

# **Implementation Plan**

A guide to ensuring a successful implementation of the  
North Central Texas General Aviation and Heliport System Plan

March 2012

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### A. GLOSSARY

This section defines acronyms and abbreviations used throughout the document.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Description</b>
AAAE	American Association of Airport Executives
ACC	Airport Consulting Council
ACI	Airports Council International
ACV	Airport Community Value
AOPA	Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
ATTAC	Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
Aviation Program Area	Aviation Planning and Education Program Area
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
GA	General Aviation
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NASCAR	National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing
NBAA	National Business Aviation Association
NCTCOG	North Central Texas Council of Governments
NGS	National Geodetic Survey
RTC	Regional Transportation Council
System Plan	North Central Texas Regional General Aviation and Heliport System Plan
TXAA	Texas Aviation Association
TAC	Texas Airports Council
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
VF	Vertical Flight

## **B. INTRODUCTION**

Funded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) embarked on a multi-year initiative in 2006 to analyze and evaluate the current aviation environment within the 16-county region, both general aviation (GA) airports and vertical flight (VF) facilities, to update the North Central Texas General Aviation and Heliport System Plan (System Plan). The study documented approximately 400 aviation facilities, 182 of which are VF specific. Forecasts of future demand over a 25-year period were generated to assess the long-term capabilities of the system and develop recommendations for future development. The new System Plan, scheduled for adoption in early 2012, should be utilized to its fullest potential by regional planners, economic development specialists, airport sponsors and managers, and other community and regional stakeholders. National stakeholders should regard the System Plan as a well-founded planning document. This report provides a framework and recommendations for implementation and on-going use of the System Plan to ensure its greatest positive impact on aviation in the region, both short- and long-term.

## **C. INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED**

During five years of study, an enormous amount of aviation information was gathered for multiple purposes, including extensive modeling to develop recommendations for expanding and sustaining GA in North Central Texas over the next 25 years. The project team prepared numerous reports on topics such as ground access, special events, value of the airport to the community, forecasting methodology, and VF. A list of recommendations is included in the study's executive report. In order for stakeholders to fully utilize the findings, the System Plan must be made available through effective communication channels.

It is imperative that stakeholders fully understand how and why they should depend on the System Plan in planning for the future. Recommendations are presented according to geographic subregions so that the information and potential impacts are useful to local communities. Stakeholders will be more apt to apply the System Plan recommendations to their future plans if they understand the impact and intent of the Plan on a regional and local basis.

To gain the confidence of stakeholders in the System Plan, the basic methodology that was employed in the development of the study's recommendations should be shared. An explanation of the basic methodology includes completing an inventory of the region to assess existing conditions, comparing the inventory to the guidelines, and making recommendations to ensure the viability of a successful general aviation system. When requested, users can be directed to detailed information in specific reports.

A new website will provide convenient access and extensive information for aviation stakeholders. Promotion of the website is important, especially at the time the System Plan is being adopted.

## **D. POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS**

The System Plan has many potential audiences both regionally and nationally. Examples include GA transportation services, businesses with air cargo needs, recreational pilots, municipal planners, and economic development specialists.

The Federal Aviation Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation have strongly advocated for the development of the System Plan almost since its inception. The agencies are encouraged to assist in public awareness of the study recommendations toward future planning and development. As Texas is a Block Grant State, promoting the study recommendations during the TxDOT funding process is also important. The FAA's Southwest Regional Office has a strong interest in the System Plan and given its responsibility for aviation activities in North Central Texas, is also in a position to encourage awareness among stakeholders of the value of the study recommendations. NCTCOG should focus on both regional and national stakeholders, even though the national perspective is likely to utilize specific North Central Texas aviation conditions as case studies to analyze and report as best practices planning examples. The Departments of Transportation in other states may be interested in conducting similar studies or incorporating certain tasks into their planning efforts. The Texas Governor's Office of Economic Development, Aerospace and Aviation should also be made aware of the study's findings to enhance understanding of the value of GA to job creation and retention in the State.

NCTCOG's Aviation Planning and Education Program Area (Aviation Program Area) is the lead on this project. Staff members in this area should reach out to the departments and program areas which have not been involved in the study process, but often factor aviation into their economic and job development programs and studies. It is crucial that the study information be integrated into planning efforts on the regional and subregional basis. Other NCTCOG departments interested in the study may include Administration, Emergency Preparedness, and Workforce Development, as well as the entire Transportation Department.

