

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief summary of the purpose of the Master Plan for Saratoga County Airport and a brief historical overview of the Airport. Also discussed in this chapter are the Goals and Objectives developed by the Saratoga County Department of Public Works (SCDPW) for the Master Plan. The chapter is organized as follows:

- Purpose of the Master Plan
- History of the Airport
- Goals and Objectives of the Master Plan
- Organization of the Master Plan Study

1.1. PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The SCDPW is the Airport Sponsor for Saratoga County Airport and develops and maintains a vital transportation facility that provides the highest level of safety for based and transient aircraft operations. The Airport also serves to support and enhance the existing and future economic development initiatives within Saratoga County.

The Airport has two paved runways with a supporting taxiway system, aircraft parking aprons and hangar and T-hangar facilities to store aircraft. The Fixed Based Operator (FBO) provides aviation services to the general aviation community and also provides limited day-to-day management oversight of the Airport. Two glider clubs are based at the Airport. Based on the most recent Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Master Record Form (5010), the Airport has 38,550 annual operations and 60 based aircraft.

The primary goal for this project is to develop both air and landside infrastructure and facilities to meet the growing needs of the Airport and the Region. This goal includes identification and implementation of realistic sustainable targets and practices. The work includes improvements to existing air and landside facilities and recommendations for new and innovative ideas to enhance cost effective operations, profitability, and customer services of the Airport.

1.2. HISTORY OF THE AIRPORT

Initial development of Saratoga County Airport was in 1942 during World War II and was built as a Civil Aeronautics Administration project. The project is identified as 904-30-38 and was designated as necessary for national defense. The Airport consists of two 4,000-foot runways



with parallel and connecting taxiways and a small apron. It was paved by the Airways Engineering Section of the Civil Aeronautics Administration during the summer of 1943. The pavement was placed on a natural subgrade (soil class A-3) consisting of a 6-inch base course of sand and plant mix asphalt emulsion, a tack coat and a 1 ½ - inch bituminous surface course. It was designed to accommodate a gross loading of 30,000 pounds. An A.N.C. lighting system with contact lights on two runways was installed as part of the project. The Airport was completed in October of 1943, and the total cost of development at that time was \$617,600. Acting pursuant to the terms of the Third Supplemental National Defense Appropriation Act of 1942, title to the Airport was turned over to the Town of Milton in May of 1942 and was officially opened November of 1943. As part of the agreement, the Town of Milton agreed that, continuously during the term of this agreement, the Airport would be operated as such, and for no other purpose, and that unless utilized exclusively for military purposes, it would at all times be operated for the use and benefit of the public, and reasonable terms and without unjust discrimination, and without grant or exercise of any exclusive right for use of the Airport within the meaning of Section 303 of the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938.

The Airport served only small to medium sized aircraft, and the cost of operation became an economic burden for the Town. Subsequently, the Town offered to sell the Airport to Saratoga County for \$20,000 so it could be promoted and developed to the best interest and advantage of the entire County. The County rejected the offer, and the Town of Milton entered into a 10-year lease with the Mustang Flying Service, Inc. By January of 1968, the Town Board had received considerable criticism because the Mustang firm had made no improvements and the lease was terminated. A number of other firms indicated an interest in operating the Airport, but the previous experience prejudiced any substantial action in the direction.

In September 1967, the New York State Department of Commerce, Bureau of Aviation, prepared a report on improvements of the Airport at the request of the Town Board. The major recommendation of the Bureau of Aviation, as stated in the report, was that responsibility for the Airport be assumed by Saratoga County and that Federal and State assistance be sought by the County to accomplish needed renovations and improvements. Influenced by these recommendations and the criticism received concerning improvements, the Town Board then voted to offer the Airport to the County for \$50,000.

The County rejected this offer; but after investigations and extensive negotiations, the Board of Supervisory of Saratoga County passed Resolution 120, dated August 12, 1968, which offered the Town of Milton the sum of \$25,000 for purchase of the Airport. Said sum was to be paid upon acceptance of the offer and delivery of an acceptable title. Consent of Federal and State agencies was obtained, and the Chairman and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors were directed, as soon as practicable, to make application for Federal and/or State assistance for repairs, improvements, equipment, preliminary studies and/or surveys which were appropriate or necessary to improve upon the safety of the Airport.



Upon acceptance of the offer by the Town of Milton, the County in April of 1969, under Resolution 55, authorized the purchase. Needed improvements were of immediate concern. Resolution 88, dated July 14, 1969, authorized the execution and delivery of a contract between the people of the State of New York and the County of Saratoga for the undertaking and completion of an Airport project consisting of land acquisition, obstruction removal, rehabilitation and lighting of Runway 14-32, taxiway and apron improvements, and construction of an access road.

In July of 1969, Resolution 105 was adopted and authorized leasing of the Airport to an interim base operator. As a result, Richmor Aviation, Inc., was awarded an interim contract to operate the Airport, and they remained the fixed base operator until 2003. In general, the terms of their lease called for charter and fueling services, flight instruction, light maintenance of aircraft and minor repairs, aircraft sales and services, and promotion and organization of flying clubs.

