

The Airport and the Community

The services provided by aviation have become essentially a part of our modern life and we have come to think of it and accept it as much as the railways, telephones, radio and other modern conveniences. Each of these essential factors of our modern living had its growing pains but none as great as the aviation industry.

Everything we have taken into our mode of living have both beneficial and detrimental aspects. Trains are dirty and noisy, automobiles are terrific killers, radios have singing commercials. All these things we accept however, because the benefits are greater than their faults and we have taken them unto ourselves as something we cannot do without. The airplane is one of the many things that has come into our lives in recent years and enter it has, and to stay. Think of the airline facilities, the line production of private planes, the part aviation played in the last war, the 300,000 pilots with almost every family touching aviation in some way or another. It is definitely a universal and essential factor in our lives and especially in our national defense and economic security.

Airplanes require airports as automobiles require highways and streets. Each are provided to produce benefits and a means for circulation of people, and increase their capacity to do business and live. We do not build highways upon which to burn taxed gasoline even though they are built for the most part by gasoline tax.

A community does not build airports to fill it with rental paying tenants, even though it could become a self sustaining community asset through properly organized and managed rentals. The airport tenants are producers of benefits. They bring people to the community, provide a means for the community, its people and its products to circulate to other communities, close and remote. The rentals and use-fees should be carefully planned to avoid curtailment of the valuable activities of the tenants. No sane business man is going to invest any amount of money in any business enterprise unless he has a long enough lease at a reasonable rate to insure continuation of that enterprise. High charges may have the effect of killing the goose that laid the golden egg.

The asset value of airports to a city is all too often computed only in terms of direct operating revenues as compared to the capital investment and operating costs with the result that the balance sheet is not to favorable.

To illustrate this a recent comprehensive and exhaustive statistical study was made of the Yakima municipal airport by E.J. Bohart, Chairman of the Washington State Junior Chamber of Commerce aviation committee and aviation enthusiast of many years. The results of this survey are actually amazing and it is with great pleasure that these results are revealed to the 60,000 men women and children of Yakima who are stockholders in the Yakima Municipal airport.

Probably the most interesting discovery, was the fact that aviation is producing hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in brand new dollars that benefit every citizen in the community.

It is generally recognized that Yakima is the hub of civil aviation in the northwest and is one of the leading aviation centers. There is hardly another city in the nation ~~that size of~~ ^{in the northwest} Yakima that has the aviation activities investments that that the local airport has. Yakima's private aviation businesses are equipped and qualified to served public requirements and demands in every phase and category of the business.

Yakima is noted for the outstanding accomplishments in the agriculture research and pest control. The operations ^{in the northwest} at the airport introduced and developed aerial dusting and spraying which is producing thousands of dollars in payrolls and benefits to the community as well as saving growers thousands of dollars annually in crops and time.

The private category Aviation buainesses at the Yakima Airport have an investment in equipment and stocks and facilities of nearly Half-million dollars. Their gross business for the period June 1946 to June 1947 totaled nearly \$1,000,000.00 and their payroll over \$300,000. These payrolls are spent with Yakima merchants and in taxes to help support and maintain our schools and other institutions. The revenue of the local operators is also spent in Yakima, which means that not only is the yakima airport a service to the community as a transprtation facility but one of the greatest assests we have in producing benefits. The direct airport income from rentals and use-fees is small compared with the total values brought to the community by aviation.

In Yakima's scheduled airline category there are 24 people employed who live in Yakima and many of them are home owners and consequently tax payers. The \$66,000 they received in payrolls annually is brand new money into the community that would not be here were it not for the airlines. The airline station ~~here~~ ^{lines} has direct telephone and telegraph hookups with the Yakima listed as one of the top ten on the trans-continental hookup. This transcontinentl service costs the airlines \$70,000 per month of which the Yakima station pays its perportionate share.

