

T H E

# CITY of PELLA

"A Touch of Holland"

"Home of the Famous Tulip Festival"



825 Broadway • P.O. Box 88 • Pella, Iowa 50219

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As a Community, we have been very fortunate to enjoy the many benefits created by strong employment, diverse opportunities and a "can do" attitude by our citizens. However, I can think of at least one more component that has contributed to our successes. It is our willingness to invest in the future. These investments are not only ones that directly enhance our lives such as schools, pools, libraries, and clean water, but investments that support our industries as well. The strength of our local industries has had an extremely positive impact on our entire region. It is for this reason that it is important for everyone to understand our interest in a regional airport.

## Reasons for a New Regional Airport

The concept of a new regional airport initially began in response to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) concerns over the high number of Category C flights at our airport. As background, the Pella Airport is a Category B-II Airport with published approaches allowing larger Category C aircraft to land. These types of aircraft are advantageous for businesses to operate due to their ability to offer longer range travel in a safe, convenient and cost effective manner. For many businesses, aviation access is just as important as road transportation. As a result, having adequate aviation access is necessary for them to remain competitive.

It is also important to note, other Category B airports across the nation also have published Category C approaches. However, these airports typically deal with Category C flights on a very limited basis (6-12 flights/year). In contrast, Category C flights at the Pella Airport occur almost daily, with the latest estimated total between 300-500 flights per year. These flights are not only made by our local industries, but include many by suppliers and customers as well. Due to the high number of Category C flights, the FAA has encouraged the City to have the ground based infrastructure in place to support its published approaches. Unfortunately, due to significant site constraints at the current Pella Municipal Airport, previous studies have concluded it is not economically feasible to upgrade this airport to a Category C level.

Although the FAA publishes Category C approaches for use at our airport, they are not guaranteed and the FAA could revoke them at any time. Therefore, if the City were to lose its ability to offer Category C flights, we may not be able to attract, retain, or support the quality of business and industry we currently have.

## Importance of Working on a Regional Basis

In planning for a new Category C airport, both the federal and state governments have indicated their strong preference for planning transportation projects on a regional basis that benefit as many communities as possible. Furthermore, the Iowa Aviation System

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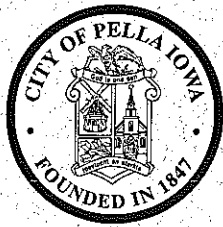
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Plan 2010-2030 recommends the cities of Oskaloosa and Pella develop a new regional airport to replace the two existing airports serving our communities. The plan also states that a "Lack of cooperation may result in airports with inadequate infrastructure and services to meet the air transportation demands of the region, impacting quality of life and opportunities for economic growth." In addition, the Federal Aviation Administration in its report "General Aviation Airports - a National Asset" has indentified a new Category C airport in our area as one of the seven regional airports in the State of Iowa. From the FAA's perspective, the intent of these enhanced regional airports is to link regional economies with state and interstate markets.

After carefully considering our options, in March of 2012 the City of Pella approved a partnership agreement with Mahaska County and the City of Oskaloosa to construct a regional airport which would be able to meet the current and future aeronautical needs of business and industries in the area.

## South Central Regional Airport Agency

The South Central Regional Airport Agency (SCRAA) is a government entity formed to construct and govern the Regional Airport. The SCRAA is governed by a six member Board of Directors who are appointed by Mahaska County, the City of Oskaloosa, and the City of Pella. It is also important to note, the Board is only responsible for the oversight of the new regional airport. The City of Oskaloosa and the City of Pella will retain ownership of their existing airport facilities and assets.

## What is the estimated cost of the Regional Airport?

The estimated cost of the Regional Airport is between \$24 to \$30 million depending on the size and scope of the project. This estimate includes land acquisition, primary runway, fueling facilities, terminal, public hangers, maintenance facilities, and any necessary road improvements. At this time, we believe the local match will be between 10% to 20% of the total project costs or approximately \$6 million. Based on the City's 28E Agreement with Mahaska County and the City of Oskaloosa, the local match would be split equally with the City of Oskaloosa which means the City's estimated share would be approximately \$3.0 million. It is our plan that, once the new airport is operational, the City will utilize land sales from our current airport to pay for our share of the local match. It is our understanding that the City of Oskaloosa is planning to use the same approach to finance their portion of the project. The City of Pella does NOT anticipate the need to raise property tax rates as a result of this development.

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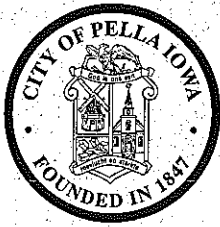
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## Where are we at now?

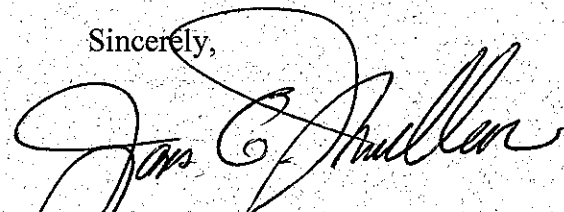
Previous aeronautical forecasts have indicated there is sufficient demand to justify a new Category C airport for our region. Therefore, we are proceeding with the necessary aviation studies for a new Category C airport in our region.

The South Central Regional Airport Agency is currently in the process of reviewing three sites for the new regional airport. All of the sites are in accordance with the 28E partnership agreement which requires the new regional airport to be within ten miles of the corporate limits of both Oskaloosa and Pella and within four miles of Highway 163. By June of this year, the SCRAA anticipates selecting a site for the new regional airport. Once a site is selected, the engineers for the project will need to complete the remaining aviation planning studies which will take approximately two years. After these studies are complete, the Federal Aviation Administration will need to approve the project before it can proceed with land acquisition and construction. If the FAA approves the project, we believe the new regional airport will be operational in 7 to 10 years.

## Summary

In summary, I believe it is very important for everyone to understand the facts and the reasons why the project is being proposed. It always has been, and continues to be, our intent to have open and honest discussions regarding this project. Accurate information is critical and misinformation is harmful. Therefore, if you have questions on this project, please feel free to contact our City Administrator, Mike Nardini at 641-628-4173.

Sincerely,



James Mueller  
Mayor  
City of Pella

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