

Formal Consultation

Airport and Compatible Land-Use Program Guidebook

When is consultation required and who must be involved?

Towns, cities and counties are required by RCW 36.70.547 and 36.70A.510 to formally consult with airport owners, managers, private airport operators, general aviation pilots, ports and the aviation division of the Washington state department of transportation prior to updating or amendment of comprehensive plans or development regulations that may affect properties adjacent to a publicly or privately owned public-use airport. This would include proposed or amended policies, land use maps, development regulations or zoning maps that would propose to alter existing land uses, density or intensity of uses or create height hazard/airspace obstructions or other similar impacts within the airport influence area of a public use airport. See the Washington State Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook for further information and guidance on addressing airport land use compatibility within your jurisdiction.



The Oxford dictionary defines the term “consultation” as “to seek information or advice, refer to a person for advice, to seek permission or approval for a proposed action.” Consultation is a process by which a local jurisdiction seeks input on actions that may adversely affect or jeopardize public use airports as essential public facilities through the development of incompatible land uses. It usually involves notification (to publicize the matter to be consulted on), consultation (opportunities for a two-way flow of information and opinion exchange) as well as participation (involving interest groups in the drafting of policy or legislation). The level of consultation should be consistent with the level of potential impacts. Policies, standards and or regulations with potentially greater impacts may involve several meetings, while those with lesser impacts may be addressed through other forms of communication. *See WAC 365-196-455 for additional guidance on consultation requirements related to airport compatibility.*

Why is consultation needed?

The main goals of formal consultation are to avoid, minimize and resolve potential land use conflicts with airports, through the comprehensive plan and development regulations. Formal consultation is needed to:

- Gather technical information on the airport and aircraft operations from airport managers, airport operators and service providers, pilots, and the aviation division of the Washington state department of transportation.
- Local jurisdictions have the project and land use expertise and knowledge necessary to help identify reasonable and prudent alternatives or measures to avoid, minimize or resolve incompatible land uses adjacent to public use airports.

- Provides a bridge between local decision makers and airport interests to make informed land use decisions based on how airports function and operate within communities, and to safeguard airports as essential public facilities.
- Create intergovernmental cooperation and relationships between communities, airports, airport users and aviation interests to promote coordinated transparent transportation partnerships and reduce conflicts between airports and land use activities.
- Promote early and continuous coordination and cooperation between airport interests and communities in order to avoid, minimize or resolve potential land use conflicts and airports, through the comprehensive plan and development regulations.

What types of actions would require formal consultation

Consultation should be conducted when the local jurisdiction is proposing updates or amendments to their comprehensive plans or development regulations that would alter existing land uses, density and the intensity of uses, or may create airspace, or height hazard obstructions within the airport influence area.

a) Local jurisdictions should request formal consultation when there are updates or amendments on the following actions:

- Comprehensive plans, subarea plans, or land use map
- Shoreline Master Plan
- Rezones
- Development regulations or Zoning map
- Master Plan Communities, Master Planned Resorts or other planned or special permits that would amend the comprehensive plan or development regulation

b) Jurisdictions that have adopted comprehensive plan policies or development regulations pursuant to RCW 36.70.547 or 36.70A.510 may also request formal consultation to review a proposed project's consistency with their adopted comprehensive plan and/or development regulations.

What is technical assistance?

Airports, managers, private airport operators, general aviation pilots, pilots and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation can provide information on the airport facilities, aircraft operations, flight patterns and characteristics, safety, airspace issues and other airport operations data within the airport influence area. The WSDOT Airport Land Use Compatibility Guidelines can be used as the foundation for addressing land use compatibility adjacent to airports. Technical assistance helps:

- Determine if formal consultation is needed;
- Avoid minimize or resolve land use conflicts with airport facilities and operations;
- Ensure compliance with state law;

Formal consultation process objectives

WSDOT Aviation's formal consultation process seeks to enhance communication and take a comprehensive approach to sharing airport technical information by providing opportunities for early and ongoing consultation between the airport, local jurisdiction, aircraft operators, and aviation service providers on airport operations. WSDOT also encourages all parties to work together throughout the comprehensive plan and development regulation process and to find comprehensive solutions of mutual benefit that fulfill the intent of the legislation to discourage incompatible development adjacent to public use airports consistent with local jurisdictions land use planning authority and obligations under law.

