

Element 640 State of Rhode Island Airport System Plan

This document represents the Rhode Island Airport Corporation's (RIAC) plan for the state airport system (ASP). The plan establishes state goals, objectives, policies and strategies on the development and management of the airports. It includes an overview of system needs through the year 2021. The plan was approved by the State Planning Council as an element of the State Guide Plan and accepted by the Federal Aviation Administration, as the Rhode Island's Airport System for the period 2010-2021.

There are seven parts to this State Guide Plan Element:

Part One Introduction and Background

The Rhode Island State Airport System Plan, State Guide Plan Element 640 (ASP) is a strategic plan for the six state-owned airports looking forward to the year 2021. It outlines the efforts needed to ensure that Rhode Island maintains an airport system capable of meeting the state's long-term transportation and economic needs. Aviation is a mode of transportation that is critical to a well-balanced transportation network that allows Rhode Island travelers and visitors the ease of travel to connect to the country and the world.

The purpose of the airport system planning process is to provide a foundation for a balanced and integrated system of airports with clearly defined roles developed in consideration of state, regional, and local goals and policies. The ASP is a strategic plan for the purposes of implementing a "top-down" planning approach. It examines the airport system as a whole and how its parts, the individual airports, interact with each other. The plan documents the airports, their needs, and outlines improvements that are important for the airports to function successfully in their designated roles and to meet the current and forecasted air transportation needs of the state in balance with the surrounding communities. It is also used to study and monitor the performance of the entire aviation system; to understand the interrelationship of the member airports; to provide an overall perspective in capital budgeting; and to assist in maximizing the benefits of investments and alignment of federal priorities with state and local objectives. The ASP broadly defines future development objectives. It does not anticipate all projects that might be needed; it does not design or select individual projects. It can be a foundation for preparing airport master plans for individual airports. The Introduction includes Rhode Island's Airport System.

Name and location

Facility's Role

- Block Island Airport in New Shoreham (BID) *Non Primary Commercial Service*
- Robert F. Wood (UUU) *General Aviation (also referred to as Newport Airport)*
- North Central Airport in Smithfield (SFZ) *General Aviation / Reliever*
- Quonset Airport in North Kingstown (OQU) *General Aviation / Reliever*

- T.F. Green Airport in Warwick (PVD) *Primary Service, Medium Hub*
- Westerly Airport in Westerly (WST) *Non-Primary Commercial Service*

The Introduction also contains a section the seven general planning factors which were developed for the general aviation system plan, including T.F. Green Airport. These factors were used to help define and guide the analysis completed for this State guide plan element. Those planning factors include:

- Economic: Ability to support Rhode Island’s economy and airport financial self-sufficiency.
- Capacity: Ability to provide airside and landside facilities to meet existing and future needs.
- Air Accessibility: Ability of Rhode Island’s airports to be accessible from the air.
- Ground Accessibility: Ability of Rhode Island’s airports to be accessible from the ground.
- Compatibility: Ability to operate as compatibly as possible within the community.
- Compliance: Ability to meet environmental regulatory requirements.
- Standards: Ability to meet applicable design and safety standards.

Part Two Inventory

The key objective of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive summary of currently available airport information and an overview of how the existing state owned airports function within the system. It includes airport background and terminology and summaries of all RI airports and other Rhode aviation facilities. It also discusses other regional aviation facilities.

Part Three Forecasts of Aviation Demand

Forecasts of aviation demand for the publicly owned airports in Rhode Island are used in this plan to help in determining if system facilities are adequate to meet current and future demand. Forecasts included:

- General Aviation Forecasts
- General Aviation Industry Trend
- General Aviation Forecasts Considerations
- Baseline Projection of Based Aircraft
- Baseline Projection of General Aviation Operations
- Commercial Service Projections for Block Island and Westerly
- Military Activity Projections

- Airport User Needs and Enhanced Growth Projections
- Green Operations and Forecasts
- Existing Operations and Markets Served (for TF Green)
- Aviation Industry Trend

Part Four Airport System Performance

This section provides an understanding of the current condition of the system to establish the base measure against which to assess future performance. This measuring process requires (a) defining the functional roles of each airport and (b) establishing a system of measures by which to quantify performance. The assessment process utilized reasonably well defined aviation parameters. Quantifying or measuring the individual results can be somewhat subjective. In summary, the assessment provides a general understanding of the airport and system performance. Included in this part are: Airport and System Performance Measures, Functional Roles, System Performance Measures, and System Performance.

Part Five Needs Assessment

This chapter outlines the future needs of Rhode Island’s airport system as perceived at this point in time based on the anticipated future demands presented in Part 3 and the performance assessment presented in Part 4. The needs are based on the airport’s role within the system and region, and the design aircraft for the airport. The needs addressed encompass a wide spectrum of topics including; economic, capacity, accessibility, technical parameters of operations, ground transportation including transit, environmental, regulatory, community compatibility, safety design, and individual facility needs.

Part Six Goals, Policies, Objectives and Strategies

This chapter outlines the anticipated needs of the airport system and the framework for its future development through the seven planning factors established at the outset of the airport system planning process. It translates the planning factors addressed in prior chapters into specific goals, policies, objectives, and strategies to be pursued by the State, the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC), and the host communities. Many of the recommendations included in this chapter are a result of the information generated by the system planning process, and the recommendations will be used in future decision making processes to achieve the stated goals. It also includes the Vision Statement.

Vision Statement

A safe, secure, and efficient system of airports with convenient intermodal connections that meets the anticipated need for aviation services, advances economic development goals of the state, enhances transportation opportunities and quality of life, and exists compatibly with the environment and surrounding communities.

Goals

The planning factors were used to develop the Rhode Island airport system goals. Once these were identified, the “policies, objectives, and strategies” by which to achieve the goals were developed.

The details of objectives and strategies can be found on pages 06.1 through 06.10 of the guide plan element. The State’s goals are as follows:

- **Goal 1** – Rhode Island’s system of airports will contribute to the State’s economic growth while maintaining financial self-sufficiency.
- **Goal 2** – Rhode Island will be served by a system of airports whose roles and capacities are sufficient to meet current and projected demand within the context of the natural, social, and economic environment.
- **Goal 3** – Rhode Island will be served by a system of airports that is readily accessible from the air.
- **Goal 4** – Rhode Island will be served by a system of airports that is readily accessible from the ground.
- **Goal 5** – Rhode Island’s airports will exist compatibly within their communities while providing air services appropriate to their roles.
- **Goal 6** – Rhode Island’s system of airports will meet all federal, state, and local environmental regulatory requirements.
- **Goal 7** – Rhode Island’s airport system will be safe, efficient, and meet applicable FAA design standards and TSA security standards.

Part Seven Airport System Improvements

The recommended facility and service improvements, or projects, set forth in this part have been identified through the process described in Parts 4 and 5 and in consideration of the goals and strategies established in Part 6 and airport-specific Master Plan Updates. Airport-specific recommendations were identified to meet system objectives and ultimately achieve higher performance levels for their system role. In addition, project costs are estimated, various funding sources and mechanisms are also outlined here.