March 2023

The document prepared by the engineering company HDR for the Milford Airport Development Considerations was reviewed by the Milford Airport Commission. We would like to highlight some significant findings provided in this study.

The number of aircraft registered in Dickinson County (40) along with the combined total of aircraft (33) that are based at the Milford Airport (4D8) and the Spirit Lake Airport (OF3), supports the necessity and importance for an airport. (Details on page 7, Table 1.5 of the study.)

Table 1.6 on page 8 references Based Aircraft/Airport Operations projected through 2039. Milford Airport shows a continued increase in the number of operations. In addition, the data is based on IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) flights. The majority of Milford traffic is VFR (Visual Flight Rules) flights. This, in effect, understates the Milford flight operations.

Bullet point #8, page 16 references the 2003 Airport Feasibility Study (updated in 2021) and replacement costs. A replacement airport including land, vertical infrastructure, runway, ramp, hangars and approaches would be $20 million. Today that estimate is $25 million.

Phase II of the study will include the economic analysis of the airport. In a 2022 Iowa DOT Economic Study, the impact of the Milford Airport is $473,00 for the community and the Spirit Lake Airport provides $291,000 of economic support.

The importance and continuation of the Milford Airport in Dickinson County is supported by local businesses and tourism. Medical and agricultural usage are also key factors. Critical response time is greatly reduced when it becomes necessary for the medical team to travel to the airport to prepare the patient and then return to the airport. Having a local airport eliminates the need for extensive travel to an airport and expedites the emergency transport.

Airports for agricultural use are critical for farmers and the demand is on the increase. On average, there are at least 25,000 acres sprayed from airplanes utilizing the Milford Airport.

Lastly, the Milford Airport Commission supports the City of Milford- Position Statement on page 16, bullet point 9 of the included study. Specifically, the Airport Commission supports the concept of a single, publicly owned airport in Dickinson County. In addition, it would require that a replacement airport be operational prior to closing the existing airport. This will not be possible without a significant amount of outside funding. Until a funding a source is available, we do not recommend proceeding with Phase II of the airport study.

Milford Airport Commission

Chris Stein, Chair
Melissa Bockman
Mike Workman
Rick Gould
Jane Berg

Attachments: Milford Airport – Fuller Field (4D8) Airport Development Considerations
2022 Iowa DOT Economic Study