



February 24, 2022

Dear DKX Tenant:

Since the beginning of January, the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority (MCAA) hosted two separate tenant meetings to discuss the DKX Runway Improvement Project. During these meetings, tenants, base customers, and other airport users were able to learn more about the runway rehabilitation scheduled from now until early 2023. The \$8.4million project consists of a complete reconstruction of the runway, partial reconstruction of the taxi, new airfield electrical system, new LED airfield lighting and signage, and sealcoating of the remaining taxiway.

During the meetings, Airport Authority staff, and experienced aviation consultants shared the need for the project, how construction will commence, the timeline associated with major construction milestones, lease agreements, and answered tenant questions. This update will provide you with the information shared and discussed during those meetings.

### **Need for the Project**

The runway's last major maintenance occurred in the early 1990s when it underwent an asphalt mill and overlay. Through this effort, the surface of the runway was removed (milled) and replaced with a new asphalt landing surface. Since that time, the airport has been continuously inspected and maintained to FAA and TDOT Division of Aeronautics standards. Through this inspection process, MCAA TDOT Division of Aeronautics has monitored the runway's Pavement Condition Index (PCI) and found that it is trending low. This downward trajectory must be addressed before it becomes a safety issue in the next few years. Essentially, the runway is reaching the end of its useful service life and requires a reconstruction.

In addition, grant funding for general aviation projects is extremely competitive. The condition of the runway and the low PCI rating allows MCAA to secure the financial support of the FAA and the TDOT's Aeronautics Division. Their support of the project is crucial to its success.

### **Construction Information**

MCAA has been working closely with TDOT's Division of Aeronautics to secure \$8 million in funding plus \$400,000 in local MCAA match for the much-needed DKX runway reconstruction project. Contractor timeline and incentives will be addressed in the "Questions" portion of this update.

<b>Timeline Associated with Major Construction Milestones</b>	
Project Design Completed	January 2022 - <b>Complete</b>
Advertisement and Bid Phase	May 2022
Construction Mobilization	June 2022
Runway Closed for Construction Airport Office Remains Open – Runway Closed	July – August 2022
Runway Reopens for Day-Time VFR Use Only	September 2022
Project Schedule To Be Completed	January 2023

\*This project timeline is based upon current construction estimates and could be impacted by the availability of products and service availabilities.

### **Questions**

**1. Will the contractor work weekdays only or can they expedite the construction by working 24 hours a day?** The project schedule is dictated by available funding and the working schedule will be set by the selected contractor. It will be dependent upon contractor workforce and resource availability. MKAA cannot require that the contractor work 24 hours a day since the funding agency does not see this as an expedited project and did not fund it accordingly.

**2. What will happen if the bid is over \$8 million?** The bid package has been developed by aviation experts who have experience crafting this type of project. The project has been designed to meet the expected funding availability with the flexibility to remove scope items, if needed, to match funding. Certainly, in today’s market, bids have been somewhat erratic and Authority staff will continue to work with our funding agency.

**3. Will helicopters and rotorcraft be able to use the airport during the runway closure?** Yes. Based upon their requirements for safe operation, DKX will be able to accommodate helicopter and rotorcraft operations. Please contact the DKX manager for specific information.

**4. During the runway closure, can an alternative surface be considered (i.e. using the taxiway or a turf landing strip)?** Both of these alternatives were considered during the design phase and discussed with TDOT’s Division of Aeronautics. Through a safety risk assessment process, significant hazards to aviation were identified when considering the use of Taxiway A and a turf landing strip. These include, but are not limited to:

- Taxiway A does not meet the minimum width design standards.
- Significant obstructions present hazards to aviation on the approach and departure ends of the proposed alternative landing surface on Taxiway A.
- The Runway Object Free Area on the proposed alternative landing surface on Taxiway A would greatly encroach on the ramp area and create multiple aircraft movement issues adjacent to the terminal and the fuel farm.
- The proposed alternative landing surface would create multiple crossing points, creating Vehicle and Pedestrian Deviation “hotspots” with construction haul routes – further complicated with a non-towered airport.

- A turf alternative landing surface would partially be located inside of the runway construction limits and would not be feasible.
- Taxiway A Runway Protection Zones would encroach on construction areas and haul routes – this is a non-compatible land use and unsafe.
- TDOT Divisions of Aeronautics does not support an alternative landing surface due to the numerous safety hazards created and the relatively short closure time compared to other airport reconstruction projects across the state.
- TDOT Aeronautics Division will not certify Taxiway A as an alternative landing surface.

To continue to ensure that you receive timely updates, please contact the DKX Customer Service Counter and sign up to receive timely text or email notifications. And as always, DKX manager, Brian Shutt, can be reached at (865) 577-4461.