



Pella Area Development Corporation (PADCO) fully supports the South Central Regional Airport in order to help maintain the continued success of our region. A regional airport is a strategic investment in our future that creates opportunities for current companies and makes our region a competitive location for business growth. It is also a wise use of funding by creating efficiencies in airport operations, and addressing safety concerns that exist at the current Pella Airport.

Meeting the needs of our region's employers is important to every household in the area. Manufacturers in Marion County directly and indirectly provide 60.4% of all household income and employ 52.5% of the workforce in Marion County.¹ Providing the infrastructure necessary to be competitive in their marketplaces will have a positive effect on income and employment. Without adequate infrastructure, the companies lose a competitive edge and can become vulnerable in the national and international marketplace.

When companies consider where to locate facilities, plausible sites must meet their list of operational needs. Iowa's largest employers rank proximity to commercial and general aviation airports as the 3rd and 6th of the 10 highest ranking factors when selecting a location for a new or expanded business facility.² (Proximity to air transportation ranked higher than proximity to suppliers.) Operating a Class C airport in this region will accommodate aviation needs of businesses of all sizes who wish to locate in our region.

Operating one regional airport rather than two local airports will result in efficiencies in operational costs such as maintenance equipment and staff as well as creating savings in the annual allocation of Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF) dollars as funds will be allocated for one airport rather than two. Construction of a new regional airport will actually put more land back into private ownership and mean less land covered by concrete.

Safety issues have been identified by the FAA at the Pella Airport. Measures need to be taken in order to protect lives and property. The Pella airport operates under special authorization from the FAA for the landing of Class C aircraft in a Category BII airport. Most other airports with the same authorization accommodate from 6-12 Category C flights each year. Pella's airport accommodates between 300-500 Category C flights each year. The solution is a facility capable of Category C aircraft needs. Multiple feasibility studies have shown it is less expensive to build a new facility than to upgrade Pella's existing airport.

Our local companies have been successful for many decades, contributing heavily to our region's success. This success is a result of adapting and changing to meet demands of the marketplace. We must do the same to support their operational needs with a regional airport capable of safely landing Class C aircraft.

Board Members of the Pella Area Development Corporation,

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¹ The Economic Impact of Manufacturing in the Marion County Economy; Iowa State University Department of Economics, October 2011.

² <http://www.iowadot.gov/aviation/aviationiniowa/aviationimpact.html>