The following steps are generally part of the consultation process that would be initiated by cities or counties, but may vary depending on whether or not the application is a specific request by an applicant(s) such as a rezone application or initiated by the local jurisdiction through their normal comprehensive plan or development regulation process:

Step 1

Contact the Airport and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation Division when considering amendments to the comprehensive plan or development regulations. Request their assistance:

- Preliminary determination on consultation process.
- Consultation meeting preparation
- Contact list of airport operators, general aviation pilots and other aviation interests.
- General airport facility and aircraft operations information.

Step 2

Review the Airport and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines. The guidelines provide information on airport operations, land use, and planning tools to assist in developing compatible land use solutions adjacent to public use airports. Worksheets are also provided and enable users to identify and document land uses and airport characteristics for areas adjacent to their airport. The worksheets will also assist in preparing for the formal consultation meeting identified in **Step 3**.

Step 3

Local jurisdiction would request formal consultation by contacting airport owners, managers, private airport operators, general aviation pilots, ports and the WSDOT Aviation Division.

a) Encouraged to provide support information and advanced notification of the proposal and schedule the consultation meeting, ideally ten days in advance.

- Establish a meeting date, time and location for the consultation meeting.
- Prepare summary description of the proposal and discuss proposed revisions to the comprehensive plan or development regulations. Information should include:
 - Maps, drawing, and/or description of affected properties and the proposed changes.
 - Description of proposed comprehensive plan text or map update or amendments;

- Description of proposed development regulations or zoning map or amendments;
 - General description and map of existing land use patterns, circulation and utilities currently allowed;
 - Other maps may also be useful such as an aerial photography, parcel map, topography maps, environmental constrain maps and general land use or zoning maps.
- b) The airport and aviation users are encouraged to provide written acknowledgment of the consultation request and should be prepared to discuss the airport facility, airport and aircraft operations data, flight characteristics, known constraints, and the long-term outlook for the airport. Other information should include:
- Documentation on the Airport Master Plan, Airport Layout Plan and or other airport facility plans.
 - Number based aircraft and fleet mix,
 - Number of aircraft operations and type of operations
 - Airspace drawing and topography or obstruction information or conflicts
 - Airport traffic pattern
 - Airport service information
 - Upon request the airport should provide the jurisdiction with other airport facility and operations data when available and provide technical support.
- c) Following the consultation meeting, the jurisdiction, airport or aviation users may request additional information to clarify the project, and exchange ideas on how to avoid, minimize or resolve potential incompatible land use issues. Request additional information from the airport and users as needed.

Step 4

During the consultation meeting, all parties will identify issues and concerns regarding the proposal in an effort to reach a consensus on project objectives, project alternatives, modifications or other specific measures that avoid, minimize or resolve potential incompatible land uses adjacent to the airport consistent with applicable laws and local land use planning authority .

- The local jurisdiction, airport and state should document the consultation process and keep a record of the proceedings.

