
Subject: Airport Master Plan Update

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Recommendations

1. That Report PDS 21-2021 **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
2. That Report PDS 21-2021 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport Commission and Niagara District Airport Commission.

Key Facts

- This report provides an update on the status of the airport master plans and airport economic impact assessments being prepared for Niagara District Airport and Niagara Central Airport.
- The primary objective of an Airport Master Plan is to establish a rational development concept for an airport that protects and preserves the long term operational and business objectives, while accommodating short-term improvements.
- Through a competitive process, WSP was selected to undertake a master plan and economic impact assessment for Niagara District Airport and Niagara Central Airport.
- The master plans are being undertaken in consultation with both airport commissions as well as local municipal planning staff.
- The expected completion of this project is June 2021.

Financial Considerations

The Airport Master Plan is being undertaken in accordance with a business case approved as part of the 2020 operating budget. Through this business case, staff were directed to undertake an Airport Master Plan process for Niagara District Airport (CYSN) and Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport (NCDRA).

In addition, a full-time a temporary position to project manage the airport portfolio was approved. Due to uncertainties with the COVID-19 pandemic, the project manager role was not filled.

Analysis

The Airport Master Plan project and associated Economic Impact Assessment build on previous work supporting the transfer of ownership for both NCDRA and CYSN facilities. A summarized background of work done to support the consideration of the airport transfer is outlined below:

- In 2016, Niagara Regional Council approved in principle the adoption of sole responsibility of CYSN and NCDRA subject to the completion of a Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) on each airport.
- In 2018, the results of the Phase 2 ESA indicated there were no soil or groundwater impacts identified requiring further action or remediation.
- In May 2019, Regional Council was further updated on the project, and made a motion to move forward with a Terms of Transfer of ownership to the Region and a full cost assessment that could be considered by Council.
- In September 2019, staff brought forward a Terms of Transfer for both facilities which suggested airport operations be considered as part of the 2020 budget process.
- Ultimately Council chose to defer the Terms of Transfer and pursue additional due-diligence related to master plans and governance structure.

Regardless of the future role the Region plays with respect to airport ownership, the CYSN and NCDRA airport Master Plans are important to the future operations of both facilities.

The Master Plans will serve as a development framework and an investment tool to assist airport management in making informed and strategic decisions about the timing and estimated costs of future improvements, action plans, and preferred development options.

Airport Master Plans typically accommodate the needs of an airport over an identified planning horizon, with updates undertaken every 5 to 10 years to ensure the relevancy

of the plan. The planning horizon established for this project is 20 years, meaning the Master Plan timeframe is from 2021 to 2041.

The Airport Master Plan project has been divided into 6 phases. These phases, and their status, is outlined below:

1. Data Collection (Completed Q3 2020)
2. Development of Business Scenarios (Ongoing & Concurrent with Phases 3-4)
3. Identification of Functional Requirements (Ongoing & Concurrent with Phase 4)
4. Development of Options (Current Stage)
5. Business Plan (Estimated completion May 2021)
6. Final Documentation (Project completion June 2021)

To date, several important background documents that will inform the Master Plan have been completed, including a wind rose (wind study) & meteorological data for each airport, and activity forecasts for each airport. The consulting team is now working through a series of preliminary development options for each facility.

A survey and questionnaire was developed for the airport Commissions seeking feedback on the vision for each facility. In addition, WSP's team working on the economic impact component of the plan has reached out to several airport based businesses for feedback.

Both the Niagara District Airport Commission and staff, and the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport Commission have been engaged in the airport Master Planning process. Regional staff and the consulting team have attended airport Commission meetings and participated in site visits with airport staff and Commission members.

Regional Planning Staff have also had discussions with Local Planning Staff in the Town of Pelham and Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake with respect to land use considerations for their respective airport facility.

The final Airport Master Plans and Economic Impact Analysis work is expected in June 2021.

Alternatives Reviewed

As this report is for information, there are no alternatives.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Not applicable at this time.

Other Pertinent Reports

- CAO 4-2019 Airport Project Update
- CSD 62-2019 Airport Project Update Terms of Transfer Negotiations

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