

1. Airport Open House June 28, 2023

Taxiway F Relocation Project and West Development Area Comments

My understanding is the impetus for altering the Los Alamos airport is Taxiway F is 145 feet from the runway centerline, which is 5 feet too near per FAA standards.

I presume FAA standards were created for runways that allow landings in both directions. LAM is very unusual in that the runway is restricted to one way only. [No aircraft may land on Runway 9 (which entails dangerously low flight over the townsite).] Taxiway F is near the end of the runway used for takeoff, not landing. In my opinion (former USAF F-4 pilot; have flown Cessnas into and from LAM) the current situation (i.e., Taxiway F is 5 feet closer to the runway centerline than FAA standard) is not potentially dangerous for an aircraft during takeoff, so the County does not need to change anything. The 2013 Airport Master Plan [page 4-17] states, "Any penetration of the FAR Part 77 surfaces, such as is the case with the transitional surface, is considered an obstruction to air navigation. An obstruction is not necessarily a hazard to air navigation which would require immediate mitigation."

If the County is determined to change Taxiway F, then another option should be considered. Remove the existing hangars along Taxiway F and widen Taxiway F by 10 feet toward the north. (Substantial aircraft parking already exists south of the runway, so replacement hangars are not essential.)

I see that Los Alamos County is seeking the return of a rental car agency at the airport. Options 2-4 all tremendously reduce the parking lot size. Did any of the Options make allowance (parking, etc.) for the return of a rental car agency?

In my opinion Options 2-4 are all bad. None meet FAA standards (per 2013 report page 4-19, "The runway taxiway separation distance increases from 150 feet to 240 feet.") for an airport with a commuter airline operating a Cessna Caravan (which did occur at LAM in the past). All require increased snow removal, increased pavement maintenance/repair/replacement, and hence increased annual operating costs.

L. A. Hiteman, Jr.

[REDACTED]

2. Fairly easy to understand plans. I would say do what satisfies long term objective

Option 1 – For Sure. Option 2 - Maybe. Options 3a, 3b, 4 - No.

Options, 3b, 4 only adds the hangar that option 1 offers. Option 3a adds new hangars but only large hangars which would make one have to have hangar mates. Must have hangar ready for lots evicted from west hangar.

-Owner of hangar 6W

Jim Shinas

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3. I would maximize the net aircraft storage gain, but the retaining walls in option 2 may not be worth the extra costs in order to be able to accommodate only 3 more aircraft than option 3a. It is my vote/recommendation is option 3a

Audrey Sinclair Marroquin
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

4. Aircraft maintenance hangar is needed ASAP, i.e. in Phase Option 1

Robert Gibson
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

5. Option 2 if implemented overtime could cost less than 3a-4 up front while allowing for future expansions

Jared Haney

6. EMAS at end of RWY 27, as far as fuel farm, is the any consideration to obtaining a fueling truck? Say a large aircraft, used Smith's CEO that comes in, they wouldn't be able to maneuver around a self serve tank. If the possibility of more aircraft on property, a fueling truck would be a great asset as well. Pricing on fuel has to be competitive as pilots who are part of CCN network, they would go elsewhere for fuel if we are overpriced

7. I am part owner of a hangar at the airport, housing Mooney N6441Q. I am also secretary of EAA Chapter 691. I am writing to echo Will Fox's comments about the proposed airport development:

I would like to see Chapter 691 in a 60x60 hangar. That would give the chapter space for a couple of aircraft projects, a tool bin, a work area for its STEM activities, and a little bit of office space with a spot for a simulator. There is definitely a demand for more hangar space at the airport. I would like to see the hangars on the North Development area built with private funds. I think a mix of small (single aircraft) and medium (2-3 aircraft) size box hangars makes the most sense. I also like the idea of most of the hangars lined up East to West facing the runway because it is fun to see the coming and going of aircraft, people keep their hangar doors open in nice weather, and it creates more of a sense of community at the airport.

Pierre Levy, Esq.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

8. Dear Bobbi,

I apologize for not being present at the public meeting to provide my thoughts in public, but we have had plans to travel to the northwest this summer and we were out of town. I hope to be back for your presentation to Avgas on the 12th.

