

Western West Virginia Regional Airport



Special points of interest:

For example, the proposed Regional Airport would have:

- An initial runway length of at least 8,700 feet, enabling it to accommodate larger passenger and cargo aircraft and expandable to 11,000 feet if , and as, needed.
- State of the art and current FAA required operational and safety standards.
- The potential for a major air cargo operation.
- Hundreds of acres of land for future economic development immediately adjacent to the airport.
- The potential for more direct flights, more airline companies and more competitive fares.
- The capability to serve the Charleston/Huntington market for improved air service from one more economical and central location.

The Future

The West Virginia Public Port Authority (WVPPA) is engaged in a comprehensive study process to determine whether or not to recommend building a new regional airport at a site located near the Culloden exit of Interstate 64 between Huntington and Charleston.

In an effort to keep the public informed, this White Paper was created to present information on what has been determined thus far about the proposed I-64 regional airport site. Since this decision will have serious and lasting consequences for a great portion of central and

southern West Virginia, Eastern Kentucky and Southeast Ohio, this paper is an effort to shed light on the potential benefits a regional airport can bring to the region. This paper will also review the projected costs of the project.

The West Virginia Legislature created the WVPPA to plan for the future transportation needs of our state. Most forecasters suggest that planning for a new airport should project the air transportation needs 25 to 50 years down the road. So clearly, the regional airport decision is about the future.

With that in mind, the WVPPA is contemplating two very serious questions: What are our needs in the future and what proposal best meets those needs.

**IN OTHER WORDS,
what type of
facility can best
accommodate our
air transportation
needs and, in a
broader sense, be a
catalyst for
creating new jobs
and economic
prosperity for
decades to come?**

The Need

Air service in the Huntington and Charleston region is now provided by Tri-State and Yeager Airports as well as larger airports in Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia and Pennsylvania. While the

quality of existing air-service varies in meeting current demand, there are serious questions about the potential for either Tri-State or Yeager to fulfill future needs. If constructed, the I-64 site

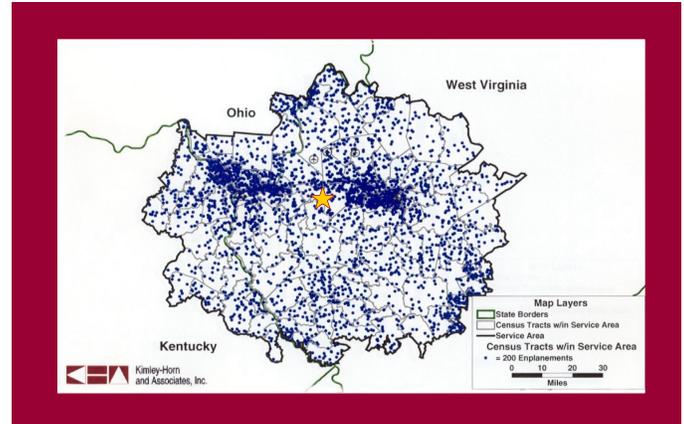
will offer immediate solutions to what many consider the limitations of existing facilities. The site is also considered to offer the best chance for improved air service.

The Site

Forty-three potential regional airport sites were evaluated by the WVPPA, including Yeager and Tri-State airports. The site which was selected is located in Lincoln County, three and a half miles from Interstate 64 near the Culloden interchange. The decision criteria, among others, included: topography, displacement of homes and businesses, impact to parks and recreational areas, developable land, runway configuration and the capability to meet future land needs.

One of the key factors the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) cites as highly important is travel time and distance from market areas. The market area for the regional airport lies between the upper Kanawha Valley and Ashland, Kentucky, and includes counties in Southeastern Ohio and Eastern Kentucky. This area had a population of 880,225 in 1996.

The I-64 site is centrally located between the area's two major population centers. The I-64 site is 31 miles from the center of Charleston and 32 miles from the center of Huntington.



This "barbell" map shows that the region's development muscle lies in the combination of the Charleston and Huntington markets. A gold star indicates the location of the proposed Regional Airport.

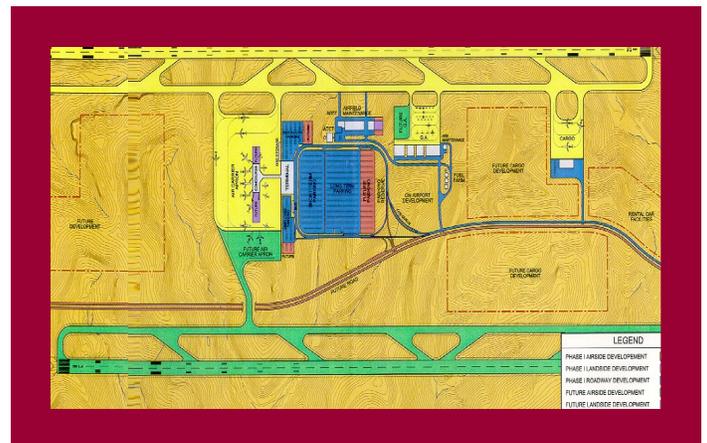
Studies indicate there will be 418,000 passengers flying out of the new regional airport during its first year of operation which is estimated to be 2006. In 2020, projections indicate more than 700,000 passengers will use the Regional Airport.

