

**PANAMA CITY – BAY COUNTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
AIRPORT RELOCATION TIMELINE**

*January 24, 1946 – Present*

**1946**

- Front page editorial in the Panama City News Herald (January 24, 1946):

“Panama City, which prides itself in being a progressive forward looking city, has a so called municipal airport which would do credit to a village of 63 person which doesn’t know the Civil War is over... The nearest true commercial airports are in 100 miles away in Tallahassee and Pensacola. We vitally and urgently need a commercial airline because our airlines connections now are very, very poor. And to get such an airline, we need a fine airport. We have a situation that should be corrected at the earliest possible moment – not in 1947 or 1948, but in 1946.

**1996**

- Airport Authority completes Airport Master Plan Update. The plan identifies extending both the runway length and runway safety areas among future needs.
- Airport Authority initiates and Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider alternatives for a runway extension at the existing airport.
- The EA recommends the extension of Runway 14-32 to the northwest into Goose Bayou, which are Class II Surface Waters protected under state law.
- Based on the analyses conducted, the proposed project would have resulted in significant adverse impacts to Goose Bayou.

**1998**

- The Airport Authority terminates the EA process and the proposed project due to the magnitude of the impacts and concerns expressed by agencies and local environmentalists over whether the impacts could be mitigated.
- The Airport Authority begins to consider the possibility of relocating the airport to a new site and begins an effort to build community support for relocation.
- The Airport Authority works with the St. Joe Company to investigate the feasibility of relocating the airport. The St. Joe Company, Bay County’s largest private landowner, agrees to consider the possibility of donating land for a relocated airport.

**1999**

- With support from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Airport Authority initiates a feasibility study examining the potential of expanding or relocating the airport facilities.

**2000**

- The Airport Authority submits the Airport Feasibility Study to the FAA and FDOT in July 2000.
- On August 18, 2000, the FAA notified the Airport Authority that it concurred with the recommendation of the study to proceed with a site selection study to determine alternative locations for relocation of the airport.
- The Airport Site Selection Study was completed in December 2000 and identified potential locations for the relocated airport, with a recommended optimal site.

**2001**

- In April the FAA provides tentative site approval for a site located in West Bay County, based on the Airport Site Selection Study's recommendation.
- The Airport Authority, the Bay County Commission and the St. Joe Company make use of Florida's new, innovative sector planning process to develop a large-scale long-term land use plan for 75,000 acres in northwestern Bay County, with the new airport site as the plan's centerpiece. The plan also includes over 41,000 acres identified as conservation land.

**2003**

- In December, the Bay County Commission approves the land use changes in the West Bay Sector Plan, including the proposed site for the new airport.

**2004**

- The FAA begins preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the airport relocation project.
- In November, the FAA delivers its DEIS.

**2005**

- In January the FAA holds a public hearing and comment period on the DEIS.
- In March 2005 the Airport Authority voted to relocate PFN, contingent on a recommendation by the FAA to relocate in its Final EIS and Record of Decision.

Other contingencies included the ability to secure all necessary state and federal permits and adequate funding.

- The FAA begins preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the proposed project.

## **2006**

- The FAA issues its FEIS in May, identifying relocation to the proposed West Bay site as its Preferred Alternative.
- In September, the FAA issues Record of Decision, issued in September 2006, recommended and approved relocation to West Bay.
- Florida issues final state permits necessary for airport construction at new site.

## **2007**

- Airport Authority finalizes design/construction team for new airport.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issues Section 404 permit, the final permit necessary for construction to begin.
- FAA provides a \$26 million grant for the first phase of airport construction. The FAA has pledged a total of at least \$72 million, plus another \$7 million available to the Airport Authority through its annual disbursement from the FAA.
- Airport Authority approved the sale of the existing airport to a subsidiary of Leucadia National Corporation (NYSE: LUK) for \$56.5 million in cash and an estimated \$38 million from transfer fees from the sale of future properties developed on the site.
- The U.S. Navy announced that the new Panama City – Bay County airport would serve as a test site for security innovations made by the Naval Surface Warfare Center, and implemented by the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA).
- The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded a \$575,000 grant to the Panama City – Bay County airport to help attract a low cost carrier to the region and to help current airlines expand their service. The federal dollars will be matched by \$529,500 in cash and in-kind contributions from the local business community.
- Airport Authority holds groundbreaking ceremony; project's construction phase officially begins.

**2008 (January – June)**

- U.S. Federal and District Courts clear the way for site preparation to proceed without restriction, in accordance with all permits.
- All clearing has been completed on the 1,330 acre within Phase I including all impacted wetlands authorized by Federal and State permits.
- Over 1.8 million cubic yards of material have been excavated and redistributed over the site.
- The two mile long main airport entry road is nearing completion and should be operational by mid-July 2008.
- The 2008 Florida Legislature awarded the Panama City-Bay County International Airport an additional \$4.5 million in funding for the purpose of “operational enhancements”. These funds would be available to extend the primary runway from 8,400’ to 10,000’ if the necessary permits are obtained.
- The Airport Authority has set a target opening date of Memorial Day 2010 (May 31, 2010).

**2008 (July - December)**

- International Airport Authority announced its intentions to construct a 10,000-foot main runway at the new airport in West Bay.
- The two-mile long main airport entry road has been completed. The storm sewer pipes are in place and the parking lot’s curbing and lime-rock base is complete.
- Almost half of the site infrastructure work, including the primary runway, has been completed.
- Airport Authority has approved the design and construction of the terminal building at its new airport now under construction in West Bay. Through value-engineering, the construction team was successful in lowering the cost by \$9.8 million to \$58.8 million. The new terminal will be 125,000 square feet and have 7 gates.
- The airport aims to have the first LEED certified Terminal Building in the nation, with a state-of-the art storm water management system, extensive use of sustainable materials and a landscaping plan that will not require supplemental irrigation.
- The U.S. District Court in Jacksonville issued a final order denying an attempt to halt construction of the new airport. Meanwhile, construction of the Panama

City – Bay County International Airport continued to move forward on time and on budget.

- The U.S. District Court in Jacksonville dismissed with prejudice the claims challenging the airport's Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.
- A new web site, [www.newpcairport.com](http://www.newpcairport.com), has been created by the Airport Authority to provide updates on the new airport construction project.

### **2009 (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter)**

- The local airport authority has preliminarily selected as its master developer Jones Lang LaSalle, the global real estate services firm specializing in commercial property management, leasing, and investment management. The authority is currently negotiating with the Chicago-based firm.
- 8,400' of Runway 16-34 is 100% complete. Still awaiting final approval for 10,000'.
- Underground utilities are being installed in the General Aviation area. Fine grading along the runway is continuing. Seeding is ongoing in the North section of the site. Installation of the centerline lighting cans is approximately 75% complete. Installation of underground utilities continues in the General Aviation area.