



AirTAP Briefings

A publication of the AirTAP program of the Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Minnesota

Welcome to AirTAP Briefings

We're happy to be included with this issue of the MCOA Newsletter. In *Briefings*, we plan to share practical information that we hope is beneficial to your work in operating, maintaining, or administering public use airports. In this issue, we discuss the benefits and process of hiring a consultant for an airport improvement project. Look for us in future issues as we cover other topics such as construction administration and managing the design process.

The Airport Technical Assistance Program (AirTAP) is a statewide assistance program for aviation personnel that offers practical instruction by knowledgeable and experi-

enced trainers, as well as a range of information resources.

Its goal is to help both public and private sector airport professionals improve the safety, quality, and efficiency of airport operations and increase

the use of new aviation materials, practices, and technology. To meet these goals, AirTAP serves as an education and information resource, providing training programs, technical assistance, access to experts, and printed materials such as this publication. Through its programs, AirTAP will also help airport staff build an aviation community network for exchanging best practices and

for learning from one another.

This past year, the first

AirTAP training sessions—covering airport pavement maintenance—were offered in Rochester, Willmar, and Duluth. These sessions covered pavement distress identifica-

tion and rehabilitation, but were specifically targeted at airport loading conditions, specifications, typical materials, safety, and operations.

AirTAP also sponsored a session at the MCOA Aviation Symposium in April in which panelists provided diverse ideas about marketing an airport to a community as well as to businesses and users.

Additionally, a four-part training

program on project funding and development was offered through AirTAP this spring throughout the state. These sessions were designed to complement the general aviation entitlement sessions that Mn/DOT Aeronautics offered.

Based on the feedback we receive from you and others in the aviation community, AirTAP will adapt to best meet your needs—from the topics it addresses to the ways in which it gives you that information. We welcome your comments and ideas, so please keep them coming. To reply to us, or to receive more information about the program, please contact Jim Grothaus of the Center for Transportation Studies at 612-625-8373 or jgrothaus@cts.umn.edu. ✈

—Cheri Marti,
AirTAP Program Director

Hiring a Consultant— An Initial Step to Airport Project Development

A critical first step in developing an airport project is hiring a consultant. A good consultant will lead the effort, assisting with the required processes for obtaining funding, identifying important project elements, developing complete plans and specifications, and finally, securing a bid from a competent contractor. A consultant can also assist with planning, engineering, and architectural services.

The selection process
Qualifications-based selection is required for Airport Improvement

Program (AIP) projects (see Resources at the end of this article for more information).

The selection process can benefit from incorporating the following steps:

1. Identifying a general scope of services.
2. Establishing a selection board. This board can consist of airport board members, community leaders, public agency employees, pilots, or others interested in and involved with the airport.
3. Requesting a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ). The SOQ

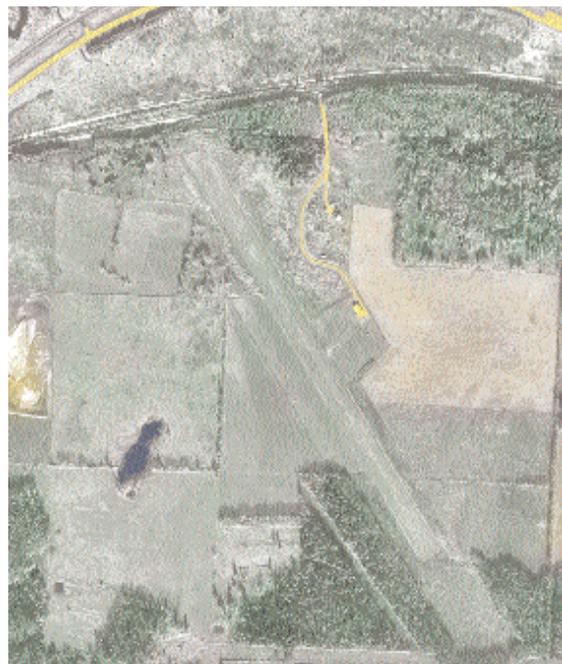


Photo courtesy of Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics

includes project identification, firm background, relevant project experience, team members' experience, client references, and evidence of EEO/AA.

4. Evaluating the submitted SOQs and narrowing the field to three to five of the best qualified candidates.
5. Developing the scope of work and services required of the selected consultants, as well as selection criteria and relative importance. Some examples of selection criteria include:

- Capability to perform aspects of the project
- Recent experience with comparable projects
- Reputation—integrity and competence
- Evidence of affirmative action
- Qualifications of key personnel and availability
- Current workload
- Demonstrated ability to meet schedules
- Capability to complete projects without major overruns
- Qualifications of outside consultants
- Quality of previous projects
- Knowledge of FAA regulations, policies, and procedures
- Understanding of the project's potential problems and the sponsor's special concerns
- Capability to furnish qualified inspectors

Interviewing

Once the consultant field has been narrowed, you're ready to conduct interviews. To prepare for a successful interview process, first develop objective rating criteria and then prepare a list of questions to ask during all interviews. You should plan to allow 20 to 30 minutes for presenta-



tions, followed by a question-and-answer period. In addition, allow ample time between presenters and make sure to provide adequate facilities for the interviews.

Negotiations and contracts

Once you've finished interviews, rank the consultants based on the predetermined

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selection criteria and initiate discussions with your first choice in order to fully and clearly define scope of work and services. Next, negotiate an agreeable fee for services. (Note that the FAA requires that a

record be kept of the negotiations.) For contracts greater than or equal to \$100,000, you will need to prepare an independent cost estimate.

You should also outline the project schedule and perform an independent analysis and comparison (in accordance with federal requirements). Then you are

ready to develop a consultant contract. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has created a sample contract that is available through the AirTAP program upon request.

Resources

The federal requirement for qualifications-based selection for AIP projects is described in Section 18.36 of 49 CFR, Section 47107 (a)(17) of 49 USC, and Title 9 of the Federal Property Administrative Services Act of 1949 (also known as the "Brooks Act").

Consultant selection requirements and information on the contracting process can be found in the Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular, *Architectural, Engineering, and Planning Consultant Services for Airport Grant Projects* (no. 150/5100-14C). ✕

AirTAP was developed through the joint efforts of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), the Minnesota Council of Airports (MCOA), and the Center for Transportation Studies (CTS). Mn/DOT's Office of Aeronautics is providing the core funding for this program, as well as the technical and administrative liaison support. The AirTAP steering committee, which includes members from MCOA, FAA, Mn/DOT, and CTS, provides program guidance and oversight. CTS

manages the program, while the program consultant WSB & Associates develops the training and information products.

Briefings is published as a quarterly insert of the MCOA Newsletter. Please direct comments to:

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