

Frequently Asked Questions

ANC North/South Runway Renewal

What is the ANC North/South Runway Renewal project?

The Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC) North/South Runway Renewal project will rehabilitate the North/South Runway, widen the runway, and update taxiway geometry to meet Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards. The runway was last rehabilitated over fifteen years ago, and the pavement has met the end of its useful life. The project will also separate the North/South Runway from the East/West Runway Safety Areas (RSAs).

Why is the ANC North/South Runway Renewal project needed?

The ANC North/South Runway Renewal project is needed to improve airport efficiency and safety by replacing its aging pavement. Runway pavement deteriorates over time. The runway pavement was last updated in 2004, and inspections indicate that it needs to be replaced. In order to meet FAA standards, the runway must be widened to accommodate large aircraft already serving the airport and the geometry of the intersecting taxiways must be revised to meet current FAA requirements.

The North/South Runway is critical infrastructure for ANC. It supports the world's 5th-busiest cargo airport as well as air travel for millions of travelers. The North/South Runway reduces noise impacts to communities by allowing most departures and landings to occur over water.

When will construction start and end?

The first phase of construction began and was completed last summer (2018). The second and final phase will begin in April 2019 and finish in October 2019. In the final construction season, the runway will be fully closed 7 days per week, 24 hours per day, April through October.

Will there be more aircraft noise?

A noise study was completed that identified a temporary increase in aircraft noise over the city when the runway is closed during construction. When the project is complete, noise levels will be nearly identical to pre-construction conditions. Visit the website to view the noise maps at www.anc15-33.com.

The noise maps on the website do not represent the increase in noise that is being experienced throughout Anchorage, but rather represent the areas that normally experience noise levels of 65 DNL (Day Night Average Sound Level) and higher, which has been identified as an important threshold by FAA for incompatible land uses. The airport recognizes that the Anchorage Bowl, outside of the noise contours shown on the maps, will be experiencing increased aircraft noise during construction.

Why can't aircraft arrive from the east and take off to the west?

Aircraft cannot arrive from the east because the mountains restrict the ability of aircraft to maintain appropriate decent angles. It is also ideal that aircraft are established on final approach six miles from the airport. Additionally, the East/West runways are not designed

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for approaches from the east. They lack low-visibility instrument approaches to enable landings in poor weather, and high-speed exits, which allow aircraft to quickly exit the runway. The absence of high-speed exits requires aircraft to make a complete stop on the runway in order to make the 90-degree turn onto the taxiway. This increases the distance required between landing aircraft and reduces the efficiency of the airport.

Why can't aircraft take off to the west and arrive from the west?

When the North/South Runway is closed, aircraft will normally take off to the east rather than the west. This operating procedure is in place because the two East/West runways are closely spaced, which requires safety restrictions on how arriving and departing aircraft can operate on the runways. The minimum spacing requirements between aircraft using the runways, in general, prohibit arrivals in one direction and departures in the opposite direction. That stated, you may notice an occasional departure to the west. There will be limited times when aircraft spacing will allow a west departure, but normally this operating configuration will not be possible.

Why can't arrivals switch from 7R to 7L, and departures switch from 7L to 7R?

This mitigation measure was ruled out due to the significant reduction in airport efficiency. The arrival rate would be significantly reduced due to the required separation between 7L arrivals and 7R departures to avoid wake turbulence impacts from the departing aircraft. This operational configuration also reduces arrival rate due to the increased time for aircraft arriving at 7L to slow down and make 90-degree turns off the runway, resulting in larger gaps for approaching aircraft. This measure would also result in longer taxi time/distance to access Runway 7R for departures, and results in the loss of the 7R Category (CAT) III approach.

In the past the runway reopened at night. Why not now?

Typically, when the North/South Runway is closed for annual maintenance, it is reopened during the evening and night hours to help mitigate noise. This type of maintenance is minor, and the runway can be returned to service each evening. This year's runway renewal project's construction,

however, is much more substantial, and the runway cannot be reopened at night during reconstruction.

Window replacements under the Residential Sound Insulation Program

Window replacements were conducted in the past by the airport's Residential Sound Insulation Program (RSIP). The RSIP, funded by FAA, was completed in 2014 and is no longer active. Homes within a certain average annual noise level were eligible under that program, and owners were contacted and either signed on to the program or did not. Based on our recently completed Part 150 Noise Study, average noise levels around the airport have decreased, primarily due to newer, quieter aircraft. The Noise Study is available at <http://anc150study.com/documents/>. At this time, additional sound insulation around the Anchorage airport does not meet the minimum federal threshold.

With regard to the current North/South Runway Renewal project happening this summer, FAA considers the increase in noise to be temporary. Unfortunately, FAA does not fund sound abatement measures for temporary noise increases.

Why are airplanes flying so low? Can't they fly higher?

During the North/South Runway closure, when airplanes are departing to the east of the airport, they are not flying lower than usual. They are flying over areas to the east where residents are not used to seeing them, so they may feel closer. However, they are following FAA air space regulations and are flying at a safe height.

Will the project create more jobs?

Yes. This project is anticipated to provide hundreds of jobs over the life of the project.

Is the ANC North/South Runway going to be extended?

No, the runway will not be extended. However, the project will shift the runway to the north within the current pavement limits. The runway will be widened from 150 feet to 200 feet to meet FAA standards. All improvements will be made on existing airport property and will not physically impact the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail (Coastal Trail), Point Woronzof Road, or Point Woronzof Overlook.

Will the project affect Point Woronzof or the Coastal Trail?

There will be no physical changes to the Coastal Trail or Point Woronzof Road. Additionally, the noise modeling research indicated that, between construction seasons and once construction is complete, the noise is expected to be similar to the current level.

Will land need to be cleared north and south of the runway?

Replacing the approach lighting system will require some clearing to install the new lighting tower between the Coastal Trail and Point Woronzof Road.

Will there be travel delays during construction?

Airline passengers are not expected to experience any construction-related delays as a result of the planned, temporary runway closures. However, there may be impacts due to reduced operational capacity or certain weather conditions. Every effort is being made to minimize and address potential project impacts.

Will the changes affect aircraft operations?

There will be minor amendments to the existing Instrument Flight Procedures (IFP) for the North/South Runway at the completion of the project. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is coordinating with FAA to ensure that amended IFP are in place when the North/South Runway is reopened and construction is complete in 2019.

Will there be any change to the location of the perimeter fencing?

There are changes to the perimeter fencing north of Taxiway R and Taxiway Q. This work was included in the Taxiway R Group VI project, which was constructed in 2018.

What is the status of the Environmental Assessment document?

The Final Environmental Assessment is posted on the project website at www.anc15-33.com.

Will there be additional trucks on the road near Point Woronzof?

Construction traffic will access the airport via Point Woronzof Road and Postmark Drive.