

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
WESTERN-PACIFIC REGION  
Phoenix Airports District Office

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***FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT***

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**Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport  
Proposed New Airport Traffic Control Tower**

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport Authority  
Mesa, Maricopa County, Arizona



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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

**WHAT'S IN THIS DOCUMENT?** This document is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed New Airport Traffic Control Tower at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (IWA) in the City of Mesa, Maricopa County, Arizona (Proposed Action). This document is based on the information and analysis contained in the Final Environmental Assessment dated November 2017, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

This document discusses all alternatives considered by FAA in reaching its decision, summarizes the analysis used to evaluate the alternatives, and summarizes why the Proposed Action will not significantly affect environmental resources. This document identifies conceptual mitigation measures that are part of the preferred alternative.

**BACKGROUND.** In October 2017, the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport Authority (PMGAA) prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) for the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action includes construction of a new Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT), connecting utilities, lighting, and Navigational Aids control lines to the proposed ATCT, moving equipment to the new ATCT, and demolition of the existing ATCT. The Draft EA addressed the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action including various reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action.

The Draft EA was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 USC § 4321 *et seq.*), implementing regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), FAA Order 1050.1F *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, and FAA Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*. The PMGAA published the Notice of Availability for the Draft EA on October 19, 2017. The PMGAA received comments on the Draft EA between October 19, 2017 and November 20, 2017. FAA approved the Final EA on November 29, 2017.

**WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?** Read the FONSI to understand the actions that FAA intends to take relative to the Proposed Action.

**WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THIS?** The PMGAA may begin to implement the Proposed Action.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**PROPOSED NEW AIRPORT TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER**

**PHOENIX-MESA GATEWAY AIRPORT  
MESA, MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA**

- 1. Introduction.** This document is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Finding of No Significant Impact on the environment in connection with the proposed construction of a new Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT), connecting utilities, lighting, and Navigational Aids control lines to the proposed ATCT, moving equipment to the new ATCT, and demolition of the existing ATCT at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (IWA), City of Mesa, Maricopa County, Arizona (Proposed Action). This document has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 USC Section 4321, *et seq.*), implementing regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, and FAA Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*.

The PMGAA is the owner and operator of IWA. The FAA must comply with NEPA requirements before taking the federal action of approving those portions of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) that depict the Proposed Action at IWA.

- 2. Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action.** As discussed in Section 1.3 of the Final EA, the purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide an ATCT capable of allowing personnel to see, monitor, communicate with, and direct operations at IWA, as well as provide the necessary utilities and infrastructure to operate the ATCT. The existing tower has become antiquated over time. The tower has been maintained the last 20 years well enough to continue its operation but does not provide adequate line of sight to runway ends 30R and 30C and the area around Runway end 12R and Taxiway F. In addition, the tower cab is not currently compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the existing ATCT faces other issues with electrical, mechanical, and structural systems.

The FAA's statutory mission is to ensure the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace in the United States. Pursuant to the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended, (49 USC Section 40101, *et seq.*), FAA must ensure that the Proposed Action does not derogate the safety of aircraft and airport operations at the Airport.

- 3. Proposed Project and Federal Actions.** The Proposed Action, as described in Section 1.4 of the Final EA, includes the following components:
- Construct a new ATCT;
  - Connect utilities, airfield control lighting, and Navigational Aids (NAVAID) control lines to the proposed tower, move equipment to the new ATCT; and,
  - Demolish the existing ATCT.

The federal actions include:

- Unconditional approval of the portion of the ALP that depicts the proposed construction of the ATCT and removal of the existing ATCT pursuant to 49 USC §47107(a)(16).
- Approval of project design, and a Construction Safety and Phasing Plan, as applicable, to maintain aviation and airfield safety during construction pursuant to FAA Advisory Circular 150/5370-2F, *Operation Safety on Airports during Construction* (49 USC 44706).

- Determination of eligibility for federal assistance for the proposed construction of an ATCT under Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, as amended (49 USC 47101 *et. seq.*).

- 4. Reasonable Alternatives Considered.** As described in Chapter 2 of the Final EA, alternatives to the Proposed Action were identified and evaluated using site selection criteria as defined in FAA Order 6480.4A. The FAA, utilizing the Airport Facilities Terminal Integration Laboratory (AFTIL), conducted an ATCT Siting Study to determine the appropriate location and height of a new ATCT at IWA. A Safety Risk Management Panel (SRMP) was assembled to evaluate potential ATCT sites, the line of sight from the prospective ATCT site to IWA movement areas, as well as the orientation and equipment layout of the cab. The SRMP recommended Site 4 (Proposed Action) as the location for the new ATCT since it provided the best line of sight to IWA. Site 4 was identified as the Proposed Action Alternative and was carried forward for detailed evaluation along with the No Action Alternative in the final EA.
- 5. Assessment.** The potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action were identified and evaluated in Chapter 3 of the Final EA. Section 3.3 discusses environmental impact categories that were not evaluated in detail because these resources do not occur in the study area or will not be affected by the Proposed Action: Biological Resources, Coastal Resources, Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f) Resources, Farmlands, Land Use, Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, Children’s Environmental Health and Safety, Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use, Surface Waters, Groundwater, Floodplains, Wetlands, and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The following environmental impact categories were evaluated in detail in the Final EA to determine the nature and severity of impacts.

