



Vermilion Airport Survey

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to provide information about the Vermilion airport for individuals to make an informed choice about the direction of the airport for the Town of Vermilion.

The Vermilion airport (YVG) is a registered aerodrome located in the Northeast portion of the Town with a land area of approximately 150 acres. The airport is operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. There is a single runway with two approaches, a taxiway, and public apron for aircraft parking. Use of the airport runway, taxiway, and apron is free to any aviation user. The airport also has a terminal building with rental space and land available for hanger development. The current airport was built in 1976 which replaced the original airport that was constructed in 1944 that was a grass runway. The runway underwent repaving in 1996 and some spot repairs in 2020. In the late 90's the grain elevator to the SE of the airport was constructed which lowered the useable runway length significantly. This limits the airports' ability to have larger aircraft land at the airport now and in the future. In 2019 a masterplan was done for the airport to identify potential future uses of the airport and provide a general scope of work to rehabilitate the runway. The study identified that at a minimum the runway is in need of spot repairs to the runway base and repaving of the runway, taxiway, and apron. It also recommended a geotechnical investigation be completed to confirm the scope of the repairs. There are business's that operate at the airport both part-time and full-time. These include a crop spray plane, flight school, aviation fuel, and aircraft maintenance. Council and Administration is seeking input on the direction to take with the airport in regards to the value of the airport to the community and the potential expenses for construction at the airport.



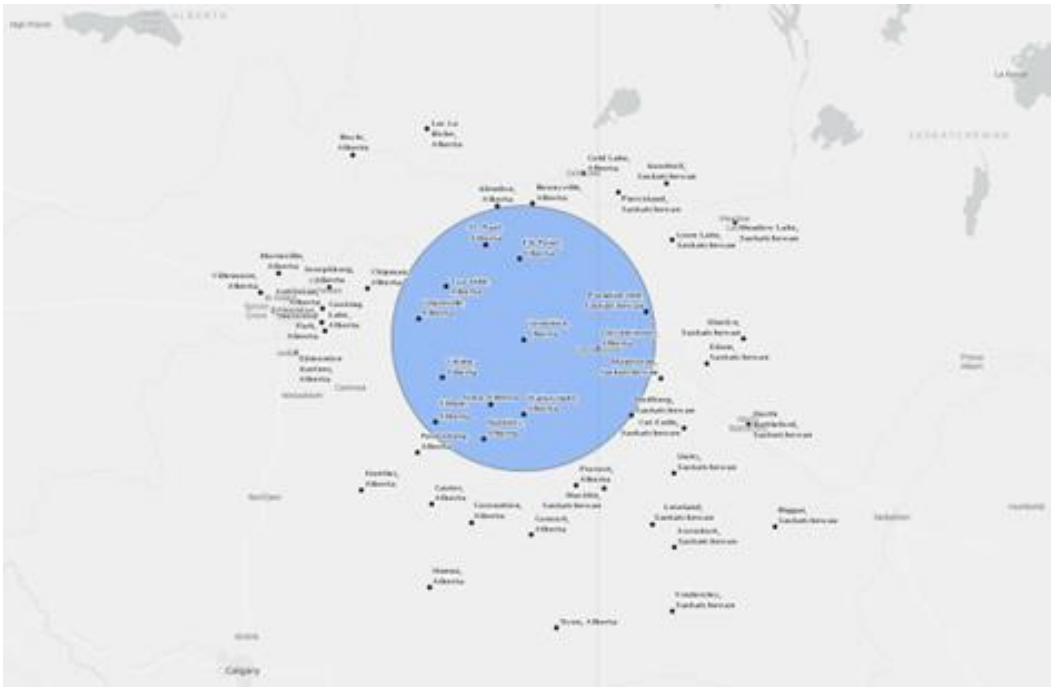
*** 1.** Where is your primary residence?

