

King Salmon Airport Master Plan Update

Project No. SFAPT00545



Open House No. 2 Summary

Meeting Information

Thursday, March 19, 2026, from 12:00 – 2:00 PM

Presentation at 12:30 PM

Bear Trail Lodge

Mile 1 Bear Trail, King Salmon, Alaska 99613

A Zoom Webinar link to view the presentation online was shared for those unable to attend in-person.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in coordination with DOWL, hosted a hybrid open house to review project alternatives for possible inclusion in the King Salmon Airport (AKN) Master Plan and gather feedback. Participants who attended the open house in-person were welcomed at the sign-in table, where they received a fact sheet. Meeting materials included project boards detailing the schedule, projects in progress, key issues, taxiway options, apron expansion priorities, potential public floatplane dock locations, potential new floatplane lease lots, airport improvements to address design standards and state-of-good-repair needs, and contact information. Online attendees were directed to the project website to access project information.

Forty-one (41) individuals attended the open house in-person and twenty-five (25) people joined the presentation online.

Project Team Attendees

Courtney Kreis C.M., DOT&PF Aviation
Transportation Planner, Southcoast Region
Project Manager

Sharon Clark, DOT&PF Kodiak-Aleutian District
Maintenance and Operations Superintendent

Peter Jackson, P.E., DOT&PF Southcoast Region
Engineer

Josh Stuckey, C.M., DOT&PF Safety and Security
Officer

Sharyn Augustine C.M., DOT&PF Southcoast
Region Leasing Chief

Melissa Osborn, A.A.E., ACE, DOWL Project
Manager

Tom Middendorf, DOWL Senior Aviation
Planner

Jessica Della Croce, C.M., ACE, DOWL Aviation
Planner

Nick Bleich, P.E., AICP, DOWL Senior Aviation
Planner and Engineer

Talli Vittetoe, DOWL Public Involvement

Greg Dyer, Woolpert

Steve Schell, A.I.A., Architects Alaska Senior
Architect

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Advertising

Alaska Online Public Notice/ Facebook Page

DOT&PF published a meeting notice on the State of Alaska's Online Public Notice platform on February 26, 2026. The notice remained publicly available until it was archived on March 30, 2026. In addition, DOT&PF promoted the open house via their Facebook page on February 23, 2026.

Email Notification

Email announcements were distributed via Constant Contact to the contact register on February 23 and March 17, 2026. These emails included details about the open house, participation instructions, and a short video created by the project team.

Flyer

Meeting flyers were posted in high-traffic community locations throughout King Salmon, including the library, post office, grocery store, and airport.

Newspaper

Meeting notices were printed in the *Anchorage Daily News* on March 8 and 15, 2026, and in the *Bristol Bay Times* on March 12, 2026.

Radio

A radio advertisement aired on KDLG from March 12 to 19, 2026.

Video

A short video introducing the Master Plan and inviting viewers to the open house was posted to the website and shared via email on March 17, 2026.

Project Website

The website was regularly updated with open house details, meeting materials, and links to engagement tools.

Presentation

Introduction

The presentation began promptly at 12:30 p.m. with a welcome from Courtney Kreis, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Project Manager, who offered a land acknowledgment, recognizing that the meeting was held on the traditional homelands of the Yup'ik and Alutiiq peoples. She highlighted the name King Salmon as a reminder of the resources that have sustained Indigenous communities for generations and emphasized the importance of honoring the cultural heritage and continued contributions of Native people in the region.

Courtney explained that the meeting was conducted in a hybrid format, with both in-person and virtual participants. She noted that attendees online would have their microphones and cameras muted by default. She shared that virtual participants could submit questions through the chat during the

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presentation. Questions that could be addressed quickly would be answered in real time, while others would be followed up later.

Courtney then reviewed the meeting agenda and noted that the team had a full schedule of topics to cover. She shared that the presentation would begin with a brief overview of what an airport master plan is and its purpose, particularly for those who did not attend the first public meeting. She then outlined key agenda items, including a project schedule update, a summary of the aviation forecast, and an overview of ongoing projects presented by a project engineer. She noted that the team would also discuss key issues identified to date, along with considerations related to public and publicly accessible buildings. Although commonly practiced in the lower 48, this approach is newly adopted by DOT&PF. She emphasized that the alternatives analysis would be the primary focus of the meeting, highlighting that a wide range of potential alternatives had been developed in response to community involvement and input. The presentation would conclude with a description of the next steps, followed by a question-and-answer period.

