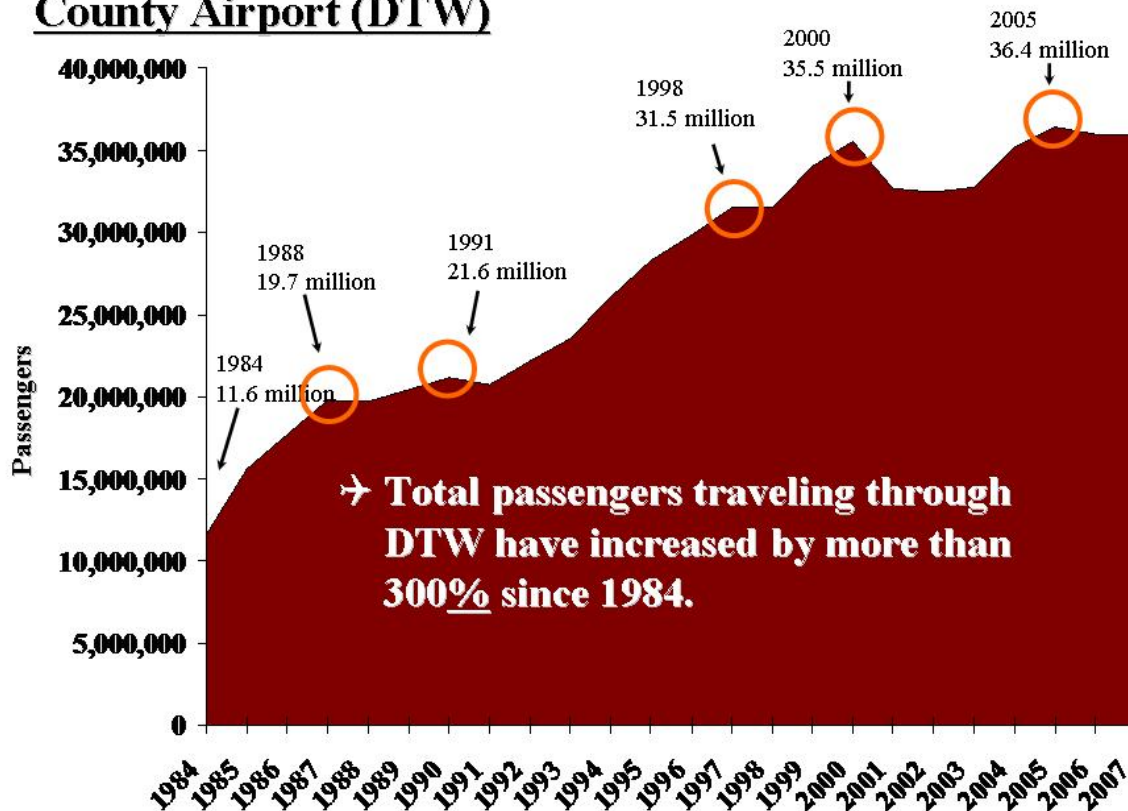
The Federal Aviation Administration estimates that passenger traffic at Detroit Metro Airport will increase an average of 2.3% annually. As a result, Detroit Metro expects to see nearly 60 million passengers and more than 800,000 take-offs and landings each year by 2025.

**17. Didn't the Airport Authority just issue a news release stating that traffic levels at Detroit Metro Airport in 2007 was flat with 2006—and even *down* from 2005?**

Yes. Passenger traffic levels at Detroit Metro Airport in 2007 are about the same as in 2006, which is below the traffic level the airport saw in 2005. Much like the stock market, passenger growth at airports often shows short-term “peaks and valleys” despite overall long-term growth. The 2.3% growth rate estimated by the FAA is an annualized average of growth over 20 years. Neither the FAA nor the Airport Authority predicts that traffic will grow *steadily* at this rate.

Traffic growth at Detroit Metro Airport over the past 24 years provides a good illustration of how air traffic has declined and/or remained flat in the short-term despite dramatic long term growth.

**Passenger Growth at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW)**



**18. Have other alternatives been considered prior to the recommendation of the current runway plan? How was this final location selected?**

Yes. A total of 28 different airfield alternatives were identified. Each of the 28 alternatives was evaluated to determine whether or not it met the Airport's planning needs. Those alternatives that were determined to meet planning needs were then evaluated based upon a number of factors. Ultimately, the proposed runway location depicted on the Preferred Development Plan was deemed the best option to meet future demand with the least impact to the surrounding area of all the options considered.

**19. Why won't the Airport Authority assure local communities in writing that it is no longer considering the addition of a runway west of the airport?**

The alternative of adding a new runway to the west of the airport is no longer being considered by the Airport Authority and is not a part of the Airport Authority's proposed Master Plan. However, since that alternative would meet the planning need, it will be re-evaluated along with any other viable option, during the NEPA process. The Airport Authority is not in a position to offer assurances on behalf of the FAA.

**20. Why can't the airport build the additional runway it needs entirely on the property it already has?**

Several of the airport's 28 possible airfield alternatives consisted of building new runways and/or expanding existing runways within the airport's current boundaries. Upon review, none of these alternatives provided the capacity to meet the airport's future planning needs.

Simply put, there is not enough room to fit a new runway entirely on the airport's current property and still achieve the separation requirement between runways needed to sufficiently increase capacity. Adding a new runway between any two current runways at Detroit Metro would not meet minimum spacing requirements, resulting in a loss of potential airport capacity overall.

