

REAP Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
Wichita Workforce Center - 2021 N. Amidon, #1100
OR Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87961157122>
June 1, 2023 ~ 11:30am

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Commissioner Pete Meitzner, Chair (11:30)
2. **Approval of Minutes from Special Executive Committee Meeting on May 9, 2023:**
Commissioner Pete Meitzner (11:35) (pp. 2-3)
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
3. **2023 Kansas Legislature Update:** Kimberly and Josh Svaty (11:40) (pp. 4-7)
Kimberly and Josh Svaty will provide a summary of the 2023 Legislative Session, and a plan to engage the South Central Kansas Legislative Delegation over the summer and into the fall will be discussed.
Recommended Action: Take appropriate action
4. **Heartland Flyer Update:** Cory Davis, Kansas Department of Transportation (12:10) (pp. 8-11)
The state of Kansas submitted a grant for funding support to extend passenger rail service from Newton to Oklahoma City.
Recommended Action: Take appropriate action
5. **Wichita Transit Advisory Board Appointment:** Keith Lawing (12:20) (pp. 12-19)
A representative from REAP serves on the Wichita Transit Advisory Board and the position is now vacant.
Recommended Action: Appoint REAP member to the Wichita Transit Advisory Board.
6. **Small Community Air Service Development Grant Application:** Valerie Wise, Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower Airport (12:30) (p. 20)
An update will be provided on the strategy to expand commercial air service from Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport.
Recommended Action: Receive and file
7. **Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach Strategy:** Keith Lawing (12:40)
REAP staff are developing plans to increase the number of people accessing this program in South Central Kansas.
Recommended Action: Take appropriate action
8. **Community Updates** (12:45)
REAP members will be asked to share any news of note and happenings of interest in the region.
9. **Adjourn:** (1:00)

NEXT MEETING: Our next meeting will be Thursday, July 6, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

REAP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2023 ~ 2:00 pm

Welcome: Commissioner Pete Meitzner, Chair

Support for Small Community Air Service Development Program

Jesse Romo, Director of Airports at Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower International Airport gave a presentation on a grant opportunity to expand air service at the airport.

The Wichita Dwight D. National Airport is seeking opportunities to expand commercial air service to the East Coast. A strategy is to apply for a grant to establish a Minimum Revenue Guarantee program and matching funds are needed to secure federal resources from the Small Community Air Service Development program. Seeking to have \$600,000 of matching funds committed from area businesses and local governments. The goal is to establish non-stop service to Washington DC. Wichita is largest market in county without direct service to DC. American Airlines is expressing interest in using this opportunity to expand service to DC. Application to be submitted this month.

REAP staff recommended allocating \$10,000 from REAP to support the Small Community Air Service Development grant application. There are funds available in the current budget for projects.

ACTION TAKEN: Commissioner Pete Meitzner (Sedgwick County) motioned to approve allocating \$10,000 from REAP to the Small Community Air Service Development grant application. Kelly McElroy (Newton) seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:30 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Next meeting will be Thursday, June 1, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

Attendance

Name	City
Will Black	Haysville
Council Member Mike Hoheisel	Wichita
Commissioner Charles Jennings	Arkansas City
Kelly McElroy	Newton
Council Member Homer Henry	Andover
Nick Engel	Derby
Kyle Fiedler	North Newton
Justin Henry	Goddard
Council Member Tom Jones	Park City
Commissioner Pete Meitzner	Sedgwick County
Kristi Northcutt	Lindsborg
Council Member Justin Shore	Clearwater
Lauren Clary	Kansas Gas
Toni Porter	Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce
Jesse Romo	Wichita Dwight D Eisenhower International Airport
Valerie Wise	Wichita Dwight D Eisenhower International Airport
Chip Westfall	Individual Member
Keith Lawing	REAP / WA



2023 Kansas Legislative Session Weekly Legislative & Regulatory Update

That's A Wrap Folks!

The House wrapped its 2023 legislative session around 9:30pm on Friday evening. The Senate followed suite at 10:17pm. However, in a rather surprising twist, legislative leadership made the motion to conclude the session Sine Die. Typically, Sine Die occurs two or three weeks after the final adjournment of the Legislature allowing for one more day to touch up any final issues. Such will not be the case this session unless if the Governor calls a Special Session for a defined topic.