Courtney then introduced members of the project team attending the open house, including representatives from DOT&PF, DOWL, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Woolpert, and Architects Alaska.

Sharon Clark, DOT&PF Kodiak-Aleutian District Maintenance and Operations Superintendent, highlighted key safety considerations, including the importance of reporting wildlife near the runway or terminal and avoiding practices, such as leaving fish waste near the airport, that can attract wildlife. She also emphasized monitoring environmental and operational hazards, including volcanic ash from nearby volcanoes, rapidly changing weather conditions, and reviewing NOTAMs and alerts from the Federal Aviation Administration and U.S. Geological Survey. Finally, she noted the importance of respecting local land and culture, recognizing the airport's role in supporting subsistence access, medical travel, and community connectivity.

Airport Master Plans

Melissa Osborn, DOWL Project Manager, explained that an airport master plan outlines development over a 20-year period. She noted that projects must be included in the master plan to be eligible for FAA funding. While inclusion does not guarantee funding, it is a necessary step to position projects for future investment. Melissa then noted that this was the second public meeting, following the initial meeting held May 22, 2025, to gather input on airport issues and community priorities. She added that this second meeting would focus on presenting potential development alternatives, sharing how prior feedback was incorporated, and gathering additional input. A public comment period of approximately 30 days will follow, after which the project team will work with DOT&PF to refine priorities and phasing. Melissa added that the team anticipates returning in four to six months with the next phase of the plan.

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Jessica Della Croce, DOWL Aviation Planner, presented the aviation forecast and critical aircraft analysis, which evaluates airport activity over a 20-year planning horizon, including users, operations, and aircraft types. She noted that continued growth is expected, driven by strong commercial fishing, tourism, and community use, reinforcing the airport's role as a key regional transportation hub. Jessica explained that the critical aircraft is defined as the most demanding aircraft with at least 500 annual operations and is used to guide airfield design. For the primary runway, the critical aircraft was identified as the Boeing 737, resulting in a higher design classification, though with minimal operational changes. For the crosswind runway, the critical aircraft remains the Beechcraft 1900, with the analysis focused on confirming that existing facilities meet current design standards and safety needs.

Projects in Progress

Peter Jackson, DOT&PF Southcoast Region Engineer, provided an overview of four projects currently underway at the airport and noted he would be available after the presentation to answer questions. He described a snow removal equipment building project, which includes construction of a four-bay facility, roadway relocation, and improved airfield access, with design expected to be completed this summer. He also summarized a fencing and gate security improvements project, anticipated to reach design completion in 2027. Peter shared that additional projects include apron and taxiway rehabilitation, along with airfield lighting upgrades, and the repaving of Runway 18/36 with associated taxiway improvements. He noted that while these projects primarily address state of good repair needs, they are being coordinated with the Airport Master Plan to ensure consistency with future recommendations.

Key Issues

Melissa summarized key issues identified through prior planning efforts and the first open house. She noted concerns including limited restroom facilities, lack of water and sewer service on the east and general aviation ramps, insufficient vehicle parking, and constrained terminal space, including TSA screening areas. Additional issues included limited aircraft parking during peak summer months, reduced visibility for air traffic control in poor weather, and the need for improved floatplane parking and lease lot access along the river. Melissa also shared newer concerns, including interest in a gravel operating area and continued gaps in utility infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and sanitation services.

Public and Publicly Accessible Building Deficiencies

Melissa explained that, while airport master plans in Alaska typically focus on airfield infrastructure, this effort also considers publicly accessible buildings due to federal grant assurance requirements. She noted that any building accessible to the public, whether DOT&PF-owned or leased, must meet requirements such as Americans with Disabilities (ADA) compliance, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) standards, and fire and life safety codes. While the master plan is not a compliance document, the team will identify potential issues to help inform stakeholders and allow time to address

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them. Melissa emphasized that regulatory priorities can shift over time and identifying potential deficiencies can help the airport and tenants avoid future compliance issues.

