



PORT OF BELLINGHAM
Washington State

MEMORANDUM

TO: ROB FIX

DATE: March 19, 2019

FROM: SUNIL HARMAN 

COPIES: AIRPORT MANAGERS

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A MULTI-AGENCY LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE PORT OF BELLINGHAM, FAA, WSDOT, AND FHWA FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE PREFERRED RUNWAY SAFETY AREA IMPROVEMENT OPTION

ACTION REQUIRED

Authorize the Executive Director to execute a multi-agency Letter of Understanding (LOU) to document the preferred improvement option agreed upon with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Washington State Department of Transportation, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to achieve a compliant runway safety area (RSA) at the Bellingham International Airport (BLI).

BACKGROUND

Port staff has held meetings with FAA, WSDOT, and FHWA to discuss several options to resolve BLI's non-compliant portion of the RSA. The purpose of the LOU is to summarize the steps taken to date and document the agreed upon preferred improvement option to achieve RSA compliance to FAA standards.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impacts as funds are not associated with the LOU. An FAA grant will be applied for at a later date to fund the design, land acquisition and construction of the project.

STRATEGIC PURPOSE

The LOU supports the 2019 Strategic Budget Aviation Division objectives 1 and 3.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of action requested.

**LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN PORT OF BELLINGHAM AS OWNER AND OPERATOR OF BELLINGHAM
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (BLI), FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION,
WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND FEDERAL HIGHWAY
ADMINISTRATION.**

This Letter of Understanding (“LOU”) is signed by the Port of Bellingham (“Port”), Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”), Washington State Department of Transportation (“WSDOT”), and Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”) for the purpose described herein.

Background and Purpose

The Port, FAA, WSDOT, and FHWA (“Team”) have entered into a process to achieve compliance with congressionally mandated Runway Safety Area (“RSA”) requirements at BLI at the northeast corner of Runway 16 RSA. Currently the RSA does not meet FAA design standards, with approximately 1,700 square feet of RSA bifurcated by the WSDOT Right-of-Way (“ROW”) for the I-5 corridor. The evaluation of alternatives for compliance with RSA standards was recently completed within the airport’s Master Plan Update. The master plan’s preferred alternative is the Port’s use (either through easement or sale) of approximately 0.25 acres of the WSDOT ROW within and adjacent to the RSA and regrading of the area to meet FAA design standards. A focused study (RSA Study) has been subsequently undertaken by the Team to explore options to achieve the master plan preferred alternative. The purpose of this LOU is to summarize the RSA Study process to date and document the agreed upon preferred option to achieve RSA compliance prior to initiating an environmental analysis required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Summary of Process & Agreement to Move Forward

Section 1 Property Rights

- 1.1 Two types of property rights conveyance, a transfer of ownership or a lease of the Interstate property, was discussed at an in person workshop (Workshop #1 held on 6/1/2018). Deed transfer of ownership is considered the preferred method of property rights conveyance.

Section 2 RSA Options Development and Selection Process

- 2.1 The options development, refinement and selection process consisted of two in person workshops (Workshop #2 held on 12/05/2018 & Workshop #3 held on 01/17/2019) and one teleconference (Preferred Option Selection Meeting held on 02/14/2019). Each member of the Team attended the workshops and teleconference. Options were developed, modified and refined based on comments made by the Team during each workshop, as well as, during independent review sessions. Each option was evaluated based on safety, construction impacts, cost, required maintenance and constructability. Options were eliminated from consideration when the Team concluded that the option could not satisfy the evaluation items.

