

April 28, 2025

Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87

4905 - 50 Avenue Bag 1010

Bonnyville, AB T9N 2J7

Attention: Mr. Scott Kovatch, Economic Development Specialist

**RE: M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport Master Plan
Project Update Report**

Dear Scott,

As part of HM Aero's ongoing work in preparing the M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport Master Plan (the "Master Plan"), we are pleased to provide the following update for consideration by Council at its May 13, 2025 meeting.

Master Plan Progress Since Previous Council Update

M.D. Council was provided with a project overview and update at its March 25, 2025 regular meeting by representatives from HM Aero. Since that point, the following progress has been made on the Master Plan by HM Aero and the M.D.:

- **Airport Site Inspection:** With the assistance of M.D. Staff, representatives from HM Aero conducted a visual inspection of the Airport on March 24 and 25 to:
 - Document existing conditions;
 - Collect data that will inform the subsequent infrastructure condition assessment and recommendations for asset rehabilitation and replacement projects; and
 - Observe aircraft operations during peak hours to assist in analysis regarding Airport capacity and aircraft ground maneuvering.
- **Market Research:** Parcel Economics, a subconsultant to HM Aero, has been advancing its market research on the impact of water and sewer servicing to the development potential of Aurora Borealis and the Airport. The following tasks have been completed:
 - Comparative analysis of industrial parks in the M.D. and Town of Bonnyville;
 - Identification of patterns in business growth, employment composition, labour market etc., across the M.D, Town, and other nearby areas;
 - Data collection on actively selling industrial lands in the region; and
 - Identification of initiatives to increase industrial land absorption.
- **Water and Sewer Servicing Feasibility Study:** \$25,000 in funding was announced by the Province of Alberta on April 9, 2025 through the Northern and Regional Economic Development program to support a feasibility study to evaluate water infrastructure expansion to enable industrial, agricultural, and aviation growth at the Airport and in the adjacent Aurora Borealis subdivision. This project will proceed in parallel with the Master Plan and its findings will contribute to its recommendations. The procurement process for engineering consulting services is understood to be underway.
- **Stakeholder and Community Engagement:** The consultation and engagement process is substantially complete, as discussed on the following page.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement Findings

Identified through the following subsections are the engagement efforts that have been completed in support of the Master Plan and preliminary overviews of common areas of feedback received. All findings are preliminary and are subject to further assessment by HM Aero and the M.D.

Community Open House

A community open house was facilitated by representatives from HM Aero and the M.D. at the Bonnyville and District Centennial Centre from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM on March 25, 2025. A total of 24 individuals signed in, and the project team estimates that actual attendance may have ranged between 30 and 40 people. Based on the sign-in records:



- 58% of attendees identified as residents and nearby landowners. Based on conversations with attendees, this included several landowners located east of the Airport;
- 33% of attendees have some form of aviation interest in the Airport; and
- Two attendees had other primary interests, including a member of the media.

Feedback was provided by attendees through conversations with representatives from HM Aero and the M.D., sticky notes on display boards, and written copies of the online community survey.

Preliminary Findings

- Generally, attendees expressed high levels of interest in what the future plans will be for the Airport and indicated support for several functions of the facility, including air ambulance operations and industry-related charters;
- Several attendees expressed interest in the proactive development and growth of the Airport and posed suggestions for how that may occur;
- Suggestions were made for infrastructure and operational improvements, including:
 - Meeting federal regulatory standards
 - Resolving apron capacity limitations with larger charter aircraft and improving the aircraft tie-down area;
 - Resolving terminal building capacity challenges;
 - Ensuring proper access and training by first responders; and
- Among residents and landowners near the Airport, numerous comments were made identifying concerns if access by Range Road 455 is impacted by infrastructure expansion projects. Comments were also made regarding the impacts of aircraft noise to quality of life and property values, and reduced support for significant growth in operations.

Community Survey

An eight-question online survey was hosted by HM Aero using SurveyMonkey and was advertised by the M.D., with the survey active for a three-week period from March 20, 2025 to April 11, 2025. 83 online responses were received, in addition to 10 written surveys that were completed during the open house. In total, 93 online and written survey responses were assessed:

