For two months this summer into fall, residents living in areas surrounding the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) will notice a change in where aircraft are flying in the sky.

As one of the last remaining projects included in the airport’s 2010 improvement plan, the center section of the south parallel runway (Runway 12R/30L) will be reconstructed.

From mid-August to mid-October the runway will be shut down and unavailable for landings and takeoffs. Aircraft that typically would have used this runway will be shifted to the remaining three runways.

When completed the entire runway will consist of a base of at least three feet granular material with 12 inches of crushed aggregate on top of that and another 20 inches of concrete on top of that. The new pavement will provide at least 50+ years of service, with the first 15 to 20 of those essentially maintenance free.

The Need
Although the two ends of this 1960’s era runway were reconstructed in 1998-99, the middle portion of the runway remains to be completed and currently requires continuous monitoring and frequent repairs due to age and use.

While the runway has been kept viable and safe through monitoring and repairs, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has indicated that a long-term solution is needed.

Noise Impact Changes
As in 1998 and 1999, the runway’s closure means a shift in which runways are used for landings and takeoffs. During the

changes will be for residents and businesses located in Minneapolis under the arrival path to Runway 17 during a southeast flow scenario. Landings on this runway have been virtually non-existent since its opening in October 2005 due to the configuration of the runways at MSP.

Typically, aircraft land on a “straight-in” approach to a runway. Landings on Runway 17 will be no exception. The landing path will generally follow a line straight out from the runway. This will place landing aircraft over downtown Minneapolis and neighborhoods north of the airport.

Landings are generally more frequent and lower in altitude than departures. However, they are also generally quieter than takeoffs.

When in a northwest flow scenario, planes will take off of Runway 35 to the north over Minneapolis, but will generally follow similar paths as those that take off to the north off the north parallel runway.

Other areas that will see more aircraft include those located under the landing path for Runway 22, in St. Paul and communities northeast of St. Paul.

Areas in Mendota Heights currently impacted by

(Continued on page 3)
The MSP Noise Oversight Committee (NOC) met on Wednesday, January 17, 2007.

Among the topics of discussion at the meeting were the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) findings regarding the use of a 215-degree heading for departures off of Runway 17 (see page 3 for details) and a review of airport operations during runway reconstruction this summer on Runway 12R/30L (see page 1 for details).

Runway Use System

Also at the meeting, Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) staff provided a review of the airport’s Runway Use System (RUS) and its implementation. The RUS is a runway selection process that, during periods of low- and mid-demand can be utilized to reduce noise impacts.

Continuous Descent Approach

In August 2005, the MAC submitted a request to the FAA for Minneapolis – St Paul International to be considered a candidate site for the FAA’s test of a Continuous Descent Approach (CDA). MSP was ranked in the middle of 33 airports that could benefit from CDA.

2006 Noise Contours

As part of the November 2004 submission of the Part 150 document to the FAA, the MAC indicated it would consider a contour update in 2007 or sooner should circumstances legitimate an update sooner than 2007.

The Commission has begun deliberating whether or not to move forward with a contour update at this time. Should the Commission decide to move ahead with an update, it is anticipated the NOC will be involved in related discussions.

In its Fiscal Year 2007 Business Plan, the FAA states that June 30, 2007 is a target date for completion of a concept operations plan and testing of prototype CDA procedures at candidate airports.

Next Meeting

The next NOC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 21 at 1:30 p.m. at the MAC General Offices.

For more information about the NOC, call 612-725-6455 or visit the NOC Web page at http://www.macnoise.com/noc.

NOC Meeting Materials

To access NOC meeting materials (agendas, minutes, memos and presentations), visit the MAC Web site at http://www.mspairport.com/mac/meetings/noc.aspx, or call 612-725-6455.