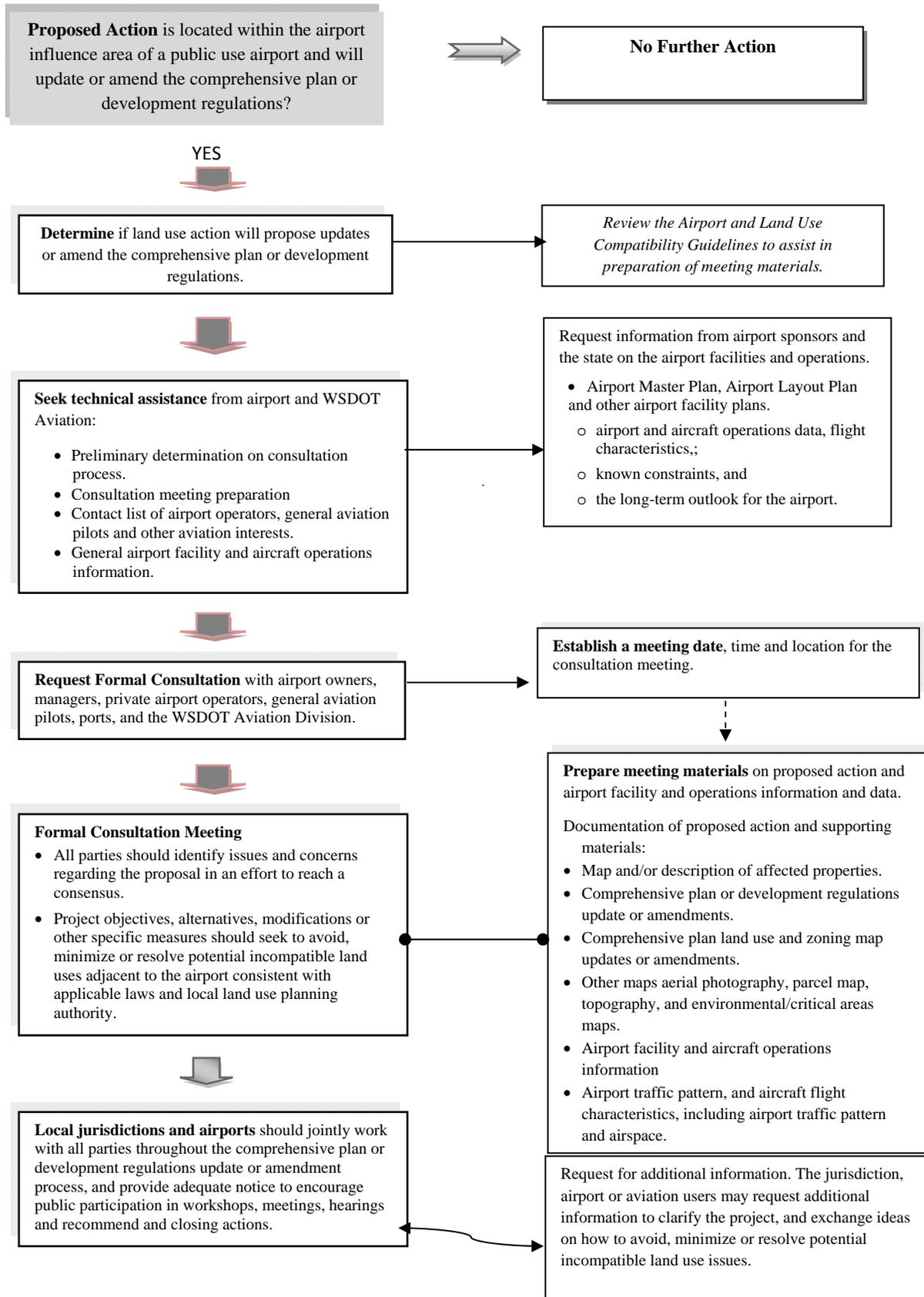
Step 5

Local jurisdictions and airports should jointly work with all parties throughout the comprehensive plan or development regulations update or amendment process, and provide adequate notice of public participation processes, workshops, hearings and recommended or final actions.