The final days of the 2023 Legislation session included work on the final budget bill, a K-12 funding package and a series of veto overrides and veto override attempts. Prior to First Adjournment on Friday, April 7th, lawmakers passed SB 169, a broad tax reform and reduction package. In the days in between the end of First Adjournment and the start of Veto Session, Governor Kelly signed dozens of bills into law (or let them become law without her signature). She also issued several bill vetoes and took the veto pin to twenty-six different line items in the Mega budget which was passed before First Adjournment. The big question remained in the days leading up to Veto Session, what was Governor Kelly going to do with the big tax bill. SB 169 included the food sales tax elimination she and lawmakers championed. SB 169 limited the exemption elimination to just the State sales tax leaving alone the not popular local government food sales tax elimination. SB 169 removed the social security income tax cliff for those making above \$75,000 as well as property tax relief which were also dual priorities of the Legislature and the Governor. The biggest element of the bill, however, proved to be the sticking point and that was collapsing the State's three income tax brackets into one 5.15% flat tax rate. Governor Kelly vetoed SB 169 at the start of Veto Session week, challenging the fiscal sensibility of the bill. Consistently throughout session, the Governor expressed her concern about the fiscal impact of the flat tax in the long term.

There was an effort to override Governor Kelly's tax bill veto, however, it fell short in the Senate. While one lawmaker moved from a no to override to a yes to override, a separate lawmaker changed their vote the other way from yes to override to no. The bill did not have a path forward in the Senate and the Senator who changed from yes to no to override shortly, thereafter was removed from his committee chair position.

The Legislature did pass a modest tax bill before adjourning. SB 8 included eleven different provisions covering a wide range of topics including a sales tax exemption for telecommunications companies to further broadband deployment, net operating loss changes for tax years 2018 – 2020, an adoption tax credit and sales and property tax exemption for private businesses "competing" with new government owned health clubs, child care centers or recreation centers. Governor Kelly has not indicated what action she may take on the bill.

As previously referenced, the State has a very healthy ending balance – historic ending balances in fact – in both the State General Fund (SGF) and the Rainy Day Fund. The SGF will end up with more than \$3 billion in its coffers by the end of next fiscal year (June 30, 2024) and the Rainy Day Fund currently stands around \$1.5 billion after lawmakers infused another \$500 million into the fund this session. It was widely expected that some significant tax package that would couple relief and reform would be enacted this session, but key to everything, you have to find just the right mix.

The K-12 funding bill was passed in the waning hours of the session. This is the only issue that lawmakers are required to fund each year per the Kansas Constitution. While school funding had not been battled around the last several sessions following years of contentious debates about whether K-12 was funded adequately, this session the debate came roaring back. Lawmakers sought to couple policy reforms with K-12 funding. Typically, policy is handled in a separate bill. However, this session, increases in Special Education funding were largely tied to an expansion of a school voucher program and a program to increase tax credits for companies to support scholarships for private or unaccredited schools.

The Legislature passed the K-12 funding bill, then moved the final Adjournment resolution and declared Sine Die. There have been calls for the Governor to veto the K-12 funding bill. If the Governor vetoed the bill, the only way to fund schools for the coming year would be for the Governor to call a special session. The Governor will have ten days once her office receives the bill to either sign the bill into law, allow the measure to become law without her signature or to veto the bill (and likely call a special session).

Lawmakers did tee up 17 different veto override efforts during the three day Veto Session. Nine vetoes were sustained (meaning there were not enough votes in one or both chambers to override the Governor's veto) and eight vetoes were overridden by the Legislature.

Sustained

- Eliminating the three-day grace period for mail in ballots
- Food sales tax/ flat tax bill
- Increasing the child hunting license age
- 1 gender care related measure
- 1 abortion related measure
- 2 childcare related measures

Overridden

- Expanding work requirements for adults 49-59 to receive SNAP benefits and to continue requiring SNAP recipients to aid Child Support Services to procure from absentee parents
- Creating the crime of human smuggling
- 3 gender related measures
- 3 abortion related measures

Closing Thoughts

The Kansas Senate is up for re-election in 2024 alongside the Kansas House. The Senate has not been up for re-election since 2020. It is not clear yet what the ramifications of this session

will be for the next session and the next election cycle. But already the fundraising letters have gone out! We do know however that Kansas will have a Presidential Primary election, rather than party caucuses, in 2024. So that will probably mean an influx of political ads.

The Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC) will meet in the coming weeks to determine what topics requested for interim committee meetings will be approved and if so, for how many days. Requests have been made for a water committee and for four days of review about transmission policy and needs in Kansas. However the transmission interim was requested by the legislator who is no longer Chair of the Senate Utilities Committee so the future of the request is unknown.

Kimberly & Josh Svaty

Contact Information

Gencur Svaty Public Affairs

Kimberly Gencur Svaty - 913.486.4446 | kimberly@gencursvaty.com

[Joshua Svaty - 785.472.7794 | joshua@joshuasvaty.com](mailto:joshua@joshuasvaty.com)

@gencursvaty | gencursvaty.com

The Kansas Legislature to You

Committee hearings and Chamber debate is available on the Legislative YouTube page and some committees allow for virtual testimony as well (if permission is granted by the Committee Chair). On the Kansas Legislature webpage, click on the Audio/Video link in the right-hand corner to be directed to your AV choices.

[Welcome | Kansas State Legislature \(kslegislature.org\)](http://kslegislature.org)



Kansas submits grant proposal for less expensive Heartland Flyer rail project

By **Brad Cooper** - May 25, 2023



Kansas is taking a significant step toward expanding Amtrak service, officially submitting a proposal to get in line for funding for a proposed rail route from Oklahoma City to Newton.

The state – along with Oklahoma – recently applied to the Federal Railroad Administration to get the Heartland Flyer extension added to a pipeline of national rail projects.

It would bring passenger rail service north into Kansas from Oklahoma City, where it already runs to Fort Worth with connections to Dallas and San Antonio.

The 206-mile project is now estimated – in 2020 dollars – at about \$124.4 million. It was originally estimate at about \$400 million.

The reduced cost reflects that some of the improvements that need to be made to existing track in the freight corridor will be bankrolled by BNSF Railway.

The estimate includes \$15.8 million in capital expenditures in Kansas and \$79.8 million in Oklahoma, according to the [application](#) submitted to the federal railroad agency.

There is another \$28.8 million planned for safety measures in the corridor to prevent train collisions and derailments.

If added to the federal government's corridor program, the state could receive about \$450,000 that would help for pay for planning the service.

It also would open the door for the state qualify for other federal money that would pay for the project in different stages, including environmental, engineering and design work as well as the early years of operating costs.

"Our goal is to get in that pipeline to be able to access the federal funds," said Cory Davis, director of Multimodal Transportation and Innovation for the state transportation department.

"We're in a very favorable position to be selected," Davis told the Passenger Rail Caucus late last month. "In the mean time, we're not slowing down."

Any money for operating costs, which were estimated in 2011 to be \$7.4 million a year, would likely start with 100% federal funding.

But that money would be ratcheted down until the state would assume those costs after five years, Davis recently told lawmakers,

The federal government has \$1.8 billion allocated for new rail corridor planning in the next five years.

It is part of the \$550 billion in new infrastructure spending that Congress approved two years ago and that the president signed into law.

The infrastructure bill provided \$66 billion for capital investment and passenger rail over five years.



***Proposed Heartland Flyer extension
from Oklahoma City to Newton.***

The proposed extension of the Heartland Flyer from Oklahoma City to Newton, Kansas is part of [Amtrak's 15-year, \\$75 billion plan](#) to add 39 new rail routes and expand service on 25 others across the country.

Passenger rail service Newton to was ended in 1979 when Amtrak's Chicago-Dallas-Houston service was discontinued.

The existing Heartland Flyer from Oklahoma City to Fort Worth was revived in 1999.

An extension from Oklahoma City to Newton would link to the Southwest Chief, a cross-country route that connects to Topeka, Lawrence, Kansas City and Chicago to the east and Los Angeles to the west.

The Federal Railroad Administration won't disclose how many applicants are seeking to get into the rail corridor pipeline.

However, last year when the agency announced the establishment of the corridor pipeline, it received multiple so-called "expressions of interests" from states, regional passenger rail agencies, Amtrak and local governments.

At that time, there were "expressions of interest" for 111 projects from various agencies.

While those do not necessarily reflect projects that have been submitted for federal grant funding, they do provide some sense of demand for the money.

