

Lance

Hello, my name is Lance Vanderbeck, the Airport Director for the Newport Municipal Airport. We wanted to give you an update on the Obstruction Removal project that will be happening at and around the airport.

Airports are required by FAA to maintain airspace, on and off airport property, free of obstructions for approaching and departing aircraft. Airspace consists of imaginary surfaces that are established to protect planes that are either landing or taking off. The airspace that needs to be maintained is established based on several variables such as type of aircraft using the runway and if the runway uses instrument or visual approach.

During the first phase of the project, existing and future obstructions that intruded into all of the airspace surfaces were identified. The number of trees and property owners affected was significant. It was determined that removing off of these trees was no feasible. As a result, the City and FAA evaluated the Federal Aviation Regulations to determine the airspace requirements in order to meet our National and Regional airport designation. Additionally, the City and FAA looked at was reasonable from a cost perspective.

The City and FAA have mutually agreed that obstructions should be removed in order to maintain:

- The precision instrument approach for Runway end 16,
- The non-precision instrument approach for Runway end 34, and
- The visual approach for Runway end 20.

Focusing on these approach surfaces has greatly reduce the number of trees that would need to be removed and the number of trees removed on private property.

For Runway end 16, only one tree is proposed to be removed that is on private property, the rest is on City owned property.

For Runway end 34, the majority of the tree removal would occur on City property. However, trees identified as obstructions that need to be removed are also located on five private properties.

For Runway 20 end, trees would be removed from City property and from one private property.

The next phase of the project is to evaluate the potential impacts from the tree removal within the approach surfaces. The City has contracted with Environmental Science Associates to conduct this evaluation.

Susan

During the first phase of the project, technical studies were completed for the larger study area. For the field studies we only accessed properties where the City received rights of entry. The field surveys were completed in February 2020.

In November 2020, FAA and the City decided that only trees within the approach surfaces would be removed. This has greatly reduced the number of trees to be removed and the study area to be evaluated. Since the removal of the trees is being funded by the FAA, the potential impacts to the environment need to be assessed under the National Environmental Policy Act. Over the next several months, we will be evaluating potential impacts to the following categories:

- Air quality
- Biological resources
- Climate
- Coastal resources
- Historic and cultural resources
- Land use
- Noise
- Socioeconomics
- Visual effects, and
- Water resources

This evaluation will be presented in an Environmental Assessment document that will be made available to the public to review and provide comments on during a public comment period. During that public comment period, we will also be holding another public meeting to discuss the results of the assessment. At this time, we expect to have the assessment completed and available in April 2022.

From our previous outreach on the project, we have heard concerns regarding:

- Noise,
- Visual impacts,
- Erosion, and
- Colonization of invasive plant species like Scotchbroom

These topics will be evaluated and measures to address them included in assessment. Additionally, we will be working with the regulatory agencies to address their issues and concerns and ensure that we are in compliance with local, state and federal regulations.

We would now like to open up the meeting to questions or comments.