EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Morristown in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as the Lead Federal Agency has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Morristown Municipal Airport Runway 5-23 Rehabilitation Project. This document is intended to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, commonly referred to as NEPA.

This project proposes to address existing deficiencies in the aging infrastructure and bring the Airport closer to compliance with FAA safety and design guidelines. The Proposed Action includes the following elements:

- Runway 5-23 Pavement Rehabilitation
- Runway 5-23 Runway Safety Area Grading and Drainage Improvements
- Glide Slope Critical Area Stabilization Grading and Drainage Improvements
- Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System (MALSR) with Runway Alignment Indicatory System Replacement
- Runway 5 Departure End Extended Runway Safety Area Improvements
- Runway 23 Departure End Extended Runway Safety Area Improvements
- Taxiway E Relocation
- Drainage System and Outfall Replacement
- Connector Taxiway and Fillet Construction
- Runway and Taxiway Lighting Rehabilitation and Replacement
- Runway 13-31 Runway Safety Area Improvements

Federal and state interagency coordination meetings have been held periodically since commencement of the project to provide these officials with the opportunity to identify issues and concerns they believe should be addressed. A Public Workshop to present the project and receive public input was held on January 15, 2014 prior to the commencement of the preparation of the Draft EA. The Workshop was advertised in a newspaper of local circulation and notice of the Workshop was mailed to the elected and appointed officials throughout the region. Further details and the presentation materials are enclosed in Appendix C.

The public-at-large were given the opportunity to review this document as per U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Order 4600.13. The Draft EA was available to the public beginning on January 5, 2015. The Notice of Availability (NOA) was published in newspapers of local and regional circulation as well as mailed to the elected and appointed officials throughout the region. The NOA also informed the public of the Public Workshop held on January 14, 2015. The workshop occurred within the 30-day comment period of the Draft EA. Comments received during the 30-day period are enclosed and addressed in Appendix C.
If the potential impacts identified herein do not appear to be adverse or are such that they can be mitigated to a level below established significant impact thresholds, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) may be issued by the FAA. Otherwise, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required to determine the Proposed Action’s effect on the environment. The public will be given a 30 day public comment period to review and provide comments on the Draft EA. Substantive comments received will be addressed in the Final EA.

BACKGROUND

The Airport is owned by the Town of Morristown and operated by DM AIRPORTS, LTD. The majority of the Airport property is situated in the Township of Hanover, with a small portion of the property located in the Borough of Florham Park. The Airport is used by general aviation users, corporate aircraft and helicopters in the NY/NJ Metropolitan area. The Airport also provides community services for medical facilities, as many hospitals in the region use the Airport to transport patients, medical samples and human organs for transplants to various locations throughout the U.S.

The two runways on the Airport include Runway 5-23 and Runway 13-31. Runway 5-23 is the primary runway and Runway 13-31 is the crosswind runway. Runway 5-23 accommodates the majority of aircraft operations. The proposed improvements are necessary to address existing infrastructure deficiencies throughout Runway 5-23 that have been identified through past studies. These studies include:

- Master Plan Update (MPU) (2013)
- Runway 5-23 Feasibility Study Phase I (August 2012)
- Runway 5-23 Feasibility Study Phase II (May 2013)
- Runway Safety Area Determination (June 2013)
- Pavement Condition Index Assessment (2013)
- Preliminary Engineering Report (June 2014)

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

This EA for the Runway 5-23 Rehabilitation Project covers numerous project elements as previously denoted in the MPU, Phase I and Phase II Feasibility Studies, and the Runway Safety Area Determination. These various project elements were combined to form the Proposed Action. Each project element and its alternatives – including runway paving, drainage system, taxiway relocation, etc. – were evaluated on an individual basis.

A set of evaluation criteria was developed to provide consistent assessments of each project alternative throughout the review process. The criteria included the following:

- **Purpose and Need:** Does the alternative meet the purpose and need of the project?
• **Environmental Effects:** What are the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the alternative? Does the alternative avoid or minimize and mitigate environmental effects?

• **FAA Standards:** Does the alternative meet the design standards of FAA Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, *Airport Design*, and others, to the maximum extent feasible?

• **Community Impact:** What are the potential community impacts associated with implementation of the alternative? Does the alternative avoid or minimize and mitigate community impacts?

• **Operational Flexibility:** To what extent does this alternative allow for operational flexibility and efficiency during construction? To what extent does this alternative allow for operational flexibility and efficiency after project completion? In this instance the ratings for “during construction” and “after construction” were weighed equally when determining overall flexibility.

• **Development Cost:** Does the alternative have reasonable development costs in comparison to other alternatives that achieve the same goal? This is a qualitative assessment based on proposed actions.