They included:

- Twenty-eight existing rail corridor projects, which reduce trip time or increase frequency of an existing service. These projects maintain existing routes and don't add stops.
- Thirteen rail extensions, which lengthening existing routes and serve additional destinations.
- Seventy new corridors, which establish intercity passenger rail service where it does not currently exist and would need a new rail line or use existing track.

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority revealed last week that it planned to seek money from the same program for adding 107 miles of passenger train service within the Kansas City area from Leavenworth to Lee's Summit.

The KCATA project [proposes](#) to create intercity connections between existing Amtrak-served routes from Topeka in the west and on new lines running west from De Soto to Kansas City, Missouri and from Fort Leavenworth south to the Kansas City International Airport.

Meanwhile, the state of Missouri also seeking money for four rail projects as well.

Missouri wants to add a third round trip and more stops to its Missouri River Runner route from Kansas City to St. Louis.

It also wants to extend Amtrak service that runs from Chicago to Quincy, Illinois to Hannibal, Missouri.

And it wants to establish new rail corridors from Kansas City to Joplin, Springfield and Branson, Missouri and from Kansas City to St. Joseph, Missouri.

Missouri rail officials said any improvements to service in Kansas City would spill over into Kansas.

In a meeting with the Kansas Passenger Rail Caucus last month, they also were receptive to the idea of opening talks with Kansas about the possibility of extending its Missouri River Runner service west to Lawrence or Topeka.

Republican state Rep. Carolyn McGinn, chair of the rail caucus, was optimistic about getting the Heartland Flyer into the federal pipeline.

McGinn said the project has a lot of support from communities across the state, including resolutions passed by the House and the Senate backing the rail service extension.

"There are a lot of pieces that need to come together, but I think we've doing our due diligence," McGinn said. "I feel very good about it."

The extension proposal, which has been on the drawing board for at least a decade, calls for one daily round trip from Oklahoma City to Newton.

Trains would stop in Wichita and Arkansas City in Kansas and in Ponca City, Perry, Guthrie and Edmond in Oklahoma.

Amtrak estimates that the 404-mile route from Fort Worth to Newton would take about nine hours, which would include about five hours from Oklahoma City to Newton

The corridor will require station upgrades or establishment at need new stations.

Newton and Oklahoma City have existing, active Amtrak stations. Wichita has an existing Union Station that served riders from 1914 to 1979 and recently underwent \$54 million in redevelopment investments.

Guthrie, Oklahoma has a platform that will require upgrades to accommodate passenger rail service. Edmond and Perry, Oklahoma do not have existing stations or platforms and will require investment to establish service.

Background:

In 2016, REAP was invited to appoint a member to the Wichita Transit Advisory Board (WTAB) in recognition of the regional significance of public transit. The WTAB advises the Wichita city council on recommendations from Wichita Transit for service improvements. The mission of the WTAB is *“to create a new vision for Wichita Transit that will work for the community at large, a vision that the community can get excited about, and a vision that will raise Wichita's transit system to be a first-class system able to compete with other cities our size.”*

Mike Tann is the Director and here is a link to information about the WTAB: [OnBoard2 / City of Wichita KS](#)

Analysis:

The current REAP representative is Troy Tabor of Andover, but he recently had to step away from this assignment and the position is vacant. The WTAB meets monthly on the third Wednesday at 10 am and a virtual option is available to Board members. The agenda and minutes from the April and May meetings are attached.

If any REAP member is interested in serving, or would like more information, please reach out to Keith Lawing or Chairman Meitzner.

Recommended Action: Appoint REAP member to fill vacancy on Wichita Transit Advisory Board.



Wichita Transit Advisory Board Agenda

Wednesday, April 19, 2023, • 10:00 a.m. @ 777 E. Waterman

Virtual Option • GoTo Meetings

Virtual Meeting Access Information

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/TransitAdvisoryBoard>

You can also dial in using your phone.

Access Code: 782-365-221

United States: [+1 \(408\) 650-3123](tel:+14086503123)

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://meet.goto.com/install>

Oath of Office

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

March Meeting Minutes

Public Comments

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the board on transit matters in Wichita. Participants must email comments to ralexander@wichita.gov before the meeting.

