

Edmonton City Centre Airport

Closure

Recommendation:

1. That Administration request that the Edmonton Regional Airports Authority take all of the necessary steps for full closure of the Edmonton City Centre Airport at 11:59 p.m., November 30, 2013.
2. That Administration continue to work with users of the Edmonton City Centre Airport to mitigate impacts and ease transitions, if possible.

Report Summary

On July 8, 2009, City Council approved the phased closure of the Edmonton City Centre Airport. This report, if approved, will result in the closure of the remaining runway and the full closure of the Edmonton City Centre Airport to aviation use.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the July 8, 2009, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

Phase 1 Closure of Airport Lands

1. That a phased closure of the Edmonton City Centre Airport be approved, and the City Manager negotiate with the Edmonton Regional Airport Authority to immediately amend the lease agreement to entrench the following activities as part of Phase 1 of closure:

- Immediately undertake to close runway 16-34 and adjust general aviation business activities to

accommodate a one-runway airport, with Medevac service to be maintained at this time.

- Determine the parcel of lands adjacent to runway 16-34 which can, once air services on this runway cease, be surrendered to the City.
- Conduct a Phase 2 environmental analysis on these lands as well as remediation plan.
- Work with ongoing users to mitigate impacts, ease immediate transitions and work with users to develop a suitable business plan to operate Edmonton City Centre Airport as a going concern until final closure date is determined, and ensure that upon the expiry of the current licenses in regards to scheduled air service that no renewals are negotiated.

Development of Airport Lands

2. That the City Manager immediately begin to undertake the following activities:

- Immediately begin negotiation with Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and the Province of Alberta regarding Northern Alberta Institute of Technology expansion on-site.
- Position the City of Edmonton as developer of the airport lands, with Administration to immediately begin to set out long-term visioning plans for the airport lands in their entirety, including plans for community consultation, and for an international design competition for an ecologically-advanced, transit-oriented, medium- to high-

density, mixed-use development (business and residential).
Provide process plan to Council by November 2009.

Realignment of NW (NAIT-LRT)

- Administration to submit plans for realignment of NW (NAIT)-LRT based on available access to lands currently impacted by 16-34 runway, and report to Council no later than September 2009.

Removal of Overlay Impact over Downtown

- Administration to make adjustments to the downtown plan in anticipation of immediate removal of the overlay impact over the majority of downtown, before finalizing the Municipal Development Plan/Transportation Master Plan in November 2009.

3. That prior to a final closure date being determined and as part of a Phase II, Edmonton Regional Airport Authority to have completed work with Alberta Health Services on long-term system design to facilitate Medevac operations at Edmonton International Airport (or other regional airports).

4. That a date for full and final closure of the airport will be determined by City Council during Phase II, with input from Edmonton Regional Airport Authority, at a point at which the lands are required to support the long-term land development plan and the needs of the City.

5. That once the final closure date is set in Phase II, final environmental

remediation of the remaining airport lands will occur followed by the final surrender of lands to the City following complete decommissioning of the airport.

6. That Administration immediately develop a communications strategy to inform and include relevant public audiences (including external audiences) about the impact of this decision, timelines, milestones, land development and transit impacts, as well as things that do not immediately change in order to ensure citizens, stakeholders and current airport users have easy access to complete, accurate information.

7. That the City Manager further negotiate with Edmonton Regional Airport Authority to negotiate mutually acceptable lease amendments to entrench Phase II and all aspects of the intent of this motion.

Report

On August 4, 2010, Runway 16/34 at the Edmonton City Centre Airport was closed. Runway 12/30 and associated taxiways, ramp and parking areas remain operational at the Airport.

On August 4, 2010, the Edmonton Regional Airport Authority partially surrendered a portion of the Head Lease back to the City. The City currently has an operating agreement with Edmonton Regional Airport Authority to operate the Edmonton City Centre Airport. That agreement can be terminated on short notice or by mutual agreement.

