

Fredericton Chamber Supports Fredericton International Airport's Development of a Community Air Access Strategy

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(Fredericton, NB) – The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is encouraged by the Fredericton International Airport Authority's (FIAA) announcement at a stakeholder's meeting on Tuesday, 20 November 2012 of its intentions to actively engage with community partners to create a Community Air Access Strategy.

If the FIAA is to meet its stated goal of becoming 'New Brunswick's preferred airport', it must start in the local community. As statistics presented during Tuesday's meeting indicated, 75% of Fredericton's potential flight traffic is currently lost to cheaper options in the United States, the second highest rate in Canada. Making improved direct connections to the U.S. the top air service priority makes good sense in this context. However, as the FIAA indicated, the primary factor driving potential passengers to U.S. airports is the substantially lower fares found south of the border, largely dictated by the fees and taxes added to the cost of Canadian-originating flights. We as a community must have a better understanding of these costs in order to create an effective plan moving forward.

Communication flowing to and from the FIAA will result in greater engagement from the local population and allow for more informed decision-making by the authority and the community. Making Fredericton the province's preferred airport is a worthwhile goal, but one that will require the efforts of all stakeholders and citizens.

"The Fredericton Chamber has been a supporter of the Fredericton International Airport for many years," stated Janice Corey, Chamber President. "We look forward to continuing this mutually beneficial relationship and appreciate the airport authority's efforts to include us and the community as a whole in their strategic planning."

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