The airport cannot accommodate future demand with the current runways, no matter what operational or taxiway improvements are made. In fact, the airport is planning to implement a number of those types of improvements to defer the need for the runway as long as possible.

To get a "bird's eye view" of the airport's current layout and land use, visit [www.metroairport.com](http://www.metroairport.com) to see an aerial photograph of Detroit Metro Airport.

**21. There is a lot of space between the airports current runways. Why couldn't the airport build a new runway between two of its existing runways?**

The Federal Aviation Administration establishes minimum spacing requirements between runways in order for those runways to be used at full capacity. There is insufficient space between existing runways to add another runway and achieve the separation requirements needed to sufficiently and safely increase capacity. Safety is the Airport Authority's top priority.

**22. What about traffic flow on Eureka and Middlebelt Roads? Would the airport close two major roads to traffic?**

The Airport Authority's proposed development plan includes tunneling both Eureka and Middlebelt Roads underneath the proposed new runway and taxiways so as not to disrupt traffic flow on either road.

**23. Didn't the City of Romulus recently invest heavily in improvement to Eureka Road that would be erased by the Airport's proposed development projects?**

The improvements made to Eureka Road paid-for by the City of Romulus were much needed at the time and have served the public well over the past several years—and will continue to serve the public well until such time that future airport development is deemed necessary.

When and if the Airport determines it is necessary to begin work on expansion that affects Eureka Road, the Airport Authority will pay the cost of any alterations to the road.

**24. Don't my property and income tax dollars go to support the airport?**

No. Local tax dollars are not used to support Detroit Metro Airport or the Airport Authority. All of the money spent by the airport to operate and maintain the airport comes from revenue generated on the airport, such as airline landing fees, concessions and parking revenue. Construction projects are funded by airlines and, when eligible, FAA grants.

**25. What does Detroit Metro Airport do for me other than cause lots of noise anyway?**

Detroit Metropolitan Airport is a major economic engine for Metro Detroit and especially for the communities closest to the airport. A University of Michigan-Dearborn study in 2005 found that Detroit Metro Airport stimulates more than \$7.6 billion for Michigan's economy and more than 71,000 jobs statewide.

More than 18,700 people are employed directly on airport property, resulting in a payroll of nearly \$1.6 billion each year. Many of those jobs are currently held by residents from local communities, including:

<b>Community</b>	<b>Residents Employed at DTW</b>
<b>Taylor</b>	<b>953</b>
<b>Romulus</b>	<b>788</b>
<b>Belleville</b>	<b>715</b>
<b>Dearborn</b>	<b>661</b>
<b>Inkster</b>	<b>533</b>
<b>Dearborn Hts.</b>	<b>456</b>
<b>Huron Twp.</b>	<b>159</b>

These job numbers do not include the many jobs located near the airport that exist solely because of the airport, such as employees of freight forwarders, hotels and restaurants surrounding the airport.

## **26. Whom can I contact if I have more questions?**

The Airport Authority Web site is a great resource for information regarding the airport and proposed expansion plans. Visit [www.metroairport.com](http://www.metroairport.com).

For more information or with additional questions, residents and business-owners in communities near the airport are encouraged to contact:

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## **ATTACHMENT A.**

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO PROPERTY OWNERS DISPLACED BY A LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT**

The following is a brief description of the types of benefits allowable by federal law for property owners displaced by a public agency utilizing federal funding.

1. **PURCHASE PRICE FOR YOUR HOME** - Value of House and Land

2. **MOVING ALLOWANCE**

- Fixed Moving Payment (Based on number of rooms in home)
- Actual Moving Payment – Commercial mover paid direct (pack, move and unpack)

3. **RELOCATION PAYMENTS**

Owners are eligible for relocation assistance in the form of advisory services and monetary benefits. These benefits are described below. Relocation benefit for renters is also prescribed by federal guidance.

**Advisory Services** may include assistance in finding a replacement dwelling, determining relocation payments, working with owners on all aspects of real estate transaction and relocation.

**Replacement Housing Payment** - Difference between value of your home and a replacement dwelling (see sample below)

#### **EXAMPLE OF DETERMINING REPLACEMENT HOUSING PAYMENT**

Your Home	6 rooms, 3 bedrooms, 1,000 square feet
Value of House and Land:	\$130,000
Value of similar home on the market:	\$150,000
Replacement housing payment	\$20,000

*-NOTE THIS IS AN EXAMPLE ONLY. ACTUAL BENEFITS MAY VARY.-*

#### **Incidental Expenses:**

- Reasonable Legal Fees
- Title Search Fee
- Notary Fee
- Survey Costs
- Recording Fee
- Lender's Appraisal Fee
- Loan Origination Fee or Assumption Fee (that do not represent prepaid interest)
- Application Fee
- Credit Report Fee
- Escrow Fee
- Transfer Taxes
- Certification Fee

**Mortgage claims** which may include an "interest differential payment" which allows for a lump sum payment if mortgage rate on a replacement property exceeds mortgage rate on current property.

**Loss of Property Tax Exemption** which is determined by the State Equalized Value less the Taxable Value multiplied by the tax millage rate, that result multiplied by up to five years depending on years of ownership.

In finding a functionally, similar home for determining your replacement housing payment, the following items are considered:

- Location
- Number of Rooms
- Living Space
- Decent, Safe and Sanitary