- ☐ Town of Vermilion
- ☐ County of Vermilion River
- ☐ Beyond Vermilion and the County of Vermilion River

*** 2.** Are you a pilot residing in the Town of Vermilion that uses the airport?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

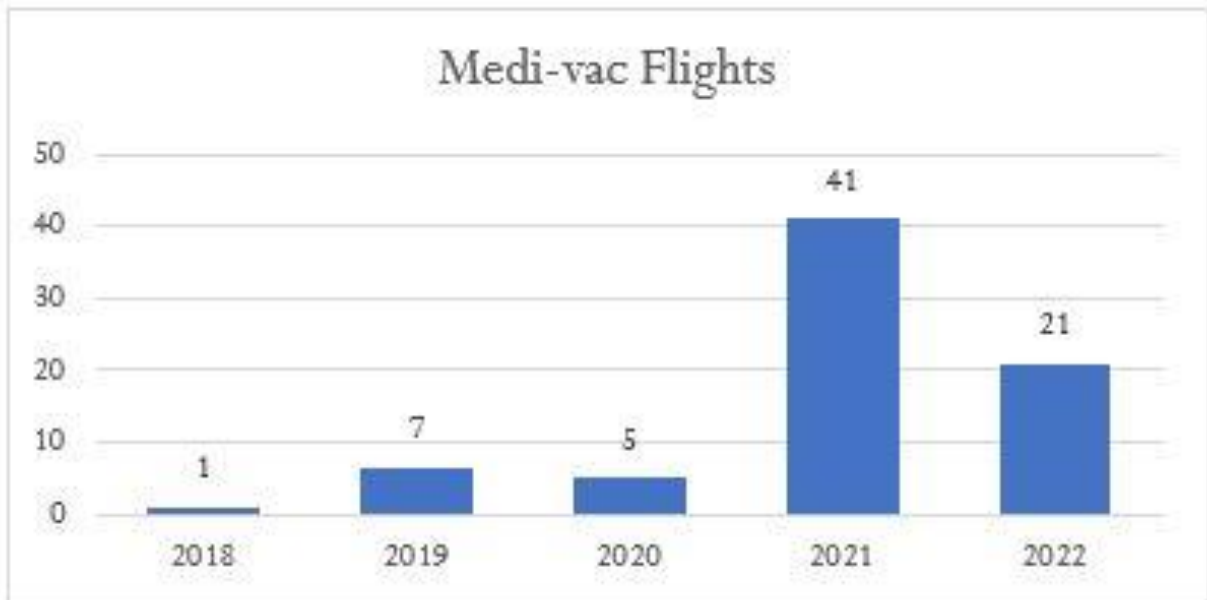
*** 3.** There are 12 airports within a 100 km radius of Vermilion. Since 2018, the Town has recorded 266 flights that were from another airport within 100 km from Vermilion.



Were you aware that there are 12 airports within this radius of Vermilion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

*** 4.** The provincial medevac fleet provides medical service for the community. The medevac fleet is stationed out of Edmonton and Lac La Biche. It is also the heaviest aircraft that frequent the Vermilion airport. Historically, the Medevac provides Vermilion and the surrounding area with additional medical coverage in non-emergent situations (primarily patient transfers). Since 2017 there has been 75 missions with the medi-vac. With Covid-19, there was an increase in usage in 2021 and 2022. In the last three years there were two medevac aircraft that overload the pavement bearing weight capacity on the runway, which landed 16 times.



With this information, do you support this service at the airport?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Nearby airports can service Vermilion for Medi-vac instead

*** 5.** There are twelve planes that are registered to this airport, to which 7 are active. Historical records dating back to 1970 indicate there is an average of 323 flights per year. For reference in 1970 there were 276 recorded flights, 2003 there were 332 flights, and 2022 there were 363 lights. On average the 7 pilots (who have aircraft registered to the Vermilion airport) utilize the runway 45% of the time and 9 medevac aircraft that utilize the runway 6% of the time. There is also 5% of additional aircraft movements that could not be identified. The remaining 44% of flights are from private (36%) and commercial (8%) pilots from across Canada. Majority of the flights that are non-local are aircraft from within Alberta to which the majority are from within 150km from Vermilion.

