

Runway Safety Area Improvements at Allegheny County Airport (AGC)

In 2021, we (the Allegheny County Airport Authority) will begin an Environmental Assessment of potential improvements to the Runway Safety Area (RSA) of Runway 10-28 at AGC. The analysis team, including engineering and environmental professionals, is studying the feasibility of several different options, which will be published for public review and comment.

An RSA enhances the safety of aircraft that undershoot, overrun, or otherwise leave the paved runway surface, and the airport must keep the RSA cleared, graded, drained, and accessible by firefighting and rescue equipment¹. RSA standards are defined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). For Runway 10-28, the RSA should extend 1,000 feet from the departure end of the runway and 500 feet from the centerline along the runway's length. FAA works with airports to find alternative solutions if land is not available or if existing obstacles make a standard RSA impossible. FAA regularly evaluates standard and non-standard RSAs and requires incremental improvements as applicable.

A standard RSA for Runway 10-28 at the Allegheny County Airport is not feasible. The RSA has been determined by previous studies and airport master plans to be 793 feet short on the eastern end, 1000 feet short on the western end, and, in some areas, steeper than

the FAA standards. There is also development around the runway that cannot be reasonably relocated, such as Lebanon Road (State Highway 885) and the railroad, Lebanon Church Road (State Highway 148), the landfill, or housing developments. Since the late 1990s, we have regularly revisited alternatives or new technologies to maintain and improve aircraft safety in this area. Several properties, such as the West Mifflin Motors, were relocated as the community has worked toward RSA safety standards.

At this time, we are studying potential combinations of solutions, such as placing fill material (clean dirt or stone) in some areas along the RSA on airport property and at both ends of the Runway 10-28. To correct the slope at this end, we may install a retaining wall or extend the fill over the landfill. We are also considering the installation of an Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS) at both ends of the runway.



Current standard RSA deficits for Runway 10-28 are highlighted in red.

STAY CONNECTED!

We will hold a public workshop to gather comments and recommendations regarding the project. Find more information about the project and the public meeting date at

www.flypittsburgh.com/allegheny-county-airport/

ESTIMATED PROJECT TIMELINE:

1

Dec 2020 to April 2021

Conduct geotechnical field survey and alternatives analysis.

2

Spring - Fall 2021

Conduct biological field surveys and environmental impacts analysis. Document findings in Draft EA.

3

Winter 2021

Hold public workshop and open public comment period on Draft EA.

4

Winter 2021

Revise draft EA as necessary to address public comments.

5

Early 2022

FAA reviews Final EA and issues environmental determination.

6

To Be Determined

If potential project impacts are determined to be not significant, begin project design and construction.

An **Environmental Assessment (EA)** is required under the **U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** to determine whether a federal action has the potential to cause significant environmental effects, such as adverse impacts to air or water quality, biological resources, or human communities and economics.² The FAA has developed procedures for implementing NEPA that are specific to FAA's mission.³

An **Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS)** uses crushable, lightweight material placed at the end of a runway to stop an aircraft that overruns the runway.⁴ The tires of the aircraft sink in and the aircraft is decelerated. To date, the FAA has approved EMAS for over 1,000 runway ends at more than 500 commercial airports.

REFERENCES

- 1 FAA 2012. Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5300-13A, https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/150-5300-13A-chg1-interactive-201612.pdf
- 2 EPA, 2021. NEPA Review Process. <https://www.epa.gov/nepa/national-environmental-policy-act-review-process>
- 3 FAA, 2020. Order 1050.1F - Policies and Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts. https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/apl/environ_policy_guidance/policy/faq_nepa_order/
- 4 FAA, 2020. Fact Sheet - Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS). https://www.faa.gov/news/fact_sheets/news_story.cfm?newsId=13754



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