Discussion Items

- Multimodal Center Update

Information Items

- Marketing Report
- Directors' Report

Old/New Business

Announcements

Adjournment

The next TAB meeting is scheduled at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2023



The Wichita Transit Advisory Board Meeting in regular session. (*) represents remote.

Board Members: Jason Gregory*, Craig Perbeck*, Ben Blankley, Jason Jantz, and Derek Sorrells

Absent: Diana Edmiston and Ellen Abbey

City staff: Mike Tann, Paul Gunzelman, Tonja Howard*, Raven Alexander, Jay Hinkel and Nate Hinkel.

Public: Alicia Hunter*, Shelley Rich, Brett Letkowski, Kim Neufield, Alan Kailer*, Sam Wright*, Clayton Pearson, and John Snapp*

Opening

Lead Raven Alexander called the regular Wichita Transit Advisory Board meeting to order at 10:08 am. Oath of office tabled to May meeting. Additional appointments were needing to be made.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The motion to approve March minutes by member Sorells seconded by member Jantz, was unanimously approved.

1. Public Comments

Member Ben Blankley introduced himself to the board as the District I representative. He previously served on the District I DAB, USD 259 Board of Education. He is an engineer at Spirit AeroSystems and is excited to join the Transit Advisory Board.

2. Discussion Items

A. TranSystems Update

Brett Letkowski provided an update on the Multimodal Facility that is currently in the 61%-90% design phase. Currently looking into value engineering in order to stay within budget. It is anticipated that groundbreaking will occur after the baseball season. A discussion was pursued regarding the staging of the construction trailers and worker

parking. Future discussions will continue and will take into account the parking for stadium staff.

Member Jantz inquired about solar panels being added. The building is being designed to include solar panels, however, Wichita Transit staff is looking for grant funding.

3. Information Items

A. Marketing Report

The marketing report was provided by Nate Hinkel. The current focus includes the summer Q-Line extension, marketing the RIDE Program, and bike and rideshare promotions.

Ridership continues to grow. Currently trending 5% higher than 2019 ridership.

Member Blankley inquired if any core groups have been identified that would benefit from transit presentations. Director Tann shared examples of discussions that are taking place with agencies and potential community partners. Discussion continued regarding community partner meetings, ridership pilots/programs, and outreach efforts made by Wichita Transit.

B. Director's Report

Director Tann shared the three-year contract with WSU is soon expiring. WSU has requested to form a new contract for years. In the May or June meeting, the board will be provided with a demonstration of the opportunities that have been created. This has been a great partnership.

4. Old Business

None.

5. New Business

None.

6. Announcements

Wichita Transit welcomed Carolyn (CJ) Eli, the new Administrative Secretary.

Member Blankley advised that he has set a personal goal to ride transit at least between meetings. He shared his experience utilizing the Q-Line in order to attend a hockey game at the arena. Both positives and suggestions for improvement were provided.

Adjournment

Lead Raven Alexander adjourned the meeting at 10:55 am

The next meeting will be on May 17, 2023 at 10:00 am



Wichita Transit Advisory Board Agenda

Wednesday, May 17, 2023, • 10:00 a.m. @ 777 E. Waterman

Virtual Option - Microsoft Teams Meeting

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 287 965 799 626

Passcode: o65q4X

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

Oath of Office

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

April Meeting Minutes

Public Comments

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the board on transit matters in Wichita. Participants must email comments to celi@wichita.gov before the meeting.

Discussion Items

- Officers (Chair, Vice Chair)
- Multimodal Center Update

Information Items

- Marketing Report
- Directors' Report
- Program Update from Raven

Old/New Business

Announcements

Adjournment

The next TAB meeting is scheduled at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 21, 2023

The Wichita Transit Advisory Board Meeting in regular session.

(*) represents remote.

Board Members: Ben Blankley

Absent: Diana Edmiston, Ellen Abbey, Jason Gregory, Craig Perbeck, Jason Jantz, and Derek Sorrells

City staff: Mike Tann, Tonja Howard*, Raven Alexander, Jay Hinkel, Nate Hinkel, and Carolyn Eli.

Public: Shelley Rich, Brett Letkowski, Kim Neufeld*, Harley Anderson*, and John Snapp*

Oath: Deputy City Clerk, Sashia Beard, swore in new board member, Ben Blankley

Opening

Lead Raven Alexander called the regular Wichita Transit Advisory Board meeting to order at 10:05 am.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Approval of April minutes was tabled due to not having a quorum.