I am providing a pdf of my comments on the plan to relocate Taxiway F and to add additional hanger space. I think that the present County management (yourself excluded because you have not been the Airport Manager long enough to see the negative direction the airport is heading in) is not acting in the interest of the community but is trying to further increase County revenue and County employment by virtue of that plan. Further, I think the County should exhaust all means at their disposal to avoid impacting the owners of the 'old' hangers, of which I am one. If that means explaining the unusual situation to the FAA and asking them for a waiver or exception to bureaucratic requirements that don't really apply to our situation, that should be done first.

The pilot community at Los Alamos has tried to keep costs low enough to make flying as affordable as possible. Those efforts include running a fueling co-op business and allowing pilots to own the hanger superstructure which sits atop leased space from the County. Pilots (myself included) justify buying a hanger because they know (or knew) when they quit flying, that hanger (and often the aircraft parked in that hanger) could be sold to another pilot for essentially the price they paid for it. In the past that led to an active and increasing pilot population.

With the County now buying hangers as they come up for sale, personal ownership and resale is no longer available. As you know, one of the most important economic issues in flying is the hourly cost of flying. I have a Mooney 201 located in one of the old hangers and that cost (including hanger cost) is \$225/Hr dry for 100 Hrs of operation. If instead of paying the annual fee for the space and owning the hanger, that cost would increase by \$48/Hr. That cost is substantial and acts as an inhibition to new pilots because they know that the cost of owning an aircraft is so high.

There has been a need for hanger space at Los Alamos, and I applaud the effort to get new T-Hangers. However, it is possible that there is not enough demand for additional hanger space given the pilot population decline over the past few years. As I point out in my comments, the County needs a new study of aircraft activity as the one being used to justify relocating Taxiway F is now 10 years old and aviation activity in Los Alamos has declined substantially since then.

We are now in the edge of the Olympic Mountains with a somewhat poor internet connection, but please feel free to contact me on my cell phone if you want to discuss my comments further before your meeting with the Transportation Board. My phone number is 505-412-2838.

Comments on the proposed FAA major project proposal for relocating Taxiway F.

This proposal is being submitted based on an incorrect conclusion that relocating Taxiway F is necessary to satisfy a rumored long-standing FAA safety request to eliminate the need for aircraft departing the Los Alamos Airport to taxi west (backtaxi) on runway 9 to reach the end

of the runway. The basis for the conclusion is that aircraft must backtaxi because Taxiway F is not wide enough for aircraft to use it to reach the end of runway and is located too close to the runway for adequate separation and therefore creates an unsafe situation. That conclusion is incorrect and I want to explain why.

First, Taxiway F can be used by all private aircraft presently based in Los Alamos, eliminating the need for nearly all aircraft to backtaxi. Further, operations near the runway along Taxiway F are low-speed because of the County requirement that takeoffs must be to the east and landings to the west. The present arrangement is demonstrably safe because it has been in place for over 50 years with no safety incidents or accidents caused by the location of Taxiway F. This includes the time period when both CARCO and Ross aviation were providing commercial service every two hours to Albuquerque. With commercial airline service now available in Santa Fe, it is generally recognized that there will be no commercial service to Los Alamos involving aircraft as large as the ones previously in use.

Second, transient aircraft larger than those based at Los Alamos have no need to backtaxi. Large transient aircraft must park in front of the terminal. There is a wide taxiway on the south side of the runway and that taxiway (Taxiway D) meets FAA requirements for runway separation and width. To avoid having to backtaxi on Runway 9, aircraft too large to use Taxiway F should be directed to use caution and cross the runway to use Taxiway D. This reduces even further the concern for a runway incident or accident because pilots crossing the runway can see both ends of the runway and determine for themselves if it is safe to cross the runway (just as we do when crossing a street in an automobile or on foot).

