



# Tenant Meeting Minutes Master Plan Update St. Lucie County International Airport



**Date:** January 27, 2009 @2:00 pm EST

**Subject:** Master Plan “Kick-Off” Meeting

**Attendees:** Attached Sign-In Sheet

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These meeting minutes provide a summary of the information and comments provided during the tenant meeting since the meeting was not recorded. SHOULD YOU DISAGREE WITH THE INFORMATION IN THIS RECORD, PLEASE ADVISE IMMEDIATELY. A copy of the presentation will be provided on the project website ([www.stlucieco.org/airport](http://www.stlucieco.org/airport)). Thank you.

## I. Project Introduction

- Ms. Diana Lewis, AAE, Airport Director (D. Lewis) – welcomed everyone to the meeting and had everyone introduce themselves to facilitate discussions associated with the Master Planning Process.
- Copies of the presentations, meeting agendas and meeting minutes will be provided on the project website.
- When the website is up and running, notification will be sent out to tenants.

## II. Master Plan Update Project Status

- A master plan provides a 20-year projection of development.
- A master plan identifies and phases projects over the twenty-plus year planning period in an effort to assist the airport in obtaining Federal Aviation Administration and Florida Department of Transportation funding.
- The master plan also will identify additional sources of funding in relation to the type of project (i.e. economic development)
- P. Jufko explained that we are at the very beginning of the process, which includes gathering information related to the ultimate vision of the airport, existing conditions, and data to provide an accurate forecast of future operations and fleet mix at St. Lucie County International Airport (FPR).



## Tenant Meeting Minutes Master Plan Update St. Lucie County International Airport



### III. Comments and Requests for Information

- Who decided on the goals and objectives for this master plan update?
  - The initial goals and objectives listed follow the FAA and FDOT requirements outlined in their master plan guidance. Additional goals and objectives were based upon discussions with airport management and staff.
  - It is important to note that these goals and objectives are merely a starting point for development. The goals and objectives are tailored to the needs and long-term vision of the airport and community. This is why we met early in the process to obtain input on the project objectives and goals.
- Who has the final say on future development – the users, Technical Advisory Committee, or County Commission?
  - All parties provide input into the master plan process, but the County Commission has final approval authority.
- There is a need for continued economic development to strengthen the airfield pavement to accommodate 80,000 dual wheel weights.
- How do I get money for my business from the government stimulus package?
  - The focus of the master plan update is on airport facility development rather than specific businesses/tenants on the airport. If a leaseholder/tenant already has planned development designed, it can be incorporated into the master plan process if it is in-line with the long-term vision of the airport.
  - Since the stimulus package money is a “moving target”, it will not be considered as a potential funding source for identified capital improvement projects.
- Do you have experience working at similarly sized airports, and how many of these master plans have you done?
  - Yes, we have worked at a variety of airports ranging from small single-runway to large commercial and international airports. The LPA Group Incorporated has been involved with over 100 master plan projects over the past 28 years. Further, the Corporation prides itself on its repeat business with existing clients.
- If you are a consultant, aren't you helping airport's compete against each other for future funding?
  - Again, The LPA Group Incorporated (LPA) strategically chooses its clients based upon the services that can be offered. LPA promotes long-term relationships with its clients, and tries to assist in all ways possible.
- Why does the airport need a new master plan when the last one went all the way to 2020?
  - Master plans according to FAA recommendations are developed approximately every five years to allow the airport to respond to industry trends as well as local and national market conditions. This allows the airport staff to identify or reprioritize previously identified projects based upon new economic conditions.



## Tenant Meeting Minutes Master Plan Update St. Lucie County International Airport



- How much does the master plan cost and who provided the money?
  - The master plan with sub consultants and expenses is \$238,000. The money was provided through an FDOT grant specifically related to this project.
- What about the findings of the last master plan?
  - The findings of previous studies including the last master plan and FAR Part 150 Study are reviewed and their finding evaluated to determine if they are still valid based upon market conditions as well as the long-term vision of the County and Community as a whole.
- How does this airport compare to other airports in the area?
  - FPR has more than twice the land area than Vero Beach, the next largest airport in the Treasure Coast Region.
  - FPR is the only airport in the region with a Foreign Trade Zone.
  - FPR is the only airport with a customs facility in the region.
  - FPR has the second longest runway of all the Treasure Coast Airports with the exception of Vero Beach.
  - Both Vero Beach and Stuart have higher dual wheel pavement strengths (115,000 and 105,000, respectively).
  - St. Lucie County has almost double the population compared to population areas served by other airports within the Treasure Coast region.
- According to Mr. Curtis King, the former Airport Director, back in the 1980s, they purchased land based upon projections that the area's population would grow significantly. This supported the possibility of developing FPR as a commercial service airport. However, the majority of the Board was against airport development, so growth of the airport was limited.
- How is the airport "self-sufficient", and are most airports self sufficient?
  - FPR is "self-sufficient" or non-subsidized GA Airport since it is an airport with ability to generate adequate revenue to cover all normal expenses for its operation, administration, and maintenance, and for the local share of federal and/or state funded capital improvement projects (matching funds).
  - Yes, 26% of GA airports in the country are non-subsidized. However, the Florida Department of Transportation continues to require airports to become self-sufficient before providing funding for capital improvement projects.
- How does the airport obtain funding (i.e. grants) for capital improvement projects?
  - The airport obtains funding primarily through a series of grants from the FAA and FDOT. The percentage of funding, however, is based upon the type of airport and FAA calculated project priorities. For example, a safety project will rate at a higher project priority level than an economic project.
  - The airport must develop a grant application and put the project in the Joint Automated Capital Improvement Plan (JACIP) system.



