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Flying Lessons May Be on Horizon

Airport official is hoping the idea lifts off

By Jake Mosbach jmosbach@clintonherald.com Apr 22, 2017



Submitted photoAn airplane sits at the Clinton Municipal Airport.



CLINTON — The Clinton Municipal Airport continues to be a crucial factor in the economic development in the Gateway area.

The airport serves as the landing spot for executives of many of the region's top companies and corporations, but it is also the hub for site selectors of potential future industries – something that area economic development specialists are always keeping an eye out for.

“That’s really what I think is the most important use for the airport,” Airport Manager Mike Nass said. “We support a lot of businesses, and we support the economic development. Industries will have site selectors come here to look at sites, and we have executives coming in. A lot of the larger industries, but also supporting industries, the smaller companies are here frequently as well.”

Normal days at the airport can feature aircraft of all sizes stopping in for fuel, maintenance, or perhaps even just a break and a cup of coffee. The airport’s activity and usage numbers vary from year to year, along with its fuel sales. Though fuel sales are slightly lower this year than last year, it’s not worrisome to Nass. Economic uncertainty in recent months, Nass says, limited some companies’ air travel.

Airport officials are always looking to generate more revenue, and that can be as simple as persuading a group that might normally land in the Quad-Cities to go a bit further north and stop in Clinton, a scenario which has recently happened.

Nass has also looked into hosting pilot training and flight instructing sessions after receiving some community interest as of late.

“We’ve been getting a lot of inquiries lately from people who are wanting to learn to fly,” Nass said. “The closest place right now is Davenport, so that’s something we want to do to improve is offering flight instructing and add that to the list of services that we offer.”

Nass said last summer's Fly Iowa event at the airport may have sparked an interest in the community when it comes to learning how to fly. With a little more research, the possibility of offering those services will become more of a realization for Nass and his staff.

"It'll just take a little more homework to get that done, but it's certainly something that we're looking into," Nass said.

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