Additionally, NCTCOG has many resources that may be applied to the promotion and implementation of the System Plan. The Public Affairs department provides external services on behalf of NCTCOG in the form of news media/public relations, directories, newsletters, special publications, and operation of NCTCOG's Regional Information Center. These internal services for all departments also include graphics design and photography, mailing lists, and meeting/workshop support.

NCTCOG's Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (ATTAC) has served in an advisory capacity during the study and should be expected to share the data and recommendations with aviation stakeholders with whom they work and collaborate. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is the independent transportation policy body of this Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and oversees the transportation planning process. RTC should be made aware of the study's findings and data, as well as how it can be used in planning.

Locally, the System Plan is a strong tool with many of its components being of particular importance for municipalities, chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, airport sponsors, staff and managers; local elected officials including county commissioners and city councils and their appointed boards; and, local colleges and universities. Certain tools such as the Encroachment Tool Kit or Airport Community Value (ACV) matrix should be used to support the development and protection of a local aviation facility. Moreover, other non-regional airport sponsors, managers, and staff will be interested in the tools and information provided by the System Plan.

Many companies within North Central Texas rely on GA to transport employees and goods. Because these companies help to drive corporate activity, they should be made aware of existing infrastructure and planned improvements. Area chambers of commerce and economic development corporations, in their normal course of business, will benefit from the system enhancements as a strong regional general aviation system certainly adds value for companies looking to conduct business in the area.

Gaining the support of the news media as well as aviation and business sector trade publications is another important step in successful System Plan implementation. All forms of media can be helpful in disseminating information and should be encouraged to develop enterprising stories about aviation in the region. In addition to working closely with the local media, NCTCOG should also provide information on the System Plan to the national media.

Industry organizations such as National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), Airports Council International (ACI), and Airport Consulting Council (ACC) should be notified of the System Plan and its recommendations. These organizations have large memberships and offer many outlets for the dissemination of information, including conferences, publications, and webinars. NBAA is a resource and advocate for the corporate, business, and charter aircraft and charter operations that operate routinely in North Central Texas. AOPA is an organization with whom most GA pilots are involved because of its emphasis on safety and training. AAAE is a highly utilized resource for news and training of airport managers and staff. Both AOPA and AAAE promote the value of GA airports and activity to local communities. ACI and ACC are international trade associations representing unique interests of consultant firms which provide airport development and operations expertise. Additionally, ACI defends airport positions and develops standards and recommended practices in the areas of safety, security and environmental initiatives. It also advances and protects airport interests in important policy changes on airport charges and regulation, strengthening the hand of airports in dealing with tenants.

Regional organizations include the Texas Airports Council (TAC) and Texas Aviation Association (TXAA). TAC's mission is to promote Texas airports in general, the economic benefits of aviation, and legislative efforts in support of operational and economic stability of airports. They also represent airports in matters that may affect their operations, economic benefits, or community standing. TXAA's goal is to preserve and protect Texas airports and advance public understanding of GA. Both organizations support the annual Texas Aviation Conference hosted by TxDOT. The organizations, as entities themselves, should be considered separate stakeholders independent from their members. Promotion within these organizations can quickly increase national awareness of the System Plan.

National sports authorities such as the National Basketball Association, National Football League, Major League Baseball, Major League Soccer, and National Association for Stock Car

Auto Racing (NASCAR) should be contacted. By demonstrating the capabilities of the existing transportation infrastructure as well as future improvements that are on the drawing board, the Plan emphasizes the region's ability to support large-scale sporting events.

## **E. DISTRIBUTION METHODS**

Numerous methods exist to distribute the information contained in the System Plan, including meetings with stakeholder organizations and the public, workshops, newsletters and mailings, news releases, and websites.

NCTCOG should initiate meetings with key organizations when the System Plan is complete to emphasize its importance as a planning resource for the future. Meetings may be open forums to which the public is invited. Others should be held with local boards, commissions, and councils to ensure that those who are in positions of airport management and regulation fully understand the System Plan and their airport's role in the regional system. Topics should be emphasized that are of particular interest to the various authorities. Central in all discussions should be an overview and explanation of the benefits of the System Plan, economic development and ACV, and future development recommendations by subregion. **Exhibit 1** presents a sample agenda for a meeting with a local council interested in what the System Plan is and how it can be utilized in support of its local airport.