Consultation Guiding Principles

- Recognize legal and policy parameters facing each others program's, but also take appropriate steps to remove impediments to working directly and effectively with each other's programs.
- Communication and consultation is a two-way street. Communication between airports, communities and the state should be direct and involve two-way dialogue and feedback.
- Work to assure that each other's concerns and interests are considered whenever their actions or decisions may affect the others programs and statutory obligations.
- Build upon already established and on-going relationships between communities, aviation interests and the state.
- Issues that require consultation should be identified as soon as possible in order to involve all parties early on in the process. The need for consultation may be difficult to define in all cases and will vary among jurisdictions. Consultation is the primary responsibility of the local governments having land use authority, but can be initiated by the state in coordination with the local jurisdiction and airports.
- Airport owners and managers, public and private airport operators and businesses, pilots, ports and WSDOT Aviation should make every effort to participate and provide requested information to the jurisdiction to prepare for consultation.
- Good faith efforts should be undertaken to involve affected governments that have related responsibilities and interests.
- Honesty and integrity must be maintained by all parties in the consultation process. Mutual respect and trust are fundamental elements in establishing a good consultative relationship.

Formal Consultation process



Organization: _____ Date: _____
 Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City _____ State _____ ZipCode: _____
 Airport Name: _____

Proposed meeting date: _____ at _____ a.m./p.m.
 You will be meeting with: _____

The items presented below are intended to help local jurisdictions prepare meeting materials for formal consultation to address proposed updates or amendments to comprehensive plans or development regulations in accordance with RCW 36.70.547 and 36.70A.510. For additional information on formal consultation refer to Appendix ???. Also refer to Airports and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for additional technical assistance.

**Comprehensive Plan & Development
Regulation amendment or update**

- Description of proposed update or amendment with supporting written documentation, maps and drawings (8 1/2" x 11" sheets)
 - o Description of proposed amendments or updates
 - o Site Vicinity Map
 - o Supporting maps, drawings and graphics with location of airport facility
 - o Proposed schedule
 - o Other actions or permits
- Summary description of existing comprehensive plan and development regulations
 - o Comprehensive plan policies and supporting text
 - o Comprehensive plan land use map/designations
 - o Development regulations
 - o Zoning map
 - o Identification of likely concerns with the proposed action
- Supporting resource maps, graphics and other visual aids of areas within the airport influence area
 - o Existing land use map
 - o Topography map
 - o Parcel map

- o Environment sensitive or critical area maps

Airport Facility & Support Information

- Airport Master Plan, Airport Layout Plan, Airport Facility Plan and/or other related industrial/business plans
- Summary description of airport facility, activities and services
 - o Number of runways
 - o Aircraft operations
 - o Number of based aircraft
 - o Aircraft fleet mix
 - o Airport services
 - o Proposed expansion plans
- Airport Plan View Drawings (8 1/2" x 11" sheets).
 - o Airport facility drawing i.e. runways, taxiways, apron, hangar, terminal and other activities
 - o Airport traffic patterns
 - o Airspace drawing

Aviation System Plan

- Summary descriptions and role of the Airport
- Aviation Economic Impact Profile

[The information above will be available from either the local jurisdiction, airport or the Washington State Department of Transportation](#)

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- b. Local jurisdictions should request formal consultation when the jurisdiction is considering proposed updates or amendments on the following actions:
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 - Rezones
 - Master Plan Communities, Master Planned Resorts or other planned or special permits that would amend the comprehensive plan or development regulation
 - Development regulations and zoning map
- c. The nature and extent of the proposed update or amendment to the comprehensive plan or development regulation may vary depending on the type and scale of the proposed action, existing land uses, and location of the proposed action within the airport influence area. The extent and complexity of assessment and consultation will vary in response.
- d. Local jurisdictions that have adopted comprehensive plan policies or development regulations pursuant to RCW 36.70.547 or 36.70A.510 may also request consultation to review a proposed project's consistency with their adopted comprehensive plan and/or development regulations.

Guiding Principles for Formal Consultation Meetings/Workshops

- Recognize legal and policy parameters facing each other's programs, but also take appropriate steps to remove impediments to working directly and effectively with each other's programs where feasible.
- Communication and consultation is a two-way street. Communication between airports, communities and the state should be direct and involve two-way dialogue and feedback.
- Work to assure that each other's concerns and interests are considered whenever their actions or decisions may affect the others programs and statutory obligations.
- Build upon already established and on-going relationships between communities, aviation interests and the state.
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