

Colville Airport Relocation
Summary Statement of Need

1. The existing airport runway is 2,700 feet long. As documented in the recent airport master plan it is 1,600 feet shorter than the length necessary to accommodate 100 percent of the B-I (small) aircraft fleet which is the category of aircraft currently using the airport. The existing airport does not meet Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) siting criteria for a regional class airport, does not meet FAA design criteria related to its runway safety area and a number of other design standards. It is considered aeronautically unsuitable for future operational demands, as documented in the following excerpt from FAA.

FAA Position on the Existing Colville Airport

As stated throughout much of the documentation, this site fails to meet FAA siting criteria for a new airport. Siting criteria is based upon safety standards developed through the collision risk model which in turn is based upon accident history and aircraft performance criteria. Our office has told the City of Colville that we will not fund improvements at the existing site due to the fact that it does not meet our design standards. In addition, the approach to the existing airport is over the city and is in close proximity to the hospital and several schools. This is contrary to FAA policy of avoiding concentrations of people in approach area to an airport. There is also a bluff that drops approximately 100-feet off the runway end. This fails to provide a safety area for over runs or undershoots of an aircraft. A state highway exists at the other end of Runway 19. This highway and existing housing present close in obstruction that would be economically prohibitive to remove. Even if they could be removed, this would not result in improving the overall safety at the airport because of the other mountainous terrain around the airport. Hills rising to 2,400 feet to the northeast of the site are of particular concern from a safety standpoint due to their proximity to the approach and departure paths of that runway end....Based on the above reason, we consider the existing airport site to be aeronautically unsuitable for future operational demands at the airport.

Excerpt from Letter Dated 10/27/1992

From J. Wade Bryant, FAA Manager, Seattle District

2. The existing airport is located within the future growth area for the City of Colville, which could be available for other residential, commercial, or public uses if the airport was relocated to another site.
3. Safety of the existing airport is a concern since the flight path is located over or very near schools, Mt. Carmel Hospital, and the urban center of the City of Colville.
4. The “Long-Term Air Transportation Study” (LATS) published by the Washington State Department of Transportation – Aviation Division in July, 2009, has indentified the need for a “regional” class airport in the Colville area. A “regional” class airport would have a runway which is at least 5,000 feet long and would be capable of accommodating business class, turbo-prop aircraft, and small to medium sized jets, along with medical transport, fire fighting, and freight transport aircraft.
5. The U.S. Forest Service (Deputy Forest Service, Colville National Forest) stated in 2009 that a relocated “Regional-class” airport in Colville with a longer runway and fewer air-space conflicts,

would improve their Fire Aviation Operations efficiency, safety, and cost. With a longer runway, the USFS could add fixed-wing aircraft for regional fire-fighting duties in addition to improved safety for helicopter service. Access to a longer runway in the Colville area would allow operation of water-scooping aircraft, single retardant, and large retardant aircraft resulting in increased utilization of the Colville airport and less time, risk, and expense in fighting forest fires in the region.

6. The U.S. Custom and Border Protection office of Air and Marine- Spokane Air Branch would be interested in using jet A fuel service in Colville, which would reduce transit time for border security missions and increase their border security efforts. A regional class airport would also allow emergency fixed-wing aviation access to other first response agencies.
7. Tri-County Economic Development District (TEDD) supports a regional-class airport in Colville, in order to facilitate economic growth by accommodating air freight and business class aircraft. The 2007/2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) published by TEDD in March, 2007, indentified the lack of adequate infrastructure, including airports, as its top issue which is critical to economic development of the Tri-County Region.
8. The fixed-wing emergency medical transport aircraft operated by MedStar cannot land at the existing Colville airport, but could operate at a regional-class airport with a 5,000 ft runway. This emergency medical aircraft could reach Seattle in one hour, saving at least two hours in air transport to Seattle compared with current medical transportation dependent upon helicopters.