

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FLOYD BENNETT MEMORIAL AIRPORT  
AND AGAINST AIRPORT RUNWAY 1/19 EXTENSION PROJECT

RESOLUTION NO.: \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

INTRODUCED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

SECONDED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport (hereafter referred to as "Airport") is a public, county owned, general aviation airport in Warren County, New York, located in the Town of Queensbury and three miles from the City of Glens Falls, and is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems as one of the 15 "Regional" General Aviation (GA) airports in New York State, and

WHEREAS, the Airport is a vital community asset, and provides fast, convenient access to Warren and Washington Counties' communities, and the Lake George region, and offers travelers a means to access the Adirondack region (in addition to other airports, such as the Saratoga County, Ticonderoga, Saranac Lake, and Lake Placid airports), and

WHEREAS, the Airport provides a vital link for businesses, tourism and the recreational flying community and strives to provide world-class services and facilities producing sustainable benefits to our community, and

WHEREAS, in or about 1991, there were 69 aircraft based at the Airport, with 57 being single engine airplanes and 8 being multi-engine airplanes, and

WHEREAS, in or about 1991, there were already significant operations by heavy, fast business jets; and

WHEREAS, in or about 1991, the Airport Master Plan proposed extending Runway 1/19 to a length of 5,300 to 7,800 feet, with a length of 5,500 feet as the preferred extended length, and

WHEREAS, there were significant concerns related to extending Runway 1, including the most significant being the terrain removal required, so extending Runway 19 was recommended, but since no immediate action was deemed necessary, no direct actions were undertaken to extend Runway 1/19 at that time; and

WHEREAS, the 2002 Airport Master Plan update again proposed extending Runway 1/19 (this time by 500 to 1,000 feet instead of by 500 feet), but no direct actions were undertaken to extend Runway 1/19 at that time; and

WHEREAS, the 2002 proposal to extend Runway 1 involves clearcutting 23 acres of forest, destroying 20 acres of wetlands, leveling 10 acres of a hillside, filling one small marl fen wetland, and potentially impacting the unique marl fen wetlands adjacent to the runway construction area; and

WHEREAS, in the last 14 years no action was taken to extend the runway, but the New York Statewide Airport Economic Impact Study, 2010 technical Report states that: "Study surveys of sponsors and businesses revealed that 37 full- and part-time jobs and \$6.6 million in expenditures are the direct result of on-airport businesses, including airport sponsor expenditures, and visitor spending at the airport, including indirect expenditures, the total impact for Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport was \$8.3 million, supporting 53 jobs", and

WHEREAS, the Airport has contributed millions of dollars to our local economy, and

WHEREAS, aside from the 2010 study, a 2002 study found the economic impact at that time to be \$4.2 million per year, and that the Airport has also attracted almost \$10 million in grants since 2002 - grants that have brought business to area employers and paychecks to their employees, and

WHEREAS, according to the study by RA Wiedemann and Associates (February 2015), "Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport supports 97 jobs and \$10 million in annual economic impact. The Airport generates \$478,400 in State and local taxes and provides incomes of more than \$4.3 million to New York residents", and "the value of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport has been estimated in this analysis, using two very different measures. The first was the economic activity metric, which assesses the job creation, income, and output, generated at the Airport. This value was determined through analysis, and shows that the Airport generates an average of \$10.04 million per year and sustains 97 jobs in the area. A second measure of the value of the Airport involves the current asset value. In this regard, a method was used that first estimated the current replacement value of the facility and then reduced that value by the useful life remaining on each specific asset. This procedure resulted in a replacement value estimate of \$80.4 million and a current value of \$46.5 million. Taken as a snapshot in time, the total value of the Airport could be estimated to include its annual economic activity (\$10.0 million) plus its current asset value (\$46.5 million). Adding these two numbers, it can be shown that the overall value of the Airport to the community is \$56.5 million. As mentioned, this means that the Airport is producing output equal to 21.6 percent of its current asset value each year, and

WHEREAS, using the information offered by the above studies (note: two separate studies that used the same economic modeling program), the Airport has contributed more than \$10 to our region for every \$1 the County has invested in it, and

WHEREAS, with the length of Runway 1 at 5,000 feet, the Airport has provided all of the above benefits, and there are currently 53 aircraft based at the Airport, including 49 single engine aircraft, 3 multi engine aircraft, and 1 jet engine aircraft, with newer jets coming to the Airport, such as a Challenger 300 and a Falcon 900, and these jets are basing at the Airport with Runway 1/19 at its current length of 5,000 feet, and

WHEREAS, other airports, such as Saratoga and Columbia Counties, have elected not to extend their runways using FAA funding, and Saratoga in particular continues to have nearly four times more jet flight operations than the Airport, even though Saratoga's runways are shorter in length; and

WHEREAS, the Airport Business Plan states that the economic impact of the expansion itself will be an increase of \$4,000.00 in fuel sales per year; and

WHEREAS, the Airport Business Plan calls for many other improvements to the Airport, such as making technological enhancements, offering aircraft rental services, charter services, instruction, pilot supplies, aircraft hangars, briefing facilities, parking, and ground transportation services, and

WHEREAS, there is nothing showing that the Airport is not already in a position to accommodate future flight management systems, like NextGen. The Federal Aviation Administration is building a new Air Traffic System (NextGEN) which will expand the airways to allow for safe direct instrument flight from airport to airport by providing additional flexibility for a wide range of jet aircraft as stated by the FAA,

“Through satellite-enabled procedures and technology, NextGen is making General Aviation safer, more efficient, and better for the environment,” and

WHEREAS, a key component to an efficient transportation network is a viable Airport. The more services an airport provides, the more likely it will function to attract and diversify business. An improved airport would more likely encourage the development of current unused or underused commercial/industrial-zoned properties in both Warren and Washington counties, and

WHEREAS, many residents have given personal testimonies in opposition to the runway extension because there will be significant environmental consequences such as destruction of wetlands, wildlife impacts, and noise and air pollution, and

WHEREAS, there are no guarantees that the environmental disturbances and impacts of destroying Class I wetlands and filling in marl fen wetlands can be eliminated or mitigated so that they will not be significant, and

WHEREAS, the Runway 1 extension will likely cost Warren County more than \$500,000.00, and then add to the Airport’s ongoing expenses of about \$800,000.00 per year, and

WHEREAS, the large adverse environmental consequences and the evidence showing only small, incremental benefits from the expansion itself outweigh the positive economic impacts of the extending one runway at the Airport; and

WHEREAS, the Airport is already a great asset to Warren County, the Board should invest in more reasonable approaches to continue its improvement, and should not pursue the extension of Runway 1 at this time, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Warren County Board of Supervisors authorizes and directs the Chairman to send a certified copy of this Resolution to \_\_\_\_\_ (DEC, EPA, FAA) and to take such other and further action as may be necessary to effectuate the terms of this Resolution.

Duly adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES :

NOES :

ABSENT: