

Punta Gorda Airport Master Plan Update

Draft Report



Prepared for:
The Charlotte County Airport Authority



January 2018

PGD Master Plan Update

The PGD Master Plan Update represents a financially feasible development plan that accommodates existing and anticipated demand in the Short-Term, Intermediate-Term, and Long-Term planning horizons.

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Introduction

01

01 Introduction

The Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Master Plan Update summarizes a 20-year vision for future development. It was developed in collaboration with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Charlotte County Airport Authority (CCAA or the Authority), Charlotte County residents and key stakeholders that have interest and insight regarding the future of the Airport and region.

1.1 Purpose and Need

An Airport Master Plan evaluates the capability of an airport's facilities to accommodate the expected changes in demand by means of a cost-effective development and funding plan. Changes in demand can result from technological improvements, airline consolidation and service decisions, regulatory initiatives, and other factors in the aviation industry that impact airport capacity and facility needs.

For example, the last PGD Master Plan completed in 2008 was largely in response to the significant damage caused by Hurricane Charley in 2004 and did not anticipate the demand for scheduled air carrier service. However, since then, multiple airlines initiated service at PGD. Airlines such as Skybus, DirectAir, and Vision Airlines have entered and exited the PGD market while Allegiant Air has developed a successful market at PGD since initiating service in 2009. Frontier Airlines followed Allegiant Air by initiating scheduled service at PGD in October 2016, but exited in 2017. The strong growth of scheduled air carrier service directly led to the expansion of the terminal building and long-term parking lot in 2016 and necessitated the need for this Master Plan Update. Accordingly, the purpose of this Master Plan is to update the aviation activity forecasts (particularly operational peak characteristics), evaluate existing and proposed aviation needs, and define solutions that will best serve the Airport's stakeholders and the surrounding community.

1.2 Primary Focus Areas

The PGD Master Plan addresses all components of the airport based on FAA and FDOT guidelines. However, each Master Plan is conducted to address specific issues or opportunities that have emerged since the previous Master Plan. Given that growth in scheduled air service has outpaced the development of adequate facilities to support it, the primary focus areas of this Master Plan include the airfield, terminal, automobile parking, and rental car facilities.

1.3 Master Plan Elements

The PGD Master Plan was completed in three general phases: Needs, Solutions, and Documentation as depicted in **Figure 1-1** and summarized in the following sections.

1.3.1 Needs

This phase of the Master Plan included the confirmation of existing conditions, development of the aviation activity forecasts, and identifying facility requirements required to accommodate expected demand. Each of these elements set the basis for the subsequent analysis.

The objective of the inventory was to gather and summarize the current airport facilities, utility infrastructure, airspace, land-use, and environmental data that will be required in subsequent study elements. This Master Plan required detailed derivative forecasts, such as peaking characteristics, aircraft fleet mix, and other projections. The newly generated forecasts were used to prepare the facility requirements for future aviation demand.

A significant component of the Needs phase was initiation of a Stakeholder Outreach Plan. As part of this phase, the key stakeholders identified by the Authority, FDOT, and FAA had the opportunity to provide their ideas, comments, and opinions on the future role of PGD in the community and aviation industry as a whole.

1.3.2 Solutions

This phase analyzed alternative solutions for implementing the facility requirements and provides a responsible and cost-effective implementation and financing schedule. A collaborative approach to alternative development and screening was incorporated through several review meetings with the Authority, FAA, FDOT, and Stakeholders to identify, assess, refine, and ultimately narrow the plan recommendations. Although the final plan suggests a single comprehensive, adaptable, and sustainable concept, the analyses are documented to facilitate contingency plan development to account for a range of potential future circumstances.

Initial alternative developments emphasize aviation safety, efficiency, and demand-driven needs. Exploration of opportunities related to new revenue generation and activities that support the area's economic growth were also considered. The use of all existing and future airport property is a key component to exploring potential options.

1.3.3 Documentation

The FAA relies primarily on the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) drawing set when participating in the funding of eligible projects. Therefore, the ALP is a primary deliverable representing the final product of the master plan process. The projects must be adequately justified within a narrative report document. Today, airport master plans provide a more comprehensive connection to local planning, policy, and administrative goals. Many airport master plans are now incorporated by reference into other plans or must undergo local adoption. The level of detail, particularly in the narrative document, must provide sufficient information to support the understanding by non-aviation users. The PGD Master Plan Update was prepared with this in mind, augmenting highly technical aviation discussions with more simplified "guiding" or "policy" principals that can be more readily interpreted by local policy-makers and non-aviation stakeholders.

1.3.4 Master Plan Stakeholders

As a master plan is intended to represent the needs of its users, it is essential to develop a plan that is based on the input of those who will be most impacted by it. Both the FAA and FDOT provide guidelines on the development of the master plan but its ultimate success is determined by how it was received by the sponsor (the Authority), their tenants, and the surrounding community. Accordingly, a stakeholder and public involvement program was included as part of this PGD Master Plan Update to provide specific airport users and the general public an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed capital improvement plan.

Key stakeholders such as general aviation representatives, air carriers, other tenants, and regulators (FAA and FDOT) were provided this opportunity via four stakeholders meetings conducted at the completion of each of the primary Master Plan elements: Inventory and Forecasts, Facility Requirements, Alternatives Analysis, and Implementation and Financial Plan.

Documentation for the stakeholders and public meetings is provided in **Appendix A**.

Three public informational meetings were conducted at the completion of the inventory and forecasts (Visioning), alternatives analysis (Realization), and Final Documentation (Regulatory).