With the usage information of the Vermilion airport, what is your opinion on the usage amounts?

- ☐ This is more usage than I thought
- ☐ This what I expected for the amount of usage
- ☐ This is not as much usage as I thought

*** 6.** The Town of Vermilion is able to borrow money and carry debt up to \$18,211,000. Currently the Town is at 76.5% of its debt limit which is \$13,394,000. The borrowing amount available to the Town is \$3,303,000. This debt limit affects the Towns ability to borrow funds for future projects such as roads, sewer, water, recreation, etc. This borrowing could also include work at the airport.

Were you aware of the Towns debt limit status and the limited amount of debt capabilities there is left for the Town?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ This doesn't matter to me

*** 7.** The COPA (Canadian Owners and Pilots Association) found that in 2005, 75% of the Airports in Alberta participated in a Financial Sustainability Study. 75% of the participating airports were in a deficit position, 16% were in a break-even position, and 9% posted a surplus. Historically the Town of Vermilion has subsidized the operations of the airport and operates at a deficit position. Over the past two years the airport has operated with an average of \$50,000 deficit per year. For the 2023 budget year this has grown to a \$105,282 deficit. This increase is due to the allocation of actual use of equipment and time for the operation of the airport for items such as mowing, weed spraying, terminal building maintenance, power, natural gas, water, sewer, snow removal, runway lights, line painting, etc.

Were you aware of the operational deficit that the airport incurs annually?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ This doesn't matter to me

*** 8.** Having an airport provides positive impacts to the community through tourism, and businesses at the airport. COPA (Canadian Owners and Pilots Association) found during the general aviation economic impact report from 2017-18 that “each aircraft directly generates 0.57 FTE’s (Full Time Equivalents) of employment, earning approximately \$42,400 in wages. This contributes \$68,500 in direct GDP and \$168,500 in direct economic output to the Canadian economy”.

Were you aware of the economic impacts and benefits of having an airport?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ This doesn't matter to me

*** 9.** The airport is in need of reconstruction work on the runway to continue to maintain the level of service for the medi-vac and other aircraft that utilize the airport. The project at a minimum includes spot repairs of gravel structure, repaving the runway, taxiway, and apron, as well as new line painting. A cost estimate of 2.2 to 2.3 million dollars was done in 2019 with the recommendation of a geotechnical investigation for the surfaces to confirm the work. The geotechnical investigation could identify that more work may be required. There is a provincial grant available that the Town can apply for to cover up to 75% of the cost of the project. If the Town was successful with the grant, the additional spending would equate to an 11% tax increase overall. For the full construction value, the tax increase would be equivalent to 44%.

If the Town was successful with a grant application for the project at the airport, would you support the Town spending approximately \$550,000 towards the reconstruction of the airport?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

*** 10.** If the Town was unsuccessful with the grant application, do you support the Town spending approximately 2.2 to 2.3 million dollars to complete the reconstruction?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

*** 11.** The airport is not limited to being in one state or another. There are different levels of service that can be offered for an airport. The airport could be to a paved state which allows for the medevac to land in Vermilion, but could also go to a grassed state to continue to allow smaller private planes to land. The other option to consider is whether to keep the airport and re-develop to another land use such as residential, commercial, recreation, etc.

What do you want to see for the future of the airport in Vermilion?

- ☐ Complete construction and maintain the same level of service
- ☐ Do not do construction and keep as is, knowing that the air ambulance would eventually not be able to land in Vermilion.
- ☐ Shut down and re-develop the airport

*** 12.** If the airport were to be re-developed, what do you think would be the most immediate land use need for the Town in this area?

- ☐ Recreation Facility
- ☐ Outdoor recreation facilities
- ☐ Commercial or industrial development
- ☐ Residential development
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ Other (please specify)

DONE