Each of the evaluation factors above was given a scoring value as follows:

- **Purpose and Need:** Yes, No, Partial
- **Environmental Effects:** None, Minor, Large, Significant, Positive
- **FAA Standards:** Yes, No, Partial
- **Community Impact:** None, Minor, Large, Significant
- **Operational Flexibility:** Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent
- **Development Cost:** None, Low, Medium, High

Thus, alternatives were compared using both qualitative and quantitative criteria. The recommended alternative was selected based on its ability to best meet those measures as compared to other options. A summary of the preferred alternatives for each element of the Runway 5-23 Rehabilitation Project evaluated in this EA are presented in *Table ES-1 Summary of Preferred Alternatives.* These alternatives make up the Proposed Action.
### Table ES-1 Summary of Preferred Alternatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Element</th>
<th>Preferred Alternative</th>
<th>Purpose and Need</th>
<th>Environmental Effects</th>
<th>FAA Standards</th>
<th>Community Impact</th>
<th>Operational Flexibility*</th>
<th>Development Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Runway 5-23 Pavement</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glide Slope</td>
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<tr>
<td>MALSR</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taxiway E</td>
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<td>None</td>
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</table>

* During and Post-Construction

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

The primary environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action are permanent and temporary impacts to wetlands and floodplains and temporary construction phase impacts.

The Proposed Action would permanently affect 58,100 square feet (1.3 acres) of jurisdictional wetlands [and temporarily affect 30,600 square feet (0.70 acres) of wetlands]. All wetlands and waters affected by the Proposed Action are subject to
regulation under the New Jersey Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act and Rules, administered by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). These impacts would be mitigated based upon NJDEP rules.

The Flood Hazard Control Act and Rules address the minimization of flooding impacts as the result of uncontrolled development, flood storage displacement, or net fill. For the Proposed Action, the net cut and fill volumes were estimated based on the Flood Hazard Area (FHA) design flood elevation of 182.75 and current topographic mapping. Results of the analysis indicate the Proposed Action would not displace any flood storage volume, but would provide approximately 41,500 cubic yards of flood storage volume credit.

Construction activities during the construction phase of this project are anticipated to have localized effects on the built and natural environment in the immediate areas of construction as well as short duration impacts to the Airport’s operations. Effects resulting from construction activity are anticipated in the following areas:

- Air Quality
- Wetlands
- Hazardous Materials
- Air Traffic/Airport Operations
- Noise
- Water Quality

In general, Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be utilized to assure that construction impacts are minimized to the extent practicable. Possible construction effects are briefly described below.

**Air Quality** - Construction activity may have some adverse temporary effect on ambient air quality, primarily in the area immediately adjacent to the area of disturbance. Construction activity would result in the short-term emission of air pollutants originating from fugitive dust and as the by-product of construction equipment fuel combustion.

**Wetlands** - Temporary and permanent wetland impacts are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action and would be approved as part of an extensive permit process and mitigation based upon NJDEP regulations. However, construction activities often cause unanticipated temporary direct and indirect impacts. Although the potential for temporary construction impacts to wetlands is very low, measures would be taken to minimize the possibility of impacts through the use of appropriate construction practices.

**Hazardous Materials** - Historic fill is located throughout the project site with some areas of fill containing contaminants at concentrations that would require special handling and disposal in accordance with NJDEP regulations. During construction, an environmental professional would be on-site in order to manage any encounters with soil conditions that were not previously identified. In addition, BMPs such as silt fence,
plastic sheeting and upland dewatering pits would be implemented during construction to minimize potential migration of the historic fill contaminants to adjacent non-fill areas.

**Air Traffic / Airport Operations** - As a result of the proposed construction activities, several closures to pavements throughout the construction period are anticipated to lead to variations in air traffic and operations. As portions of runways, as well as entire runways, are reduced in length or closed during the construction period, some aircraft that currently utilize Airport on a regular basis are anticipated to temporarily relocate and utilize other nearby airports during these construction periods. Construction activities would be carefully coordinated with tenants, operations, and the contractor(s). Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) would be issued by Airport management as needed. The construction site would be marked and barricaded in accordance with current FAA standards.

**Noise** - As the number of aircraft operations is anticipated to fluctuate during the construction phases there has been consideration to temporary aircraft noise during these phases as a result of the relocated thresholds on Runway 5-23 and increased operations on Runway 13-31. There are four time periods during the construction phasing where aircraft operations would be impacted due to limited runway availability. Each of these four time periods has been modeled to assess potential impact utilizing the factors presented in Section 5.12.

Based on this analysis, and the noise contours depicted in **Figures 5-1 through 5-4** considering operations during the phased construction of the Proposed Action, it can be concluded that the Proposed Action does not result in a significant noise impact during any phases of construction.

**Water Quality** - Short-term construction impacts would be minimized by strict adherence to erosion and sediment control procedures throughout the multi-year construction process. The minimum design standards for erosion control, as established under the *Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act* (N.J.S.A. 4:24-39) would be addressed during the final design phase with the development of a detailed schedule for the phasing and implementation of BMPs.

**REQUIRED PERMITS**

The federal, state and local actions and permits that are likely to be required are listed below.

- NJDEP Individual Wetlands Permit
- NJDEP Individual Flood Hazard Area Permit and Hardship Waiver
- NJDEP Stormwater Management Compliance including Request for Authorization as per NJPDES General Permit No. NJG0088323 Construction Activity Stormwater (5G3).
- NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands Letter of Interpretation
- Morris County Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Certification

Additional permits, such as dewatering or Beneficial Soil Reuse, may be required based upon the final design of the project and the contractor’s methods of construction.

**PLANNED TIMEFRAME**

The following is the planned timeframe required to implement the Proposed Action. This timeframe is subject to available funding.

2014-2015: Complete NEPA EA

2015-2016: Complete Engineering Design

2015-2016: Obtain Regulatory Permits

2017: Construction Begins