1. Public Comments

There were no public comments entered by email or in person.

2. Discussion Items

- A.** There will be an email sent out regarding the need for officers to be appointed (Chair and Vice Chair). Also, there needs to be an appointment made for the Sustainability Integration Board – They would represent the Transit Advisory Board. If you are interested in any of these appointments, please let CJ know by Friday, May 26th at celi@wichita.gov or call her at 316-352-4824.
- B.** Multimodal Update: Brett Letkowski presented the most up-to-date design. On the design schedule, 60% plans were submitted by January 20th, 2023. 90% are to be submitted by June 19th, 2023, and 100% to be submitted by August 16th, 2023.

The construction budget is \$13,836,735 without contingency. Office furniture, artwork, and security cameras will be purchased through COW-contracted vendors.

Member Blankley asked for clarity on the “screening”. It will be metal screening, not fencing or landscaping. He also inquired if public restrooms have baby changing stations. Yes, changing stations are in the design.

C. Transit Advisory Board 101 will be held during the June meeting.

3. Information Items

A. **Marketing Report** Current focus is the Summer Museum Loop on the Q line. RIDE Summer Youth Program. Farmers’ Market and Double Up Free Ride Promotions

Ridership is still trending upward. The veteran program is also continuing to set records each month. The USD 259 and WSU numbers are expected to drop with the end of the school year. Q-line is trending up.

Member Blankley brought up an issue he is having sharing our Facebook Page. Nate will look into sharing issues.

B. **Programs Update** International Rescue Committee (IRC) started a pilot program in 2022. Families seeking asylum are given a 6-month bus pass designed to get them to English classes, grocery stores, and appointments, and to give them a general quality of life in their new home city. There were 364 bus passes issued (not including students). Of the passes issued, they accounted for roughly 6,500 trips used. Known countries of origin were Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Sudan, and Ukraine.

Raven worked with Child Start on how to trip plan with their clients. The pilot program will launch in July/August and will run through December 2023.

Staff is currently working on the Sedgwick County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Food Access and Education committee groups. Transportation is continually indicated as a barrier. This is an ongoing project.

Section 5310 funding letters have been sent out to awardees. There was a request for \$2.3 million in funding. There was approximately \$970,000 available for allocation. Funding was granted for capital projects, vehicles, and operating funds.

C. **Directors’ Report** Holding until there is a quorum.

4. Old Business

None.

5. New Business

None.

6. Announcements

Member Blankley mentioned at the last meeting that he would try to take a bus trip each month to give a report. He was not able to prior to this meeting.

Adjournment

Lead Raven Alexander adjourned the meeting at 10:30 am

The next meeting will be on June 21, 2023, at 10:00 am

DRAFT

REAP | Regional Economic Area Partnership

May 9, 2023

Brooke Chapman, Associate Director
Small Community Air Service Development Program
Office of Aviation Analysis
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport (ICT) - Small Community Air Service Development Grant

Dear Ms. Chapman:

The Regional Economic Area Partnership (REAP) is pleased to support Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport (ICT) in its effort to acquire a Small Community Air Service Development Grant for east coast service.

REAP is comprised of over 35 local governments in ten counties of South Central Kansas, including Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, McPherson, Pratt, Reno, Sedgwick, and Sumner, as well as multiple school districts and higher education institutions. These local jurisdictions and education partners have voluntarily joined together to guide state and national actions that affect economic development in the region and to consider and adopt joint actions among member governments that enhance the regional economy.

REAP shares the airport's goal of attracting high quality air service to support our regional businesses and passengers. Air service from Wichita to the east coast, Washington D.C. in particular, has higher air fares and more limited access than those available in competing communities. In fact, Wichita has no daily nonstop service to the eastern seaboard, with only seasonal service to Florida. It is our belief this grant along with strong community support will allow the airport to successfully attract service to the east coast.

Therefore, REAP is committing to a \$10,000 local match to this grant application.

The members of REAP hope that the highest consideration will be given to Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport for this grant in order to improve regional air service which will benefit the traveling public including businesses, leisure travelers, educational institutions, and other enterprises whose future rely on improved access to the national air transportation system.

Sincerely,

Chairman Pete Meitzner
Sedgwick County Commission
REAP Chair