Since the purchase of the Airport, various resolutions were adopted by the County legislature concerning State and Federal aid. Resolution 124, dated August 10, 1970, authorized application for Federal and State funds for development of the Airport.

With the use of varying amounts of State and Federal aid, miscellaneous improvements have been made to the Airport. The Airport property has been cleared of brush, junk, and debris, which had accumulated over the years; and maintenance, repairs and improvements to existing buildings have been accomplished through the efforts of the County and the fixed base operator. The beacon and runway lighting, installed in 1941-1942, were repaired and have been in continuous operation since the County purchased the Airport. In 1970, \$47,932.30 was disbursed for maintenance and repairs to the runways and taxiways prior to paving, and the 3,000-foot taxiway and 4,000 by 150 foot runway received a paving overlay at a cost of \$112,178.88.

On June 14, 1971, Resolution 144 was adopted by the County legislature. This resolution authorized an application to the State and Federal governments for funds to do a master plan study and report on the Saratoga County Airport. Projects that were included for study included a boundary survey, which had not been completed when the Airport was built, and a master plan update.

Since 1971, there have been a number of projects to enhance the Airport, expand facilities to meet aviation demand and to maintain the Airport in an operationally safe manner. The list below provides a chronological listing of projects that were completed since that time:

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| 1970 | R/W 14-32 2" Asphalt Concrete Overlay |
| 1988 | Master Plan Update & Environmental Assessment (EA) |
| 1989 | New Snow Blower |
| 1989 | Installed AWOS |
| 1990 | R/W 5-23 Obstruction Clearing |



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| 1991 | Off Airport Property Acquisition |
| 1991 | R/W 5-23 700' Extension |
| 1999 | Airport Master Plan Update & EA |
| 2001 | R/W 5-23 Reconstruction & Lighting |
| 2002 | On Airport Obstruction Clearing |
| 2002 | Off Airport Property Acquisition |
| 2003 | R/W 14-32 Reconstruction & Lighting |
| 2004-2012 | Tree Clearing and Easement Acquisition Project (Multi-phase) |
| 2000 | Runway 5-23 Reconstruction |
| 2003 | Runway 14-32 Reconstruction |
| 2003 | Construction of Saratoga Soaring Hangar |
| 2003 | Water Line Extension – Richmor Hangar |
| 2010 | Replacement of Barn Hangar with new Box Hangar |
| 2010 | Replacement of AWOS Unit |
| 2010 | Taxiway A, B, C, D, E, F and Apron Mill and Overlay |
| 2011 | Fire Station Expansion – Geyser Road |
| 2012 | Construction of Adirondack Soaring Hangar |
| 2012 | Runway 5-23 Taxiway and Visual Aids Lighting Design and Construction |
| 2013 | Based Aircraft Apron Rehabilitation Design |

1.3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE MASTER PLAN

At the beginning of the study, a set of Goals and Objectives were developed collaboratively with the Saratoga County Department of Public Works. The purpose of these Goals and Objectives was to provide a set of guiding principles upon which the Master Plan will be developed. The following elements were developed:

1. Work cooperatively with the Federal and State agencies to balance Airport development potential and operational considerations with environmental constraints.
 - a. Identify the needs of the Airport and clearly understand the environmental constraints that affect Airport development and operations.
 - b. Develop effective strategies to maintain the Airport to FAA operational and safety standards.
 - c. Identify strategies to meet existing and future needs of the Airport.
2. Develop strategy to work effectively with the community while also meeting the operational needs of the Airport.
 - a. Review existing land use and zoning regulations. Work with the affected municipalities to revise and update land use and zoning regulations as necessary to protect the Airport, the Community and maintain compliance with FAA design criteria and grant assurances.



- b. Develop a community outreach program to inform the Community of ongoing Airport initiatives during and after the MPU is complete.
3. Enhance the financial performance of the Airport and enhance the Airport's role in regional economic development.
 - a. Enhance facilities to better accommodate business use of the Airport.
 - b. Evaluate and identify initiatives to enhance the revenue generation potential of the Airport.
 - c. Identify economic development potential of the Airport with Local, County and Regional planning agencies.

1.4. ORGANIZATION OF THE MASTER PLAN STUDY

This Master Plan is organized in accordance with Advisory Circular 150/5070-4B, *Airport Master Plans*. The analysis presented in this Master Plan Update chronicles existing facilities, land use, socioeconomic statistics and baseline environmental conditions. Aviation forecasts will be developed to identify future aviation demand and to compare existing facilities to future demand. Facility needs will be identified from this process and future development scenarios assessed using evaluation criteria tailored to this evaluation. A recommended plan will then be selected and become the basis for the Airport Layout Plan. Cost estimates will be prepared and phased over the twenty year planning period and will define how the projects will be funded by the FAA, the State of New York, the County and private investment.

The following chapters present the technical analysis described above:

- Inventory
- Aviation Demand Forecasts
- Environmental Overview
- Demand/Capacity Analysis and Facility Requirements
- Alternatives Analysis
- Airport Layout Plan and Capital Improvement Plan