Steve Schell, Architects Alaska Senior Architect, described how buildings at the airport are categorized as public, publicly accessible, or private, noting that requirements vary based on how a building is used and who can access it. He explained that buildings may be subject to a range of regulations, including the 2021 International Building Code, ADA, Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and requirements from agencies such as the FAA and TSA, depending on use and context. Steve emphasized that buildings play a critical role in airport safety, operations, and user experience. He noted that the team's review was limited to a high-level planning assessment and not a detailed compliance review. Identified issues will be shared with leaseholders for awareness, and he highlighted that limited access to utilities, such as water and sewer, presents challenges for meeting certain code requirements.

Josh Stuckey, DOT&PF Safety and Security Officer, discussed TSA requirements, noting that King Salmon is a TSA-regulated airport and access to the air operations area (AOA) must be strictly controlled. He emphasized that all access control systems must be approved by the TSA, and only properly badged personnel are allowed in restricted areas. Noncompliance can result in fines, which may be passed on to tenants. Josh highlighted the importance of coordinating with airport staff when planning future building upgrades to ensure systems meet current security requirements.

Alternatives for Airport Development

Jessica introduced the alternatives analysis as the primary focus of the meeting, noting that the goal is to gather detailed feedback on potential development options and confirm whether long-standing recommendations from previous master plans are still appropriate today. She acknowledged that many of the concepts presented have been discussed for decades but were not advanced due to funding priorities, such as past FAA focus on runway safety area improvements. She emphasized that these projects remain important and should continue to be considered and refined so they are ready when funding becomes available.

Jessica explained that feedback would be collected through multiple methods, including live discussion, written comment forms, and an interactive polling platform that allowed participants to follow along with the presentation and vote on alternatives in real time. Participants were encouraged to share preferences, identify priorities, and note if any key ideas were missing.

Taxiway Options

The main focus of the discussion was potential configurations for a parallel taxiway on Runway 12/30. She described several options, including a partial parallel on the south side that would support terminal apron expansion, reduce runway taxiing, and improve access and utilities, though it would require roadway realignment. Extending this option further toward the cargo apron could provide additional

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benefits, but full buildout on the south side all the way to the Runway 30 end was determined to be cost-prohibitive due to terrain constraints.

Jessica also described a full parallel taxiway on the north side, which would be more constructible and could be built in phases. This option would reduce runway taxiing and could serve as a temporary runway during construction but would require aircraft to cross the runway to access existing activity areas and would involve higher overall costs.

A third option included a split configuration, combining a partial south-side segment near the terminal with a north-side alignment toward the runway end. While more feasible from a construction standpoint, she noted this option may be less intuitive for operations.

She emphasized that, given funding limitations, partial buildout of a taxiway may be more realistic and asked participants to identify which segments would provide the greatest operational and safety benefits.

Apron Expansion Priorities

Jessica presented apron expansion concepts for three key areas of the airport, emphasizing that each apron serves a distinct role and all locations show a need for additional space. Rather than selecting a single option, participants were asked to help prioritize which apron expansions should occur first based on operational demand and phasing considerations.

For the west (terminal) apron, Jessica described a potential expansion that would connect with the proposed partial south-side parallel taxiway. The concept represents a build-out area, which could be constructed in phases as funding allows. Benefits include increased apron space, improved vehicle parking and circulation, additional lease lots, and the ability to extend existing utilities. However, the option would require roadway realignment, potential property acquisition, and would involve higher costs and longer implementation time than the other apron options.

For the east (cargo) apron, she noted opportunities to expand cargo and transient aircraft parking and add a limited number of lease lots. She cautioned that drainage constraints and nearby terrain drop-offs may limit the extent of expansion. This area currently lacks water and sewer utilities and may be affected by wetlands, which could further constrain development.

Jessica also highlighted an opportunity to formalize circulation between the cargo and general aviation (GA) aprons by adding pavement in an area currently used informally by vehicles and pedestrians. She described potential expansion on the south side of the GA apron to accommodate additional aircraft parking, lease lots, and hangar development, including T-hangars and small hangars. The concept could also provide wind protection for smaller aircraft. Additional apron space could be developed near existing DOT&PF snow removal equipment building (SREB) facilities, though this would require construction of new taxiways to support access.

