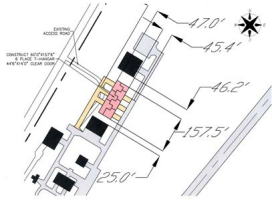


Airport gets loan, grant for new hangar, taxiway

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Wednesday, 18 August 2010 19:26 -



Estimated \$370,000 project includes taxiway.

On several occasions, Gothenburg's Airport Authority has tried to obtain grants and interest-free loans from the Department of Aeronautics.

To no avail.

Last Friday, airport authority chair Craig Bartruff traveled to Lincoln to ask aeronautics commissioners for help to build a six-stall, 9,420 square-foot hangar.

After his plea to the five-person panel, airport authority secretary Roger Donner said Bartruff was told that Gothenburg would not only receive a \$224,000 interest-free loan for the hangar but also a \$45,000 grant to install a new taxiway.

"I guess we had all of our ducks in a row," Donner said.

Since the estimated price for the hangar—which includes costs for engineering, concrete, seeding, etc.—is \$320,000, he said the authority will obtain a conventional \$96,000 loan.

Included in the project price is an estimated \$50,000 cost for the taxiway on the west side of the new hangar. The grant is for \$45,000 which means the authority will need to get another loan for \$5,000.

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Donner said an increase in requests for hangar space is what prompted the authority to ask for help.

“There’s a waiting list for people looking for space to store their planes,” he said, noting that there’s a privately owned hangar as well as three other buildings to store planes that are owned by the airport authority. “Requests have been showing up the last couple of years.”

In the past, Donner said he thinks aeronautics commissioners have turned down requests for grants and loans to small airports located near larger ones.

Gothenburg is between Cozad and North Platte which also have airports.

“I don’t know why they (aeronautics commissioners) changed their mind,” he said.

Donner said he thinks the new hangar will benefit Gothenburg because it may bring in more air traffic.

“People like to see that we’re busy out there and the more people interested in flying want hangar space,” he explained.

On average, Donner said about one to two planes take off or land each day.

Traffic increases in the summer when crop dusting services are needed.

“We used to be really busy in the 1970s and early 1980s but then it cost too much to insure airplanes,” he said. “That’s what killed it. That and high maintenance costs.”

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Construction of the hangar will probably begin after the first of the year with completion by summer.

Donner noted that the airport's runway was shut down for three weeks in July when broken concrete in a small area made takeoffs and landings potentially dangerous.

Airport officials were surprised when the aeronautics officials paid for 90% of the repairs which cost \$27,000, he said.

ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com 308-537-3636