Third, there may be a good reason why the FAA is insistent on relocating Taxiway F, as follows. The County prohibits landing to the east on Runway 9. That means that ground operations on Taxiway F and on the nearby runway are low speed. Aircraft both on the runway and Taxiway F are moving at speeds slow enough that they can easily stop to avoid an incident or accident. Landing aircraft are similarly either stopped or moving slowly before reaching the start of Taxiway F. To my knowledge, the FAA does not recognize the County Ordinance and has designated Los Alamos as a two-way airport, meaning that they expect aircraft to be landing on Runway 9 and therefore moving at high speed near taxiway F, which is not the case. If the county has not already done so, it should formally notify the FAA of the one-way nature of operations at the Los Alamos Airport and request a waiver or exception based on the information in this document. Instead of expending taxpayer funds and displacing hanger owners, the county should formally make a petition to the FAA for an exemption to the regulations, which to my knowledge has never been done.

Proposals for airport improvement funding from the FAA and State of New Mexico are likely based on projections from a ten-year old airport study. That study is badly out of date regarding the projected number of airport operations, air-taxi operations, and number of aircraft based on the airport, and therefore very likely the classification of the airport. Before submitting a proposal to the FAA based on potentially misleading information, the County should commission a new study of airport use and use those results for submitting proposals or for accepting funding, including already approved funding such as that from the State of New Mexico for relocated and expanded aviation fueling facilities.

In summary,

- 1) There is no justifiable reason for relocating Taxiway F based on reasonable alternatives and the historical safety record.
- 2) If not already done, the County should formally notify the FAA of the one-way operation at Los Alamos and use that to request a safety waiver or exception.
- 3) The proposal under consideration and others already submitted should be reconsidered after data based on up-to-date airport operations and an updated airport designation are determined.

Paul Lisowski

9. Hi Bobbi, Thanks again for the presentation of the Los Alamos Airport Development plan. Here are my comments.

I would like to see the hangars on the North Development area built with private funds, They will be less expensive and get built quicker that way and private hangars reduce the cost of flying when compared to renting hangars. I think a mix of small (single aircraft) and medium (2-3 aircraft) size box hangars makes the most sense (in other words a combination of Option 3A and 3B). I also like the idea of most of the hangars lined up East to West facing the runway because, people tend to keep their hangar doors open in nice weather when they are out at the airport, and it is fun to see the coming and going of aircraft from those hangars, plus it creates more of a sense of community at the airport. I think the airport will have plenty of T-hangars after the next set of eight are built and considering that a large number of the existing T-hangars are owned by pilots that will be getting out of flying due to their age in the next 5 to 10 years.

There needs to be a phased construction plan for the Development that allows new hangars to be built before the Western hangars are removed. This will give the owners of the Western hangars an opportunity to build a new hangar if they want or to move into an existing T-hangar if that works for them. I think the County should give the hangar owners who will have to move an incentive to do so above and beyond simply purchasing their hangar. The cost of building a new hangar will certainly exceed the value of their current hangar and their cost of flying will go up. Some possibilities to consider would be reducing the cost of the ground lease or a reduction in the rental fee for a certain period of time.

As the president of EAA Chapter 691 I would like to see the Chapter own one of those 60'x60' hangars. We plan to be here for the long run and owning a hangar would reduce our operating costs. A hangar that size would enable us to work on more than one aircraft at once and also have plenty of working space for our Workshop and STEM activities. It would also give us room for our Tool Crib (which is currently in Skip's hangar) and a small office space for our computers, documents, and records, as well as a Flight Simulator.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Will Fox

10. Hello Bobbi, Juan, and other PWD contacts,

After the presentation and comprehensive question responses from the July 6th Transportation Board meeting, I have determined I see no reason LAC should not pursue relocation of Taxiway F. If the FAA has determined this is a priority and is going to provide 90% of the project costs (with NMDOT-AD likely contribute another 5%), it would be fiscally irresponsible to pass up this opportunity.

As for the option to choose, I prefer options 2 or 3A for providing the most potential use (and I was not convinced of any value for attempting to accommodate a corporate hangar/jet capacity).

I appreciate the opportunity to learn more about the airport situation as well as all the question responses.

Thank you,

Michael Dolejsi

Transportation Board Vice Chair