Section 3 Options Considered

- 3.1 Six options were developed by the Team for the selection process. Below is a description of each option considered.
 - 3.1.1 **Option 1:** Earthen Embankment Only with the Restricted Access Road inside the RSA
 - 3.1.2 **Option 2:** Earthen Embankment Only with the Restricted Access Road outside the RSA

- 3.1.3 **Option 3:** Retaining Wall with & without Concrete Barrier/Guardrail and Restricted Access Road inside the RSA
- 3.1.4 **Option 4:** Retaining Wall with Concrete Barrier/Guardrail and Restricted Access Road inside the RSA
- 3.1.5 **Option 5:** Retaining Wall & Embankment with & without Concrete Barrier/Guardrail and Restricted Access Road inside the RSA
- 3.1.6 **Option 6:** Retaining Wall & Embankment with Concrete Barrier/Guardrail and Restricted Access Road outside the RSA

Section 4 Option Evaluation and Selection

4.1 The six options were evaluated by the Team based on the criteria outline in Section 2. Below is a short description of the Team's evaluation during Workshops #2 & #3 and the Preferred Option Selection Meeting.

4.1.1 Workshop #2 Evaluation

- (1) **Option 4:** Removed from consideration due to safety concerns over the proximity of the Restricted Access Road and Sound Bound I-5.
- (2) **Option 6:** Removed from consideration due to safety concerns over the proximity of the Restricted Access Road and Sound Bound I-5.
- (3) **Options 1, 2, 3, & 5:** Refine grading for remaining options and refine barriers for Options 2, 3 & 5.

4.1.2 Workshop #3 Evaluation

- (1) **Option 3:** Removed from consideration due to the impacts during construction, high cost, required maintenance and poor constructability.
- (2) **Option 5:** Removed from consideration due to the impacts during construction, high cost, required maintenance and poor constructability.
- (3) **Option 1:** Refine design with one-way restricted access road at the crossing of the RSA.
- (4) **Option 2:** Adjust Restricted Access Road to allow one-way traffic at RSA to provide additional clear distance between the access road and South Bound I-5.

4.1.3 Preferred Option Meeting Evaluation

- (1) **Option 2:** Removed from consideration due to safety concerns over the proximity and lack of vertical separation of the Restricted Access Road and Sound Bound I-5.

4.1.4 Selection of the Preferred Option

- (1) **Option 1:** Selected as the preferred option by the Team. Option 1 provided the maximum safety of the considered options, while providing ease of constructability and minimum construction impacts, construction costs and required maintenance.

Section 5 Team Representatives and Notices

- 5.1 Port's Representative, Sunil Harman, will be the point of contact for Port in all matters requiring Port's participation under this LOU. Mr. Harman's e-mail address is: SunilH@portofbellingham.com and his telephone number is (360) 676-2500 Ext. 378.
- 5.2 FAA's Representative, Karen Miles, will be the point of contact for FAA in all matters requiring FAA's participation under this LOU. Ms. Miles's e-mail address is: Karen.Miles@faa.gov and her telephone number is (206) 231-4133.
- 5.3 WSDOT's Representative, Jay Drye, will be the point of contact for WSDOT in all matters requiring WSDOT's participation under this LOU. Mr. Drye's e-mail address is: DryeJ@wsdot.wa.gov and his telephone number is (360) 757-5990.

5.4 FHWA's Representative, Jeffrey Horton, will be the point of contact for FHWA in all matters requiring FHWA's participation under this LOU. Mr. Horton's e-mail address is: Jeff.Horton@dot.gov and his telephone number is 360-753-9411.

This LOU has been signed by each Team representative on the date(s) set forth below.

Port of Bellingham

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Title)

(Date Signed)

Federal Highway Administration

DocuSigned by:
Jeffrey L Horton

(Signature) DD385B4E3...

Jeffrey L Horton

(Printed Name)

Area Engineer

(Title)

3/11/2019

(Date Signed)

Federal Aviation Administration

DocuSigned by:
Karen Miles

(Signature) BC18BB4EF...

Karen Miles

(Printed Name)

Project Manager

(Title)

3/8/2019

(Date Signed)

Washington State Department of Transportation

DocuSigned by:
Jay Drye

(Signature) 55F5340C...

Jay Drye

(Printed Name)

Assitant Regional Administrator

(Title)

3/8/2019

(Date Signed)