On May 16, 2012, City Council passed Bylaw 16033 – A Bylaw to adopt the City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan. The Area Redevelopment Plan provides a land use planning framework for the future development of the Edmonton City Centre Airport site.

The overarching goal of the Area Redevelopment Plan is that the site will become home to 30,000 Edmontonians living, working and learning in a sustainable community that uses 100 percent renewable energy, is carbon neutral, significantly reduces its ecological footprint, and empowers residents to pursue a range of sustainable lifestyle choices. The Area Redevelopment Plan also incorporates Transit Oriented Design principles to integrate the redevelopment area with the future LRT extension in the eastern portion of the Area Redevelopment Plan.

To facilitate the development of the Edmonton City Centre Airport Lands (“Airport”), City Council approved the expropriation of the interests in land that were inconsistent with the Area Redevelopment Plan. This included both aviation and non-aviation tenants. The City lacks the power to expropriate the federal and provincial governments and has been working with these parties to acquire their interests at the Airport through other means.

On July 25, 2013, the City filed a Certificate of Approval on title pursuant to the *Expropriation Act*. As a result, the leases and licences are now voided. Lessees and licence holders who are still on site and are inconsistent with the Area Redevelopment Plan have been asked to vacate the Airport on or before November 15, 2013.

Compensation has been or will be paid to expropriated parties pursuant to the *Expropriation Act* if they have incurred damages.

Many interests who were located on the Airport have already left. Most have relocated to the Edmonton International Airport or other nearby airports. The majority of others who remain are either moving or in the process of planning to do so.

Medevac

Alberta Health Services relocated to the Edmonton International Airport at their brand new facility on March 15, 2013, which is immediately adjacent to the brand new STARS facility.

Edmonton Regional Airport Authority

Administration has met with Edmonton Regional Airport Authority staff to discuss the procedural and physical requirements of the airport closure process. Edmonton Regional Airport Authority has advised that the closure can be effected on very short notice and that a Notice to Airmen would be issued by Nav Canada advising of the closure. A Notice to Airmen contains information concerning the establishment, condition or change in any aeronautical facility, service, procedure or hazard, the timely knowledge of which is essential to personnel dealing with flight operations.

Blatchford Redevelopment

Administration continues with the preliminary engineering design for the overall development of the site. This work includes the design of the infrastructure, including storm water management facilities, water and sanitary servicing, and roads. On-site geotechnical testing has occurred on the

non-aviation portion of the Airport. Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment testing and analysis needs to be completed for the westerly portion of the site (the active aviation portion of the Area Redevelopment Plan area) and this cannot be done while the airport is operational. Administration is also continuing to evaluate the best approach for the aggregate recycling program including the scheduling, staging and costing of the program. All of these initiatives are intended to allow for infrastructure servicing beginning in 2014. The closure of the airport is necessary to begin physical implementation of the Area Redevelopment Plan.

Policy

- *The Way We Grow*
- *The Way We Move*
- *The Way We Green*

Corporate Outcomes

The Way Ahead, City of Edmonton
Strategic Plan 2009-2018:

- Transform Edmonton's Urban Form
- Improve Edmonton's Livability

Budget/Financial Implications

Funding to decommission the Edmonton City Centre Airport was approved by Council under the Capital Budget Profile "City Centre Redevelopment Implementation" (12-02-2103).

Legal Implications

The City lacks the jurisdiction to close Runway 12/30 and cease all aviation operations at the Edmonton City Centre Airport. The City must ask Edmonton Regional Airport Authority to consult

with Transport Canada and Nav Canada and ensure compliance with all applicable Canadian Aviation Regulations in order to do so.

Justification of Recommendation

1. The Blatchford Redevelopment cannot begin until the Edmonton City Centre Airport is fully closed.
2. It is prudent and cost efficient to assist parties to make the transition from the Edmonton City Centre Airport.

Others Reviewing this Report

- L. Rosen, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer
- D. H. Edey, General Manager, Corporate Services