



For Immediate Release
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Mayor John Harkins strikes historic accord on Sikorsky Memorial Airport

*Agreement will fix flooding on Main Street,
reduce the size of airport by approximately 40 acres*

STRATFORD – Today, Mayor John A. Harkins signed an historic agreement with Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch that will reduce the footprint of Sikorsky Memorial Airport in Stratford, correct the frequent flooding on Main Street, and provide many additional positive benefits for the residents of Stratford. The agreement has been already ratified unanimously by the Bridgeport City Council and the Stratford Town Council.

Talks between Stratford and Bridgeport began in earnest after a meeting with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood in Washington in July of 2012. The agreement has been unanimously approved by the Stratford Town Council, and the Bridgeport City Council.

“For decades, the residents of Lordship have been wrongly denied access to their homes because of high tides and average-sized rain storms. Not only from a convenience standpoint, but in terms of public safety concerns, this agreement will bring welcomed relief to the people of Lordship,” Harkins said of the agreement. “Additionally, by reducing the overall footprint of the airport and locking in the length of the runways, we can assure the residents of Lordship that the airport will not be expanded now, or in the future.”

“I’d like to thank Secretary LaHood, Mayor Finch, Gov. Dannel Malloy, DOT Commissioner James Redeker, as well as our state and federal legislative delegations, including Rep. Rosa DeLauro, for all of their assistance and support making this historic agreement possible,” said Harkins. “The time has come to move forward and make progress in a positive way. By setting aside years of bad will and focusing on working

together for the common good, we have been able to reach an agreement that will benefit Stratford, as well as all of the other stakeholders, for years to come.”

In exchange for Stratford’s cooperation with the installation of the runway safety zone, the following accommodations will be made for Stratford’s benefit:

- 1) The length of both runways is locked in at current lengths. Runway 6-24 will never be increased or exceed 4,677 feet, and Runway 11-29 will never be increased or exceed 4,761 feet in length.
- 2) Through the State of Connecticut, approximately 40 acres of airport property - including the Long Beach West parking lot and wetlands and marsh acreage - will be conveyed to the Town of Stratford, assuring a permanent buffer zone for residents of Lordship for decades to come.
- 3) Tax revenues generated from any new structures or expanded private operations at the airport will go to the Town of Stratford.
- 4) As part of the road relocation, a yet-to-be-determined amount of Raymark waste will be remediated and transported out of town, thereby reducing the footprint of Raymark contamination in Stratford.
- 5) Upon execution of the agreement, Bridgeport will develop an action plan to permanently address all blight issues at the airport.
- 6) Upon completion of the safety zone project, the State of Connecticut will convene discussions about ownership and governance of the airport, including possible regionalization, which could give Stratford more say in future operations at the airport.
- 7) Bridgeport agrees to relinquish any claims to the Long Beach West parking lot.
- 8) Bridgeport will complete wetland mitigation of approximately 40 acres, which allows Stratford the ability to preserve this precious asset and resource into the future.

The agreement allows the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to install a safety zone (EMAS) which will require a slight realignment of Main Street. However, negotiations have enabled this realignment to be a far less substantial move than originally proposed by the FAA. The Town also agrees to withdraw pending legal actions with regard to the 1978 agreement between the two municipalities in the on-going dispute, resulting in substantial savings in legal expenses for Stratford taxpayers.

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