Q. What is a RMT, what does it do and how is it used for noise management at MSP?

A. The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) operates a system of noise monitors called Remote Monitoring Terminals (RMTs) that record both aircraft and community noise levels 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each RMT consists of a permanently mounted 20-foot tower and laboratory-quality noise monitoring equipment. The equipment is calibrated and certified annually by an independent accredited laboratory to ensure it stays in top operating condition and meets industry standards. As part of the Airport Noise and Operations Monitoring System (ANOMS), RMTs supply noise data to calculate time-averaged metrics like aircraft and community DNL (day-night level), as well as data to quantify significant noise events associated with aircraft operations or community noise sources. The original 24 monitors were installed as part of the ANOMS installation. Five additional monitors were added in the late 1990s. Another 10 monitors were added south of the airport in 2001 to record noise levels associated with aircraft using the airport’s new north/south runway, 17-35, bringing the total number to 39 and making it one of largest single airport noise monitoring systems in the world. The combination of RMT data and radar flight track information provides an objective tool for MAC Noise Program staff to assess airspace use and airport noise impacts.
FAA Begins Test of 215-Degree Takeoff Heading for Runway 17

At the January MSP Noise Oversight Committee (NOC) meeting, local Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) officials told community and airport user representatives that, after looking carefully at its procedures, the FAA believes a 215-degree heading for planes taking off Runway 17 at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) may be possible and proposed testing that heading.

The 215-degree heading sends planes more over the unpopulated Minnesota River Valley than the 200-degree heading the FAA has been using when departing planes to the west off that runway (see diagram).

The 60-day test, begun on February 7, will allow the FAA to evaluate operational issues associated with the change. It will also assist the Metropolitan Airports Commission’s Noise Program and the NOC in reviewing and evaluating the noise implications associated with the heading’s use. The FAA has indicated that if the test is successful the heading would be implemented.

During the test, the 215-degree heading will be utilized along with other headings to the south that are consistent with the FAA’s on-course routing practices and safety requirements. The change in heading does not affect the use of the 2.5 nautical mile turn-point procedure for that runway.

Background
Prior to this test period, when the airport was operating in a southeast flow (i.e., takeoffs on Runways 12L/12R over Eagan/Mendota Heights and takeoffs to the southwest off Runway 17 over Bloomington and Burnsville), the FAA assigned headings of no greater than 190 degrees initially, and later 200 degrees, for planes headed west off Runway 17 – a heading that places planes over the more populated northeast portion of Burnsville.

The 215-degree heading represents a step toward the 230-degree heading preferred by the City of Burnsville, which the FAA says is not possible when operating in this manner.

But a 215-degree restriction may be feasible for keeping aircraft arriving from the east and headed (Continued on page 4)

Runway Reconstruction
(Continued from page 1)
departures off the north parallel runway will notice an increase in the number of aircraft, as will those in Bloomington that are impacted by takeoffs on Runway 22 to the southwest.

Why Now?
A 2007 timeframe is prudent for this project for several reasons:

(1) A fourth runway is now open, allowing for at least two functioning runways at all times. The additional capacity afforded by the new runway will help minimize delays;

(2) The time of year is best due, first, to calm or southeast winds being predominant. These wind patterns allow aircraft to take off to the southeast over a less-populated industrial/commercial corridor in Eagan and Mendota Heights.

Secondly, lower temperatures in September and expectations for fewer large-body aircraft operations mean fewer aircraft will need the south parallel runway’s longer length during this time (higher temperatures can lead to aircraft needing longer runway lengths for takeoff); and

(3) The number of aircraft operations at MSP is projected to stay flat for 2007. This will help keep delays at a more manageable level.

Next summer the center section of the north parallel runway will be reconstructed, also as part of the 2010 airport improvement plan.

For more information, please visit our website at www.macnoise.com.

Click on “Runway Reconstruction” on the left-hand side of the homepage. Or call the Noise Complaint and Information Line at 612-726-9411.
FAA Heading Test

(Continued from page 3)
west for landings onto 12L or 12R safely separated from Runway 17 takeoffs.

The 215-degree heading should also allow the FAA to keep a corridor open for aircraft transitioning through MSP’s airspace and not landing or departing the airport.

The results of the test should be available for the NOC’s May 16 meeting. In the meantime, MAC’s Flight Tracker program can be used to locate aircraft flight paths over a specific address. Go to www.macnoise.com/maps/.

Public Input Meeting
Join Us April 17
An opportunity for residents to voice concerns and ask questions about airport noise.

Meeting Topic
Runway Reconstruction
Tuesday, April 17, 2007
7:00 p.m.
Apple Valley Municipal Center
7100 West 147th St.
For directions, call (612) 725-6455