## Tenant Meeting Minutes Master Plan Update St. Lucie County International Airport



- It is important to note that the Airport is competing with other airports around the country for funding. Just because a project is in the JACIP or has been applied for doesn't mean that the airport will receive the funding.
- Also, grant funding is not based upon the planning costs rather it is based upon the accepted construction bid.
- An airport typically has four years to complete a project and close out a grant. If an airport does not start a project in the first year, both FAA and FDOT may take back the funding so it can be used at another airport with a higher priority project.
- LPA does not assist airport management, as part of this master plan, to obtain funding for recommended projects. However, the consultant does identify estimated costs associated with the project and potential funding sources (i.e. FAA Airport Improvement, FAA Discretionary, Florida Department of Transportation, Governor's Economic Development grants, etc.)
- Mr. John Mason, Vice President of Key Air, suggested that the county and airport need to initiate a public education program on why the airport is needed, where the money comes from to operate and for recommended development, and how the airport will attract and provide good paying jobs. This effort should have been started prior to the master plan process.
- Money associated with the Runway 9/27 overlay is already in the Joint Airport Capital Improvement Program, which is locked for five years.
- Is it possible to delay the runway overlay until additional monies can be obtained to strengthen the runway to 80,000 lbs?
  - The airport has applied but does not have the grant money as of yet to do the Runway Overlay.
  - The runway pavement is in poor condition and needs to be overlaid. If the project is pushed back, the funding could be jeopardized.
  - The Airport Director also advised the Tenants that any strengthening of the runway is the County Commission's decision. Tenants can only provide input and support to airport management, the consultant, and Board.
  - As part of the master plan process, critical airplane(s) will be identified which may support strengthening the runway pavement. But again, this is the Board's decision.
- What happens if operations dramatically decrease? Will FPR lose its tower?
  - Operations around the country have decreased as a result of fuel prices, corporate bankruptcies, the economic recession, etc. It is unlikely that FPR will be negatively impacted by the downturn in operations.
  - It is unlikely that FPR will lose the Air Traffic Control Tower as a result of decreased operations.
- How will the airport property be developed? Can portions of the property be used for non-aviation related uses?
  - As part of the master plan process, existing and recommended acquisition property will be evaluated for highest and best use. This highest and best use may show that



## Tenant Meeting Minutes Master Plan Update St. Lucie County International Airport



- property further from the airfield would be suited for non-aviation business development, which may include a hotel, restaurant, business park, etc.
- As part of the master plan process, we will not limit recommended development by existing leaseholds. We will evaluate where the existing business leaseholds are as of today, and plans that are already in progress. However, to accurately evaluate the “highest and best” use, we must consider all potential land use options based upon the short and long-term goals and vision.
  - What is associated with the aviation forecasts? Are they based upon different scenarios?
    - Multiple aviation forecasts for related to different types of operations (i.e. general aviation, on-demand charter and air taxi, military, training, etc.) will be developed.
    - The forecasts will consider current trends and events which have impacted and will continue to impact the aviation industry including: September 11 and the War on Terrorism, fuel prices, corporate and commercial airline bankruptcies and mergers, impact of green technology, etc.
    - A range of forecasts within each sector will be evaluated in an effort to develop a forecast of operations which accurately predicts future demand. This information is critical in evaluating the types and size of facilities needed at FPR over the 20 year planning period.
  - Operations and passenger demand associated with FPR becoming a commercial service airport will not be forecast as part of this master plan. However, the type, size and potential location of commercial service facilities will be identified within the facility requirements section of the report to assist Management to achieve this goal based upon the desires of the users, community and Board of County Commissioners.
  - Although the economy is in a recession, the demand for high-technology jobs especially associated with biotechnology and medicine continues. The economic recession may assist in the development of the Airport since it can be used as a resource in attracting and retaining businesses.
  - Airport management is being proactive in evaluating a variety of options for future development while considering the “sustainability” of proposed progress.
  - For a project to even be considered for FAA and FDOT funding, existing and future operational data (passengers and operations) and support documentation is needed. If data is available regarding new business development, support information is required. Accurate data is necessary to support proposed airport development. However, airport development must be in line with the County Commission’s directives and policies.

#### IV. Meeting Procedures and Schedule

- Three additional tenant meetings will be held during the course of this process. All meetings will be held on the same day as the Technical Advisory Meetings. Although tenant meetings are not required by FAA and FDOT as part of the master plan process, Airport Management considered tenant participation a critical component in the FPR Master Plan development.



## Tenant Meeting Minutes Master Plan Update St. Lucie County International Airport



- The working papers will be uploaded to the county website approximately one (1) week prior to the Tenant Meeting. Comments can be provided to the consultant up to two weeks following the meeting, and must be in writing per FAA/FDOT criteria. It is important that comments be received in a timely manner since later sections build off the findings of the previous chapters.
- The next Tenant and Technical Advisory Meeting will be held in June 2009.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm EST**