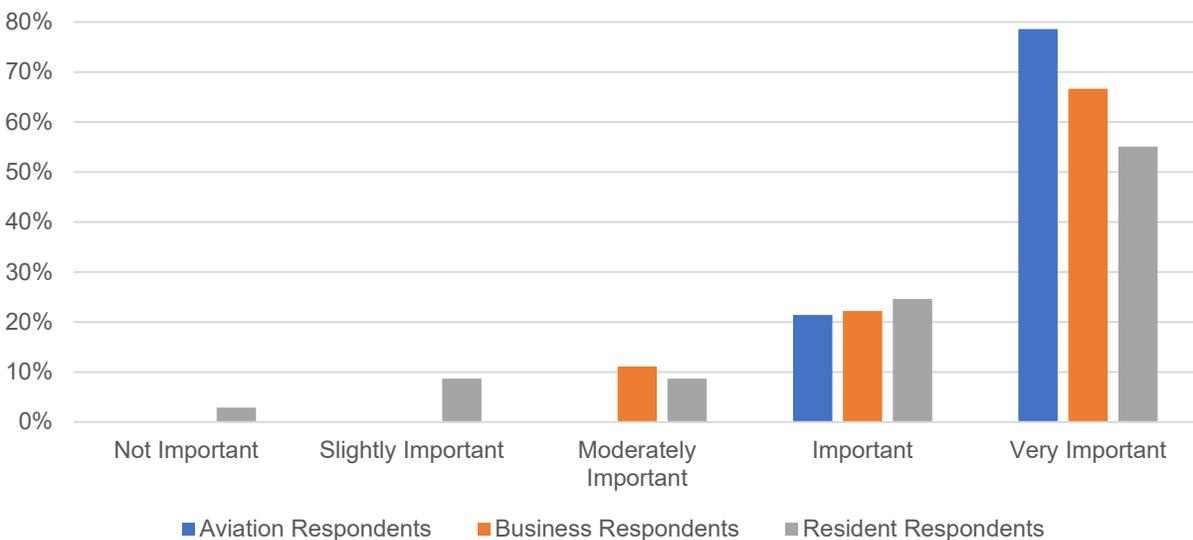
- 70% of respondents identified as being residents of the M.D.;
- 19% of respondents identified as residents of the Town of Bonnyville; and
- The remaining 11% of respondents were from other locations, such as Cold Lake, Calgary, and Edmonton.

The majority of survey respondents (75%) identified as being residents or representatives of their household. 15% of respondents identified as having an aviation interest in the Airport (e.g., as pilots, aircraft operators, or routine users of the facility), while the final 10% of individuals represented businesses or organizations.

Preliminary Findings

Survey respondents were asked to provide their opinion of the importance of having an airport serving Bonnyville and the surrounding region. 84% of all respondents identified the availability of the Airport as being “important” or “very important”. Business representatives assigned these valuations at a higher level (89%), whereas 80% of resident respondents selected these valuations. A further 11% of business respondents and 9% of residents identified the facility as being “moderately important”.

Survey Respondent Valuations of an Airport Serving the Region



A series of questions were posed to understand how the various services facilitated by the Airport influence respondent valuations:

- Air ambulance patient transfers were identified as being important or very important by 98% of respondents;
- Energy and resource sector charter flights were identified at the two highest levels of importance by 73% of respondents. A smaller proportion of residents assigned these valuations (67%) versus business respondents (89%). Corporate and private business-related flights had somewhat lower valuations, with 62% of all respondents identifying this form of activity as being important or very important and 51% of residents;
- Similar valuations were assigned to flight training and aerial work, with 68% and 65% of respondents deeming these activity types as being important or very important;
- Recreational flying was identified as being important or very important by 55% of respondents; and
- Non-aviation events, such as drag racing, were identified as being important or very important by 34% of all respondents.

When asked what success looks like for the Airport in the future, recurring themes included:

- Continued operations and maintenance to support services of importance, such as industry and air ambulance access;
- Scheduled passenger air services to major cities, such as Calgary and Edmonton;
- Pursuing opportunities for economic development, such as aircraft maintenance; and
- Several respondents identified less support for growth and expansion for reasons such as the financial implications of pursuing growth, noise impacts, and potential impacts to Range Road 455.

Stakeholder Engagement

Three categories of project stakeholders were collaboratively identified by HM Aero and M.D. Administration and were directly engaged by interviews and roundtable sessions. 21 stakeholders that have been consulted to-date and are identified as follows:

- Aviation Stakeholders
 - Aerium Analytics
 - Airborne Energy Solutions
 - Airco Aircraft Charters
 - AIRmarket / iART Alliance
 - Air Partners
 - Alberta Health Services
 - Bonnyville Air Services
 - Bonnyville Flying Club
 - Gemini Helicopters
 - Peregrine Aerial Surveys
 - RD Scan
 - Royal Canadian Mounted Police Air Services Division
 - Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service
 - Star Helicopters
 - Sunwest Aviation

- Economic Development Stakeholders
 - Alberta Hub
 - Bonnyville and District Chamber of Commerce
- Industry Stakeholders
 - Aurora Borealis Estates
 - Cenovus
 - Canadian Natural Resources Limited
 - Strathcona Resources

In addition, a roundtable session was held to engage several landowners in the Aurora Borealis industrial subdivision.

Preliminary Findings

Due to the nature of the stakeholder engagement process, a significant volume of in-depth feedback has been received from consulted parties. The analysis of this feedback continues at the time of the report's preparation and will be integrated as appropriate in the Master Plan.

Next Steps

The project is proceeding on schedule, with the Master Plan tentatively scheduled for consideration by M.D. Council in August or September 2025. Next steps in the Master Plan's progression will include the completion of the:

- Water and Sewer Servicing Feasibility Study, in parallel to the Master Plan;
- Market research and economic impact assessment of extending water and sewer services to the Airport and Aurora Borealis industrial subdivision;
- Airport baseline assessment and establishment of recommended strategic direction;
- Identification of Airport capital requirements and preparation of Airport Development Plan;
- Financial analysis and preparation of recommended funding strategy; and
- The preparation of the draft and final Airport Master Plan.

Closing

We trust that this letter will assist Council in its ongoing role as the governing entity of the M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport. HM Aero will continue to advance the Master Plan project as detailed herein. Any questions may be directed to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

HM Aero Inc.



Ben Crooks, RPP, MCIP
Senior Planner – Aviation



Andrew Macdonald, B.Comm.
Senior Planner – Aviation