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Airport complex to generate \$1.6B by 2011

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Its controversial days in the past, the DuPage Airport Authority is riding the triple wave of its airport operations, high-tech park and golf course into a financial boon that will be worth \$1.6 billion to the area economy by 2011.

"We have successfully turned this operation into a self-sustaining business," said Dan Goodwin, chairman of the DAA Board of Commissioners, at a press conference highlighting the airport's economic and fiscal impact. "We took the airport from a \$2 million annual loss to a \$2 million annual profit. We have also paid off our last portion of debt. The airport is now debt-free."

Park and Prairie Landing Golf Course. Numbers were derived by measuring expenditures on construction activities, operations and payroll for the three entities. The study also conducted interviews with local hotels, restaurants, gasoline stations and on-site tenants of the DAA.

In 2006, the three entities generated 2,940 jobs, \$373 million in local spending, and \$106 million in wages and salaries to DuPage County, Kane County and metro Chicago.

While these figures may be enough to turn some heads, the study projects that they will only increase as the years go by. By 2011, the DAA contribution to the local economy

counted for a little less than \$26 million, but by 2011 it is predicted to bring in more than \$1 billion.

The majority of job growth that will come at the DAA will be in the manufacturing and service sector, in large part because of the emergence of the tech park.

"Tech park is building at a fast rate and bringing in tenants at a fast rate," said Goodwin. "There are other competing technology parks in the area, but we doing twice the amount of new rentals and developments as our competitors."

The tech park is drawing numerous potential customers because of its advanced technology capabilities; it is wired with 10 Gb bandwidth of fiber optic capacity, 800 times faster than a T1 line.

The tech park will draw product developers that will in turn establish light manufacturing plants on site to produce prototypes or even consumer-ready products.

Because of this, durable manufacturing is expected to increase to 3,650 jobs by 2011, up from 890 in 2006. Services are predicted to increase to 2,580 positions by 2011, up from 990 in 2006.

While the airport and the tech park made up for most of the money generated in the area, the golf course, which was designed solely to act as a buffer zone between residential areas and airport activities, managed to profit last year as well. Prairie Landing had revenue of \$250,000, proving itself more than self-sufficient.

West Chicago will also benefit from its arrangement with the DAA. In 2006 the city received \$515,000 in tax benefits and in 2011 it will get more than \$1 million.

"The airport is a good player in this community," said Goodwin. "We generate numerous economic benefits for the community."



Slides of the DuPage National Tech Park, the DuPage Airport and Prairie Landing Golf Course illustrate the presentation as the DAA board unveils growth and revenue projections for the facility.

It's stark contrast to the not-too-distant past, when the airport was under constant fire for being a burden on the taxpayers. Now it seems that the DAA is pulling its weight and acting as a benefit to the surrounding area.

According to an economic and fiscal impact study conducted by Deerfield-based Gruen Gruen and Associates, the DAA directly generated \$3.8 million in direct tax revenue in the past year. The study also went on to determine additional dollars generated by off-site spending, jobs and wage.

The study focused on the three main entities that make up the DAA--the DuPage Airport, the DuPage National Technology

should have increased by 329 percent to \$1.63 billion, with \$1.1 billion occurring within DuPage County.

Employment will also increase by 207 percent to 8,900 in 2011, which will generate \$356,190,000 in wages and salaries.

Although the airport is the 29th busiest general aviation airport in the country, the employment and revenue and spending numbers it generates now give it an economic impact as if it were in the top five, said Goodwin.

The industry affected the most by DAA spending is the transportation, communications and utilities sector. In 2006, it ac-