The Facility

Regional Airport Facility

The I-64 site is comprised of 3,400 acres located less than three and a half miles from Interstate 64. The facility will meet or exceed all FAA safety requirements. Initially, one runway will be constructed at a length of 8,700 feet, with 1,000 feet of safety overrun on each end.

The overall site plan includes room for two 10,000 to 11,000-foot runways with 1,000-foot overruns, parking and terminal facilities, along with 138 acres set aside for commercial/industrial aviation-related development inside the airport perimeter.



An overview of the proposed airport layout shows the phases of construction and the concept of parallel runways.

The Economy

Economic Impact

It is projected that the construction of the regional airport will take 3-4 years to complete, and pump approximately \$800 million into the regional economy, resulting in thousands of jobs during the construction phase.

The operation of

the airport will add more than 700 new jobs and more than \$100 million to West Virginia's economy annually.

Transportation systems play an essential role in economic development and a regional airport will make the region more attractive to companies looking for business or industrial

sites.

In addition, the I-64 site is located less than an hour's drive from more than 50 presently identified industrial sites offering more than 7,000 acres of developable property for additional job-producing facilities.

"The operation of the airport will add more than 700 new jobs and more than \$100 million to West Virginia's economy annually."

"Studies show that building the proposed airport is less expensive than updating all current facilities..."

The Cost

Economic feasibility studies have predicted that building the regional airport at the I-64 site is financially feasible. In fact, the studies indicate the site is the low cost solution to meeting our future air service needs.

The projected cost for the proposed regional airport is \$330

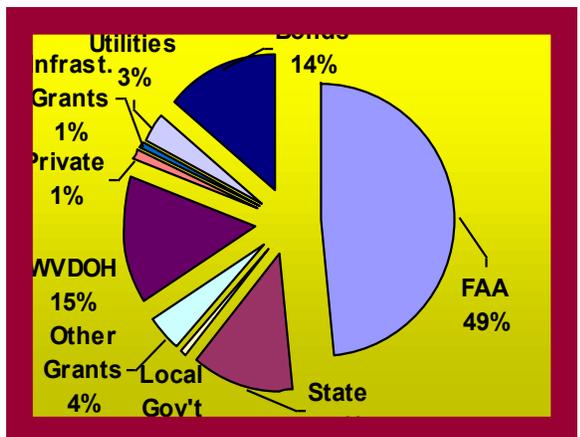
million, which includes the cost of building a road from the interstate to the location.

Studies show that building the proposed airport is less expensive than updating all current facilities to meet the regional airport criteria, for today and the future.

The Funding

Conservative analyses project that:

- The FAA is expected to provide approximately 49% of the cost of the airport, or more than \$160 million.
- The state of West Virginia may be asked to appropriate approximately \$40 million for the project payable over a term of several years.
- The remaining costs would be covered through airport revenue bonds, utility companies, local governments and private investment.



A pie chart of likely funding possibilities.

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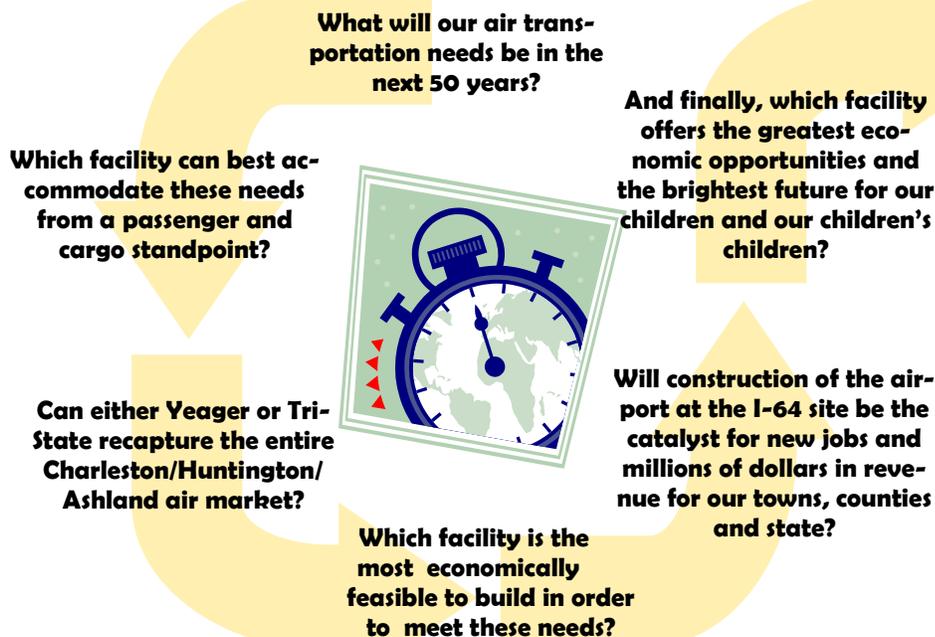
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Conclusion

In the broadest sense, the decision on the regional airport is really about the future and the answers to a few important **QUESTIONS:**



The studies reviewed by the WVPPA to this point clearly substantiate the need for a regional airport at the I-64 site. However, more work, including studies on the re-use of Tri-State and Yeager airports, need to be completed before the WVPPA can make an informed "build, no build" decision. It is the goal of the West Virginia Public Port Authority to make that decision on the regional airport in 2001.