The Yakima airport is used by Pan American Airways and United Airlines as an alternate base when weather prohibits landing at coast airports. This along the the Northwest Airlines layovers in Yakima produces thousands of dollars annually in hotel accomadations and meals to say nothing of the money these visitors spend with other local merchants while waiting for clearance to conitue their journey.

The Civil Aeronautics facilities and the Us Weater Bureau facilities constitute and investment of nearly \$100,000. The \$98,000 the 34 employees of these stations is also dollars gracing our tills as a direct result of the Aviation activities. 13 of these employees pay taxes into our community because they are home owners.

A popular restaurant at the field serves several hundred people daily. The payroll from this enterprize grace the tills of local merchants.

During the rugged war years local operators trained thousands of pilots under contract for the american air forces. The navy mantained a refueling base for itinerant navy planes. Although our report deals mainly with civil aviation appropriate recognition should be given to the intangible value of the airport vital to our national security.

Adjacent to the airport is one of the outstanding technological institutions in the the northwest. Here is trained hundreds of aircraft mechanics and instrument technicians vital to the maintaining of aircraft both civil and military.

Airports must be made as beautiful as the nicest park. Every business thereon must be a "Show Place" and as clean and attractive as the down-town business. It is impossible to overstress courtesies and conveniences because through airports a colossal business will continue to funnel into Yakima, from a boundless trade area that will benefit every citizen and grace every till. The size of this cash will be limited only by your willingness to support and exploit as you should. It is not likely that the next generation will compliment our initiative and vision if we do not quickly grasp this tremendous opportunity and develop the greatest asset we have, the airport.

The airport could be and will be one of Yakima's leading shipping points in a few years. Air freight offers the quickest and most reliable method of perishable food yet devised. With warehouses and shipping stations erected at the airport the revenue would be greatly increased for its maintenance and thereby become self sustaining. By raising rents or use-fees, gas tax, or any other method of increasing revenue from aviation businesses only tends to retard the growth of the airport and the industry as a whole.

It needs an administration, and badly. Within the walls of such a building could be housed the CAA equipment and offices, The US Weather Bureau, the terminals for the airlines, restaurant, and many other offices all paying toward the upkeep of the airport. During the winter months when planes are grounded, as many as 500 people are waiting here for the weather to clear. These people from all over the world don't get a very good impression of Yakima being crammed into an inadequate shelter. A deluxe waiting room would ease their stay here considerably.

Another opportunity to enhance the airport is the possibility of creating a golf course and general park for the whole family on the 100 acres adjoining the airport on the south. The city of Yakima is in dire need of a large park and playground. What's the matter with utilizing this land and killing two birds with one stone. This park could have swim tanks, tennis courts, baseball diamond, golf course and a life stream for the kids to fish in. What more could anyone ask than a complete play ground for the whole family to enjoy Sundays and holidays. And what would improve the airport more than parking it.

Following is a detail outline of the recent survey made of the aviation activities at the Yakima Airport.

STATISTICAL STUDY OF CIVIL AVIATION IN YAKIMA 1946-47

	Investm't	Employees	Home Owners	Payroll	Visitors	Days Stay Visitors	Spent per Day	Total non Aviation	Local Purchases
Fixed Base Operators	471,493	72	34	304,967.19	1200	2	\$18	\$11,492	\$6,100
Scheduled Airlines	29,000	24	6	66,000.00	8000	1	7	4,800	8,000
Civil Aeronautics Administration	75,000	10	7	32,000.00	36	2½	8	720	
US Weather Bureau Airways Division	10,000	6	2	17,500.00	24	1½	8	288	
Concessionairs	18,000	6	3	12,000.00					
Aviation Conferences					600	3	15	4,875	
Gross Business Fixed base Operators	\$974,641.45								
No. Planes Sold	32								
No. Pilots Trained	1647								
City-County	41,000,000	2	2	6,500					
TOTALS	603,493	120	54	438,967.19	98600			\$22175.00	\$14,100

The County has an investment along with the city of about \$1,250,000. The city leases the airport ofr \$1 year. The city has a little if any investment comparatively.