FACT SHEET
FAA Airport Privatization Pilot Program
Gwinnett County Airport – Briscoe Field in Lawrenceville, Georgia
Last Updated December 15, 2011

Background

- Like many other communities, Gwinnett County seeks significant new revenue sources through efficiencies, user fees, and the best use of assets.
- In 2009, a private investment group approached Gwinnett County officials with a concept that envisioned privatization of the operations, development, and maintenance of Gwinnett County Airport – Briscoe Field as part of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Privatization Pilot Program, including potential commercial passenger service.
- The FAA Airport Privatization Pilot Program affords the opportunity and framework for public sponsors of airports, like Gwinnett County, to explore privatization to generate private capital for airport improvements and development.
- In January 2010, the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution directing staff to submit a preliminary application to the FAA to reserve one of five slots in the Airport Privatization Pilot Program.
- Gwinnett County's preliminary application to the FAA was the initial step in starting the lengthy process of studying the possibility of a public-private partnership to operate Gwinnett's airport. The preliminary application identified the project objectives, described the proposed process and timetables, and provided current financial and operations statements.
- FAA acceptance of the pre-application does not commit the County to proceed with a final application.
- The FAA has prepared a fact sheet about Gwinnett County's application to the program.

Gwinnett's Preliminary Application to FAA

- April 26, 2010: Gwinnett County submitted a preliminary application to the FAA
- May 26, 2010: FAA accepted Gwinnett's preliminary application
- Gwinnett currently holds the fourth of five slots in the airport privatization pilot program
- If the FAA approves the final application for Gwinnett's participation in the pilot program, Briscoe Field will qualify as a general aviation airport in the program
- No commitment to continue process
- Goal: Explore use of private capital for airport improvements

Other Steps Taken

- August 16, 2010: Gwinnett County opened three responses to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from American Airports Corporation, Gwinnett Airport, LLC, and Propeller Airports Briscoe Field, Inc.
- October 19, 2010: The Board of Commissioners postponed a decision on requesting specific proposals until early 2011.
- April 28, 2011: A special called meeting for the purpose of receiving public comments on the issue of airport privatization was held by the Board of Commissioners. This meeting took place in the main sanctuary at 12 Stone Church in Lawrenceville in order to accommodate more people. No vote was held at this meeting.
- May 3, 2011: The Board voted on a motion directing staff to develop guidelines for a Request for Proposals (RFP).
- May 17, 2011: The Board authorized a change order with Infrastructure Management Group, Inc., (IMG) for assistance with the potential privatization process as part of the preliminary application to the FAA Airport Privatization Pilot Program.
- August 23, 2011: Commissioners authorized work to issue and RFP and affirmed a commitment to openness and public participation in the process for considering privatization of Briscoe Field, including the formation and role of a citizen advisory committee.
- August 31, 2011: Gwinnett County entered into a contract with IMG to develop the RFP.
- September 20, 2011: The Board met with IMG representatives to discuss the privatization process. The consultants recommended separating privatization from commercialization and developing the RFP with a short term focus on continued operation of Briscoe Field as a general aviation airport. The RFP also would consider a long term vision for the airport, which may or may not include scheduled commercial service.
- October 4, 2011: Commissioners voted to reject all three SOQ (statement of qualifications) responses and expanded the contract with IMG to assist with preparing and evaluating the RFP and to maintain contact with the FAA. The Board also created the Gwinnett County Airport Privatization Citizen Review Committee (APCRC) and began appointing members.
    - Members of the Gwinnett County APCRC are:
        - Gaye McNeil and Steve Ramey (Chairman's appointment)
        - Terry Britt and Nickie Summers (District 1 Commissioner's appointment)
        - Mary Jane Polizzotto and Woody Woodruff (District 1 Commissioner's appointment)
        - Gary Custar and Jeff Timler (District 3 Commissioner's appointment)
        - Tony Powell and Jim Regan (District 4 Commissioner's appointment)
        - Eric "Tip" Cape (Gwinnett county Airport Authority appointment)

- November 8, 2011: The Gwinnett County APCRC held its first meeting and is working hard, continuing to meet regularly. The citizen committee is expected to complete its report during the first quarter of 2012. Committee meeting agendas and minutes can be found at www.gwinnettbriscoefield.com.
- December 8, 2011: Gwinnett County issued a Request for Proposals to solicit proposals from qualified airport management and development firms or consortia for a public-private partnership for the lease, operation, and improvement of Gwinnett County Airport – Briscoe Field. The deadline for proposal submissions is February 8, 2012, with review and scoring completion anticipated later in the first quarter of 2012. This procurement process is running parallel with the work of the APCRC.

Possible Next Steps

- Requests for proposals are evaluated
  - Board of Commissioners selects preferred proposal
- Contract Negotiation
  - Gwinnett County negotiates with private sector partner
  - Conduct Potential Impact Studies
    - Based on proposed operational changes
    - Not needed if simply a change of management
    - Adding passenger service would require extensive studies, including environmental and economic impacts
    - Other state and federal agencies likely to be involved
  - Board of Commissioners approves contract
- Final Application Process to FAA
  - FAA review and certification of private operator
  - Closing – sign contract with private sector partner
- FAA approval requires private operator to:
  - Ensure continued access to the airport on reasonable terms
  - Ensure continued safe operations, security, maintenance, and improvements
  - Mitigate noise and environmental impacts in accordance with state and federal law
  - Provide for the continued operation of the airport in case of the private manager and operator's bankruptcy or other defaults
- There is no timeline for the FAA to complete its review of the final application.

Facts About Briscoe Field (Gwinnett County Airport)

- Located on approximately 500 acres in Lawrenceville
- One runway
  - 6,000 feet long and 100 feet wide (approximately half is on city property)
  - Can handle most corporate jet aircraft in operation today
  - 66,000 pound dual-wheel weight-bearing capacity
  - Maximum takeoff weight of a Lear Jet 35-A: 18,300 pounds
  - Maximum takeoff weight of a Boeing 737-700: 153,000 pounds
- Aircraft/Tenants
  - 310 aircraft based at Briscoe Field in 2010
  - 24 master lease holders (each has at least one building)
- Operations (either a takeoff or a landing)
  - 56,849 operations in 2010
  - 9.6 percent increase compared to 2009 (51,887)
- 4th busiest airport in Georgia (based on current FAA data)
  - Behind Hartsfield-Jackson, DeKalb Peachtree, and Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport
- Opened October 1966
- $25 million series of improvements completed in 1991, which included:
  - Expansion of property
  - Construction of current runway and parallel taxiway
- Currently there are two Fixed Base Operators at the airport:
  - Landmark Aviation on the north apron
  - Aircraft Specialists on the south apron
- Air traffic control tower is open daily 7:00am – 9:00pm
- Management provided by Aviation Division of the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation, which includes daily operations, maintenance, regulatory compliance, development, and marketing
- Governed by five-member Airport Authority Board, whose members are appointed by Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners

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