- A) Air Quality.** As discussed in Section 3.5 of the Final EA, the Proposed Action will not change vehicles accessing IWA, or cause a change in aircraft activity, fleet mix or a change in runway use patterns or taxi time. Thus, no impacts from ground access vehicles or aircraft emissions will occur. Table 3-2 compares the estimated annual emissions of criteria air pollutants from construction of the Proposed Action with the *de minimis* thresholds. The emission analysis demonstrated that the Proposed Action will not cause an increase in air emissions above the applicable *de minimis* thresholds. As a result, no adverse impact on local or regional air quality is anticipated due to construction of the Proposed Action.
- B) Climate.** Section 3.6 of the Final EA states that the Proposed Action will not change vehicles accessing IWA, or cause a change in aircraft activity, fleet mix or a change in a runway use patterns or taxi time. Therefore, no climate impacts from ground access vehicles or aircraft emissions will occur. Table 3-3 provides an estimated annual Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission due to construction of the Proposed Action for information only as there are no federal NEPA standards for the significance of GHG emissions from individual projects.
- C) Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention.** As noted in Section 3.7 of the Final EA, limited surveys indicated potential for asbestos-containing materials in the drywall of the existing ATCT and lead based-paint may be present on the stairwell railings. Therefore, prior to the demolition of the existing ATCT, PMGAA or its contractor will conduct additional surveying and testing to ensure all hazardous materials are identified and properly disposed of to prevent contamination. All asbestos and lead based-paint will be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable Federal, state, or local regulations.

As set forth in Section 3.7, the Proposed Action will not result in significant impacts related to hazardous materials or solid waste because the Proposed Action will not have the potential to 1)

violate applicable laws and regulations; 2) involve a site listed on the National Priorities List; 3) produce an appreciably different quantity of type of hazardous waste; 4) generate an appreciably different quantity or type of solid waste or use a different method of collection or disposal and/or will not exceed local capacity; or 5) adversely affect human health and the environment.

- D) **Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources.** As discussed in Section 3.8 of the Final EA, no known archeological sites are located within the Area of Potential Effects (APE); therefore, project activities will not affect archeological resources. The existing tower is 47 years old, thus not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. As a result, the FAA has made a finding of "*no historic properties affected*" for the Proposed Action. The State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the FAA's finding on June 29, 2017 (see Appendix A of the Final EA).
- E) **Natural Resources and Energy Supply.** Section 3.9 of the Final EA notes the Proposed Action will not consume a notable quantity of natural resources, nor will it exceed local supplies for fuel and energy. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not cause a significant increase in resources or energy consumption for IWA or result in demand exceeding available or future supplies of these resources.
- F) **Visual Effects.** Section 3.10 of the Final EA discusses visual effects including light emissions and visual character.

Light Emissions: The rotating beacon on top of the proposed tower will be similar in brightness and direction to the existing ATCT but at a higher elevation. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not interfere with normal activities from light emissions and will not affect the visual character of the area, including the importance, uniqueness, and aesthetic value of the area. The Proposed Action does not include high-intensity strobe lights that will shine directly into residences. Therefore, no special lighting study is warranted and the Proposed Action will not result in significant light emission impacts.

Visual Character: The Proposed Action will not significantly alter, contrast, or obstruct the existing views due to the distance from residential areas and the obstacles in the way and because the new tower is next to the existing tower and similar in character. Therefore, there will be no significant change to the visual character with implementation of the Proposed Action.

- G) **Cumulative Impacts.** Section 3.11 of the Final EA discusses the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable cumulative actions. No significant cumulative impacts were identified.

## 6. Public Participation.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) announcing the availability of the Draft EA was published on October 19, 2017 in the Arizona Business Gazette (see Appendix A of the Final EA). All stakeholders and agencies contacted or who submitted comments during the EA scoping process were sent a notice of the draft EA availability for review via email or letter. The Draft EA was made available for the public review on the PMGAA's website, at local libraries, and at the FAA's Phoenix Airports District Office. No comments were received during the 30-day public comment period.

## 7. Inter-Agency Coordination.

Pursuant to 49 USC Section 47101(h), the FAA has determined that no further coordination with the U.S. Department of Interior or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is necessary because the Proposed Action does not involve construction of a new airport, new runway or major runway extension that has a significant impact on natural resources including fish and wildlife; natural, scenic, and recreational assets; water and air quality; or another factor affecting the environment.

**8. Reasons for the Determination that the Proposed Action will have No Significant Impacts.**

The attached Final EA examines alternatives and each of the various environmental impact categories associated with the Proposed Action. Based on this review, the FAA has determined that the Proposed Action will not have any environmental impacts that exceed the threshold of significance as defined by FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B, and therefore the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.

Based on the information contained in the Final EA, the FAA has decided to implement the Proposed Action as described in Section 3 of this FONSI and Section 1.4 of the Final EA.

**9. Finding of No Significant Impact.**

I have carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the attached EA. Based on that information, I find the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives of Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). I also find the proposed Federal action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. As a result, FAA will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for this action.

**APPROVED:**



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike N. Williams  
Manager  
Phoenix Airports District Office



\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**DISAPPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike N. Williams  
Manager  
Phoenix Airports District Office

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date