## Exhibit 1: Sample Agenda

1. Overview of System Plan
  - a. Team Contributors – NCTCOG, ATTAC, FAA, TxDOT, CHA Aviation Development Team
  - b. Methodology
    - i. Inventory
      1. Data Collection: Operational Activity, Based Aircraft, Property Development and Availability
      2. Regional Review: Airspace, GA Air Cargo, Ground Access, Encroachment
    - ii. Forecasts of Operational Activity and Based Aircraft to 2035
    - iii. Airport and Subregion Guidelines
    - iv. Needs Assessment
    - v. Recommendations
2. Recommendations
  - a. Recommendations for the Subregion
  - b. Proactive Sponsors Responsibilities
  - c. Website and Tools
    - i. Guide to Preserving GA Airports
    - ii. Online Data Management System ([nctairportdata.com](http://nctairportdata.com))
    - iii. Educational Videos
    - iv. GA Regional Mobility Initiative
    - v. Educational Initiative

Press releases should be distributed to newspapers, magazines, technical journals, online publications, and aviation and transportation related blogs. Their content should focus on the System Plan's importance, reference the study website, and clarify the date, time and place of upcoming meetings. **Exhibit 2** presents a sample press release.

In North Central Texas, a Speakers' Bureau is an important tool to promote System Plan value. This activity can be spearheaded by NCTCOG, recruiting speakers and coordinating speaking opportunities. Volunteers who are stakeholders in the Plan's acceptance and future success should be recruited to participate on a volunteer basis. In the future, the programs that are presented through the Speakers' Bureau should focus on the importance of supporting the Plan recommendations and feature successful applications.



## Exhibit 2: Sample Press Release

### For Immediate Release

#### **REGIONAL GENERAL AVIATION PLAN AVAILABLE NOW AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOL**

This region's new North Central Texas General Aviation and Heliport System Plan (System Plan) was officially unveiled today (date) by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) following five years of research, study, and analysis. The series of reports will serve as a guide for aviation planners and economic development specialists.

Approximately 400 General Aviation (GA) facilities were inventoried, of which 182 are specific to vertical flight (VF). Forecasts of future demand over a 25-year period have been generated to assess if and how the system is capable of meeting aviation needs today and in the future. Among the numerous reports prepared by the team of experts are documents on topics such as ground access and land use, special events, study methodology, and data update methodologies.

"The FAA considers the new System Plan a critical document which should be used to ensure the growth of aviation in this 16-county area that has, as its core, Dallas and Fort Worth," said (spokesperson for FAA). "We encourage airport sponsors and managers—and community stakeholders—to utilize this tremendous resource going forward to expand existing GA facilities and/or to invest in new ones."

NCTCOG's website makes available to the public the System Plan in its entirety. Videos are also posted as well as sources of information. (URL here)

"An important tool that was developed during the study is the airport community value matrix," said (spokesperson for NCTCOG). "Historically, public entities use economic development models to help evaluate whether public investment should be made in a project. This new model goes further into an analysis that can be used to support funding applications and local match dollars for airport development."

In the immediate future, the FAA and NCTCOG will present the System Plan to community and regional stakeholders as well as the public. A series of public meetings are announced below.

*List public meeting schedule; include a map of the 16-county area with the region divided into subregions. The map's legend should explain the use of subregions. Consider including a list of ATTAC members (or at least the names of airports/cities) who were involved in the study.*

Mailings to specific organizations and targeted audiences should be created from System Plan products that highlight the overall study, information relevant to that specific group, or a combination of both. A mailing can be in the format of a multipage handout, a postcard, a list of frequently asked questions, or other designs identified as being most useful to targeted audiences. Print and electronic newsletters for the public can be generated to publicize the System Plan to demonstrate its success and impacts. It's important to determine the best

approach and message content for the target audience. Examples of targeted audiences include: homeowners/businesses in a certain radius from an airport; citizens of a community in which a specific airport is located/planned; persons who are employed in the aviation industry; and, economic development specialists, etc. The mailings and newsletters should highlight key aspects of the Plan and direct readers to the website or NCTCOG for more information. NCTCOG should also be open to being part of a case study for future research, books, and educational classes.

NCTCOG's website should allow people at any level of interest or from a geographic area to understand the concept, methodology, and recommendations of the System Plan. Proper tagging of System Plan content on the website will allow for broader search capabilities, boosting the website's visibility. NCTCOG should reference the website's address in all forms of public outreach. News articles and videos should be uploaded to the study website to demonstrate interest of other independent sources and to promote benefits of the plan. Tools that can be used to promote the airport and its importance should be highlighted. NCTCOG may also consider mailing electronic files or hardcopies to airport managers, encouraging them to display the materials in their offices and reception areas for public promotion. The design and content of this website will be discussed thoroughly with NCTCOG outside of this Implementation Plan.

*The Benefits of Aviation in North Central Texas* is a series of video clips that showcases the diversity, economic impact, and benefits of local GA airports to the community. The videos will be available on the study website and YouTube and can be presented as individual clips or as a seamless combination for a presentation. The speakers and facilities shown in the videos are almost exclusively from North Central Texas.

In addition, local news stations can be encouraged to showcase a local aviation facility when reporting on the story. NCTCOG should request that the website be highlighted in articles and TV reports as a source of additional information. When possible, upcoming news stories or briefings should be promoted on the study website to encourage viewers to tune in. Emails to stakeholders can be used to alert interested parties that this information is being posted.

By attending and presenting at national conferences and professional organization meetings, an even wider audience can be reached, with many of the attendees being from out-of-state. A presentation at a conference will encourage industry professionals to learn more about the System Plan. The presentation could be on a wide range of topics, including an overview of the Plan, a timeline of its evolution, final recommendations, or key components within the study.

A presentation can be enhanced by showcasing NCTCOG and the System Plan at an expo booth offering public outreach documents including System Plan products and materials. A giveaway that highlights the System Plan website address and contact information should be made available. Items such as pens, post-its, luggage tags, clips, and cups are low cost. It is highly recommended that NCTCOG participate in the annual Texas Aviation Conference as a speaker and/or exhibitor.

NCTCOG should consider hosting one of the major annual conferences, such as AAAE, in cooperation with one of the regional GA or commercial airports. These conferences can be useful in highlighting what the System Plan has to offer to a wide range of aviators and interested stakeholders. Tours of transportation facilities are common place at such conferences.

NCTCOG should develop fact sheets on individual tasks or tools developed as part of the System Plan to be available for download from the website or distributed during meetings and special events. These should give a brief description of the overall System Plan and then describe the importance, individual components, and specific use of the task, or tool.

## **F. DISTRIBUTION MATRIX**

**Exhibit 3** shows a Distribution Matrix with suggestions on how best to connect with different stakeholders. This matrix offers a way to simplify the task of disseminating information; not all tactics apply to every stakeholder group. It should be emphasized that one-on-one meetings with key transportation leaders and aviation stakeholders are important to the Plan's adoption and overall success. However, the communities in which airports are located should be educated about the present and future value of these facilities. Economic development can be stimulated when national business interests are made aware of GA strengths in North Central Texas.

### Exhibit 3: Dissemination of Information Matrix

Distribution Methods	Stakeholders																						
	Aviation	Regional FAA	TxDOT	Texas Governor's Office	National Aviation Governmental Representatives	Industry Organizations	Industry Group Members	National Airport Sponsors, Managers, and Staff	ATTAC	Economic Development	NCTCOG Departments/Councils	Municipal Organizations	Local Elected Officials	Colleges and Universities	Local Public	National Public	North Texas Commission	Sports Authorities	Regional Businesses	Potential Businesses	Media	Local News Media	National News Media
Meetings with Individuals / Departments								X								X	X						
Subregional Meetings								X															
Local Government Meetings																							
Local Economic Development Advocate Meetings														X									X
Public Information Meetings																							X
Aviation Workshops	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X													
Aviation Webinars	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X													
Conference Speaker								X									X						X
Conference Booth								X						X									X
News Conference							X							X									
News Release								X		X	X				X								
Magazine Placement				X										X	X			X	X				
Radio Placement														X	X			X					
TV Placement						X	X										X	X					
Direct Mail				X	X												X	X					X
Print Newsletter	X	X						X	X														
Electronic Updates	X	X			X	X																X	X
Online Videos	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X				X				X	X
Website																							

Note: Cross-hatching indicates high priority distribution methods.

### G. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

This section outlines the systematic approach that should be taken to publicize the System Plan so that its products are made available and its recommendations are integrated into public policy decisions. Ensure that all System Plan products are available on the website. FAA, TxDOT, and ATTAC must be fully briefed and given opportunities to ask questions about the recommendations before public meetings begin. Their acceptance and support of the System Plan is critical as local communities move forward with information and tools in economic development activities. As the System Plan is publicized, stakeholders will likely begin asking questions of the agencies and airport managers. Staff should be knowledgeable about the study's content.

A news conference should be hosted by NCTCOG as the kick-off of the public information campaign. Participants should include officials representing NCTCOG, FAA, TxDOT and ATTAC. Additionally, the news release and supporting information should be distributed as a media packet to national, regional and local media outlets as well as trade publications. By creating a master media database, media writers and editors can be kept informed about the System Plan's utilization and applications in the near term. Media generally prefer receiving

information electronically. At this time, packets of information should be distributed to stakeholders with whom NCTCOG does not intend to meet, such as the Texas Governor's Office, major employers, and sports authorities.

One of the strengths of the System Plan is the way in which it is broken down into subregions. Subregions provide, on the local level, detailed analyses of aviation strengths and weaknesses. A series of meetings within each subregion is encouraged. The invitation list of stakeholders should be broad to include elected officials, airport boards, economic development corporations, academic representatives, major employers, and major property owners near airports in the subregions. ATTAC members should assume a role in hosting meetings to show their support of the System Plan and its recommendations.

If the general public is not invited to the meetings discussed above, then presentations should be made during meetings of these jurisdictions that are open to the public. The above activities should be completed in the first four to six months of the public information campaign. After this initial push, over the course of the following six to eight months, activities should include sponsoring or participating in aviation and economic development workshops, presentations at aviation conferences, participation in aviation expositions, and keynote speaking engagements at aviation industry meetings.

Newsletters are an effective means to communicate with stakeholders. Three issues should be produced over the course of 12 months. In specific communities, direct mail offers a way to communicate applicable details about the System Plan in areas where the knowledge would be most beneficial. Planning should allow for approximately 10 to 12 mailings over the course of the year-long public information campaign. Beyond regular correspondence with the FAA and TxDOT, NCTCOG should continue to communicate with individual airports, their sponsors, and local governments to ensure a continued awareness of GA uses and recommendations of the System Plan. This can be done by continuing ATTAC's involvement through periodic meetings, attending government meetings throughout the region, participating in advisory committees for individual airport planning studies, and conducting workshops.

NCTCOG aviation staff should support the region as needed in attracting special events to the region, such as conferences and sporting events, as well as in business retention and recruitment initiatives. While it is recommended that NCTCOG aviation staff focus on aviation conferences, other industry meetings may be interested in aviation transportation information. There are several special tasks that NCTCOG should undertake on a routine basis, or as resources allow. These tasks are described in Section H, Plan Sustainability.

## **H. PLAN SUSTAINABILITY**

In order to ensure successful implementation of the System Plan, NCTCOG must execute several critical steps. NCTCOG should review carefully examples of ordinances related to land use at airports and assess how they could apply to the region as a whole, or to individual subregions or airports. In some cases, the ordinance may already be in place in one area but not in other areas; or it could be extremely important for only a certain set of airports. By understanding the reasons why such ordinances may exist and how they might be implemented, NCTCOG can ensure the aviation system in North Central Texas is protected over the long term.

While the FAA strives to make data reporting more reliable and timely, much information is spread across different sources, sometimes making it complicated to maintain up-to-date information on the status of the system. A series of performance measures were generated as part of the System Plan to assist NCTCOG in tracking GA status and growth over the years. These measures were selected specifically for use in regular, annual reviews of the region as a whole. Other information sources or measures should be used when available. The selected monitoring measures are those that, at a minimum, should be cataloged annually. This task may be coordinated with NCTCOG's research and information services department as it supports the information needs of the agency and is familiar with the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). NCTCOG may continue to collect updated GIS data on the aviation facilities and adjacent property to assist in future studies.

Annual activity data may be used to update the system forecasts, which then may be compared to previous forecasts. This comparison will help to ensure the recommendations for future development are on track in five to ten years. The Online Data Management System at [www.nctairportdata.com](http://www.nctairportdata.com) should be updated as necessary to ensure accurate information is provided to the public and used for reference.

#### **Data to be Updated**

- 5010 Airport Master Record Data – This data is updated every 56 days through the FAA.
- Grant History – This data is typically updated annually through TxDOT.
- Airport Obstructions – This data is updated approximately every three months through the National Geodetic Survey (NGS).

NCTCOG should also monitor aviation funding status and programs on the federal, state, and local levels. Funding is essential to the implementation of the study's recommendations. FAA occasionally has pilot programs or funding for specialty projects, but notice times for applying may not be easily met. By being in contact with agencies on a regular basis and monitoring funding priorities, NCTCOG may assist in obtaining grants for critical projects.

Additionally, in recent years, FAA reauthorization has been irregular, resulting in short grant deadlines. By staying abreast of the funding program status of both FAA and TxDOT, NCTCOG can inform the region's airports via email of applications. It is to the benefit of all to ensure grants are obtained to complete projects important to the sustainability of the System Plan. Moreover, NCTCOG is in a position to encourage airports to communicate with local officials about airport goals, potential funding opportunities and deadlines.