

## CHAPTER 1 - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The last New Hampshire State Airport System Plan was completed in December, 1993. Due to the numerous changes that have occurred in the State and the aviation industry since that time, the Division of Aeronautics has sponsored this update to the 1993 plan to address the current and anticipated needs of the system of airports throughout the State.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation's mission is to “plan, construct, and maintain the best possible transportation system and State facilities in the most efficient and economical manner utilizing quality management techniques consistent with available resources and mandated controls.” The Department is “committed to excellence, safety, innovation and the future.”

The Division of Aeronautics is tasked by the State’s legislature to provide the citizens of New Hampshire with an air transportation system that is safe, efficient, and socially responsible. The Division of Aeronautics interacts with the state’s airports in a number of ways:

- **Funding:** The Division issues state grants, and administers federal grants, to airports. Through its capital improvement program (CIP), the Division assigns priorities to airports and individual projects that are eligible for state and/or federal funding. The Division applies to the state legislature for airport funding.
- **Registration:** The Division registers all airports, commercial operators, and aircraft within the state. It also inspects all public-use airports and approves new landing sites.
- **Regulatory:** The Division enforces state law regarding aeronautics, and supports FAA in enforcing federal aviation regulations when appropriate. The Division is also tasked with assisting other federal and state agencies during aircraft accident/incident investigations.
- **Navigation Aids:** The Division maintains state-owned navigation aids used by pilots.
- **Technical Resource:** The Division provides technical resources to airports in the form of master plan reviews and other requests.
- **Promotion:** The Division actively promotes airports and aviation through public events and forums, and coordination with the media.

There were 25 airports listed in the 1993 Airport System Plan. Since then, Foord and Salem Airports have closed while Newfound Valley Airport re-opened to the public and Colebrook was added to the System. Nevertheless, the potential loss of other airports is a real concern to the Division. The focus of the previous System Plan was facility oriented, and did not assess the economic value of the airports to the State or their communities. Since that time, demand for funding for airport capital improvement projects has outstripped the resources available on the local, state, and federal level. In order to make the case for increased funding, this study analyzed the role of airports in relation to local, regional, and statewide economic development.

There are also so-called ‘structural issues’ that were addressed regarding airport funding on the local and state level. For example, unlike other states, there is no aviation trust fund in New Hampshire providing a source of funding dedicated to airport development. The State does, however, have one source in the aircraft operating fees. Another potential revenue source, the aviation fuel tax, goes into the state’s general fund. In addition, due to the state’s tax structure, there is a weak funding mechanism in place both on the local and

state level. The Division of Aeronautics and the airports in the State System rely on appropriations from the legislature for the state share of project funding.

This Airport System Plan Update has three overall objectives:

- a) Clearly identify the relationship between airports and economic development
- b) Develop a program to increase investments by local and state agencies in airports
- c) Identify the key constituencies, and make them aware of the value of airports to the state's economy

A list of goals was developed to reach the three objectives described above. The list of goals evolved as the study progressed and additional information was collected throughout the study process.

## 1.2 SYSTEM PLAN UPDATE GOALS

Based on the scope of work and discussions with Division of Aeronautics staff, six goals were developed for this study. These goals will be used to help define and guide the analysis completed for this study. The goals and objectives are discussed below.

### 1. Identify The Specific Role Of Each Airport In Terms Of Economic Development

One of the key elements of the System Plan was to analyze the connection between airport activity and economic development. Airports such as Manchester demonstrate an obvious and direct relationship between aviation activity and economic development. Pease International Transport and Lebanon demonstrate similar relationships because they also have scheduled airline service, albeit on differing scales compared to Manchester. General Aviation (GA) airports, however, have less apparent relationships between airport activity and local or regional economic development. GA airports can support local economic development, but do drive such growth regionally. This System Plan developed various quantitative and qualitative factors with which to define an airport's role and to assess the airport's value to the region and to the State.

### 2. Develop A System Plan Suited To Meet The Goals Of Airport Users, The State's Citizens, And The Division Of Aeronautics

The System Plan process obtained input from various stakeholders including airport managers, airport users, local and State government officials, and regional planners and economic development officials, to name a few. This information was valuable in establishing the needs of the different airports and the regions that they serve and in identifying the best way in which to develop the airport system.

### 3. Develop Strategies To Preserve Airports, And Identify The Investment Required To Maintain And Enhance Airports

This System Plan identified airport needs and prioritized those needs to maximize the development of the airport system. Once the airports were prioritized, strategies were developed to preserve the system of airports by identifying issues impacting future use and development. Required investment to meet the needs of airports was also determined and incorporated into a development plan.

### 4. Identify The Key Stakeholders And Provide The Information That They Need

One of the key objectives of this System Plan was to identify key constituencies and stakeholders, and include them in this study process. Their input and participation was very important to develop a database of information that was relevant and useful to this analysis. It is anticipated that identifying and



incorporating the stakeholders and key constituencies will also help to support and secure the funding necessary to maintain and grow the State's airport system in the future.

## **5. Develop Strategies To Enhance Statewide Intermodal Access**

Intermodal access has become an important factor in developing an effective statewide transportation system. Integration of different modes of transportation has become an effective way in which to move people and goods, and also to relieve congestion on the highway system, thereby improving air quality as well. This study reviewed intermodal development options in the state and determined how airports may factor into the state's intermodal network. Recommendations to improve ground access to airports were also developed based on input from airport managers, as well as intercity and municipal transit companies.