1.3.5 Airports-GIS

In 2008, the FAA released new standards for federally funded projects to be submitted in an electronic Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format. GIS may be used by the Authority for a number of purposes, including the inventory and maintenance of airport facilities, preparation for emergency services, planning for airport improvements, inventory of airport property, and the inventory of sensitive environmental areas among others. This Master Plan Update includes development of the initial GIS airport mapping database utilizing newly acquired aerial and ground survey per the requirements of FAA Advisory Circular's 150/5300-16A, 17C and 18B (Change 1).

1.4 Master Plan Goals and Objectives

Consistent with the guidelines of the FDOT and FAA, the primary goal of this Master Plan is to update proposed airport development based on the current forecasts and expected operational peaks. More specifically, the goals and objectives include:

- Utilize the current FAA Terminal Area Forecast (TAF) to develop peaking characteristics, future aircraft fleet mix, and cargo forecast
- Develop a landside and airside development plan that is consistent with the changing nature of operations at PGD
 - Determine future facility requirements for demand-driven development
 - Determine need/justification for any future runway extensions
 - Evaluate the operational efficiency of the airfield and identify recommended improvements to mitigate potential issues
 - Determine feasible terminal and vehicle parking development plan
 - Prepare a Terminal Area Plan that addresses short-term and long-term requirements
 - Obtain an FAA approved ALP that includes projects which can potentially receive federal funding
- Prepare updated noise contours based on the existing and future aircraft fleet mix
- Prepare a capital improvement plan that is financially feasible and sensitive to the Authority's business model
- Prepare an Environment Assessment for the short-term plan that will secure FAA environmental approval
- Develop an Airports-GIS database and new Exhibit 'A' Airport Property Inventory Map
- Identify land use and development opportunities to maximize airport revenues while minimizing development costs

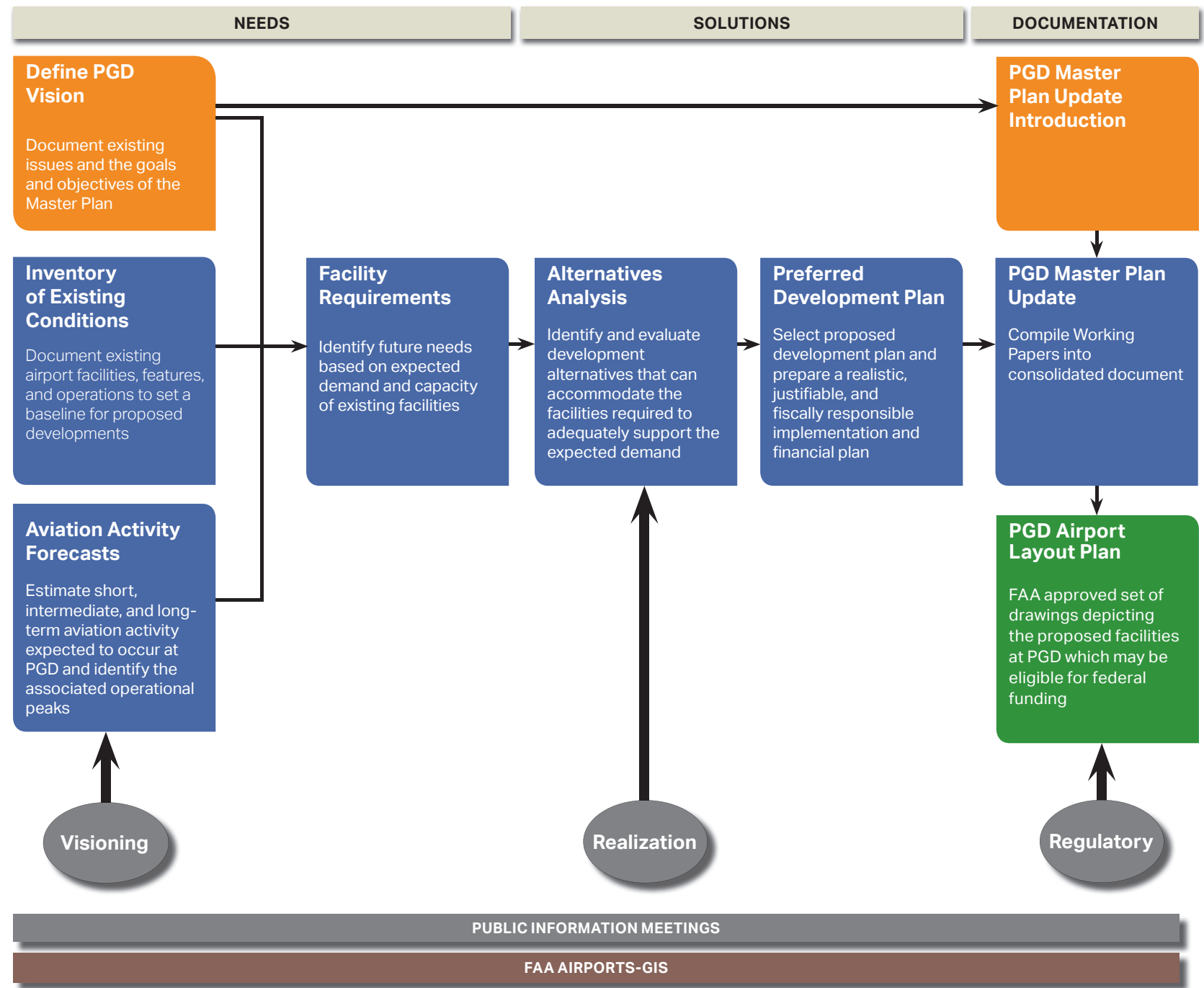


Figure 1-1: Master Planning Process
Source: AECOM (2016)