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Jessica reiterated that, due to funding limitations, not all expansions are likely to occur at once. Participants were encouraged to rank priorities and provide input on which apron improvements would deliver the greatest operational benefit and should be advanced first.

Floatplane Area

Tom Middendorf, DOWL Senior Aviation Planner, and Sharyn Augustine, DOT&PF Southcoast Leasing Chief, introduced the topic of development of the floatplane area along the Naknek River. Sharyn discussed riverfront land use, noting that conflicts between aeronautical and non-aeronautical uses are a common issue at airports statewide. She emphasized that the riverfront is a sensitive and important area, and no decisions have been made. The project team is seeking input from both aeronautical and non-aeronautical users to better understand how the area is used and how safety can be improved for all. They shared that a dedicated virtual meeting focused on the riverfront will be held the following week. They encouraged participation and noted the goal of the meeting is to answer questions, provide context, and gather feedback to help inform the Master Plan.

Tom discussed riverfront issues identified through previous meetings and public outreach, particularly with floatplane users. He noted several ongoing challenges, including the lack of a public transient dock for floatplanes, limited lease lot availability, poor road conditions, drainage concerns, and the absence of water and sewer utilities. He also highlighted safety concerns related to conflicts between floatplanes and boat traffic. Additional constraints include wetlands, shallow and tidally influenced river conditions, and lease lots that are not ideally located for efficient aircraft access to the main channel.

Tom emphasized that local knowledge is critical, particularly regarding river depth and operating conditions, and encouraged participants to share insights. He also introduced potential safety and operational ideas, such as improved mapping of operating areas and pilot-activated warning systems to alert boaters. He explained that jurisdictional complexity is a factor, as DOT&PF manages airport land but does not control the river itself, and coordination with agencies such as the Alaska Department of Natural Resources is ongoing.

Tom then introduced the concept of a transient floatplane dock to improve access for fueling, passenger pickup, and short-term stays. He described several potential locations, each with tradeoffs related to taxi distance, available space, proximity to leaseholders, and vehicle parking capacity. He noted that the dock could be developed as a public-use facility by DOT&PF, another entity, or a private operator, and emphasized that the team is seeking input on whether the concept is supported, where it should be located, and how it should be implemented.

Tom compared potential lease lot locations, noting tradeoffs between water depth, proximity to the channel, and interactions with boat traffic. He highlighted that while some locations may offer shorter taxi distances, others provide better water depth but introduce additional operational conflicts. He emphasized that while some options may appear straightforward on paper, real-world feasibility is more

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complex, and encouraged participants to share local knowledge and ideas to help identify workable solutions.

Unpaved Operating Area

Nick Bleich, DOWL Senior Aviation Planner and Engineer, provided an overview of ongoing discussions regarding unpaved operating areas at the airport. He noted that the team is coordinating with DOT&PF and the FAA to evaluate whether existing gravel areas, such as runway shoulders, could be used for aircraft operations in the future. He explained that constructing a new dedicated gravel strip at King Salmon was evaluated but determined to be infeasible due to geographic constraints and the proximity of nearby airports, including Naknek and South Naknek, which already provide non-paved landing opportunities. He added that the current approach is to maintain King Salmon as a paved airport while relying on nearby facilities for gravel operations.

Additional Recommended Improvements

Greg Dyer, Woolpert, provided an overview of emerging advanced air mobility (AAM) technologies. He explained that new electric and hybrid aircraft are in development and may begin certification in the next few years, with broader adoption likely within the next 8 to 10 years. These aircraft could require significant infrastructure investments, such as charging stations, which may cost between \$500,000 and \$1 million. Greg noted that local utility providers have indicated the capability to support future electrical demand but emphasized that AAM remains a long-term consideration. He emphasized the importance of planning for these technologies within the 20-year master plan horizon, while taking a measured approach to ensure investments align with realistic timelines and operational needs.

Jessica summarized a broader set of recommended improvements focused on maintaining airport infrastructure, meeting FAA design standards, and addressing facility needs beyond the primary alternatives. She noted that while key elements such as taxiways, apron expansions, and floatplane planning will be reflected in the final plan, many additional improvements that address maintaining the airport in a state of good repair and complying with FAA design standards are important for overall airport function and safety and will also be included in the plan.

Jessica emphasized that some high-priority needs, such as water and sewer utilities, are not typically eligible for Federal Aviation Administration funding. As a result, the project team is exploring alternative funding sources and coordination with local agencies, the borough, and tenants. She also highlighted that some improvements, including building compliance and air traffic control facilities, fall outside DOT&PF's direct authority but will still be included as recommendations, with coordination needed to support implementation.

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Next Steps

Melissa outlined next steps, noting that the team would move into a question-and-answer session. She highlighted the upcoming floatplane breakout meeting the following week and encouraged participants to attend. Melissa noted that a public comment period of approximately 30 days would follow, during which feedback would continue to be collected.

After the comment period, the team will evaluate alternatives, refine recommendations, and develop a recommended plan, including cost estimates and phasing. She added that a third open house is anticipated in fall 2026 to present the recommended plan and capital improvement plan (CIP) and gather final input before completion.

Summary of Question-and-Answer Segment

A participant emphasized that environmental and wildlife considerations, particularly related to the river, need greater attention. They noted that the river is a highly significant salmon habitat and that nearby areas also serve as important staging grounds for waterfowl, including large seasonal concentrations of birds. The participant expressed concern that expanding development closer to the river, including lease lots or dredging, could negatively impact these habitats and create safety risks for aircraft due to increased wildlife activity. The participant recommended that, from a long-term planning perspective, development should be moved farther away from the river rather than closer, with improved road access used to support user needs instead.

A participant who has operated a charter business on the riverfront for 45 to 50 years expressed concern about how proposed lease language could affect long-standing non-aeronautical and legacy users. He objected to one-year leases for non-aviation users, stating this would be unfair to businesses operating there for generations and could reduce property and business value, limit the ability to sell or pass the business on, and leave leaseholders without a clear path forward. He also noted that some riverfront lease lots are currently unused and should be addressed before displacing existing users. He said he has not experienced conflicts with nearby floatplane operations and requested clearer direction if the long-term goal is to phase out uses like his so businesses can plan accordingly. Melissa explained that lease considerations are influenced by federal grant assurances requiring airport sponsors to prioritize aeronautical uses. While not new, this requirement is being considered as part of the master planning process. She acknowledged the concerns and emphasized the team's commitment to working with affected users.

A participant expressed concern that proposed floatplane-related improvements appear to target or impact existing non-aeronautical uses along the riverfront. They questioned whether current plans disproportionately affect non-aeronautical users and sought clarification on how these uses are being considered in the planning process. Melissa clarified that the identified locations for floatplane-related

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improvements are conceptual and intended to gather feedback. She explained that areas currently used for non-aeronautical purposes are being considered because, where there is aeronautical demand, the FAA requires airports to prioritize those uses. However, she emphasized that no decisions have been made, and the concepts are presented to ask for input on whether they are appropriate or workable.

Summary of Open House Conversations

Access and Safety

- Need for a gate on the southeast ramp to safely accommodate passenger drop-offs.
- Interest in safety improvements to reduce boat and floatplane conflicts, including potential warning systems and operational changes (such as limiting step taxiing in certain areas).

Riverfront Use and Environmental Considerations

- Strong interest in balancing airport development with protection of salmon habitat, wildlife, and overall river health.
- Feedback that future development should consider moving users away from the river where possible, with improved road access to support operations.
- Importance of considering recreational and quality-of-life benefits tied to the riverfront.

Floatplane Operations and Growth

- Mixed perspectives on future demand, with some noting that fishing and tourism activity may already be near capacity, potentially limiting future growth in floatplane and boating activity.
- Existing alternative locations, such as Pike Lake, were noted as important to ongoing operations, particularly during challenging conditions.

Land Use and Lease Considerations

- Questions about how non-aeronautical lease terms are determined and whether different areas should be treated differently.
- Concerns from long-term tenants about potential displacement and impacts to generational businesses and investments.
- Suggestions to explore options such as land swaps or long-term transition strategies.
- Interest in potential borough involvement in owning and operating portions of the waterfront.

Infrastructure and Utilities

- Ongoing need for water, sewer, and other utility infrastructure to support airport and waterfront uses.
- Interest in understanding existing systems, including potential use of the military water system.