Nanaimo Airport expansion up, up and away

Nanaimo Airport is off the ground and climbing toward the start of the first phase of it’s $16.4 million expansion project that will provide improved air service to the Mid-island.

The airport has received $11 million in contributions - $6 million in February from the BC government followed by $5 million in April from the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET). In addition to the provincial and ICET contributions, the Nanaimo Airport Commission has spent $3 million on the project during the past several years and expects to borrow the remaining $2.4 million, President and CEO Mike Hooper said.

Premier Gordon Campbell said his funding announcement was in keeping with a commitment he made in Nanaimo during the last provincial election to improve air transportation to the island.

Chair Jack Peake announced the ICET funding and the money was presented to Airport Commission Chair, Jerry Pink by BC Minister of Economic Development Colin Hansen.

The BC government funded ICET in 2006 with $50 million to make strategic investments in forestry, transportation, tourism, mining, Olympic economic spin-off opportunities, agriculture, aquaculture and small business.

The funding will pay for a 485 meter runway extension, high intensity lighting and an instrument approach system, with a targeted completion date of the first phase of the project before the end of 2009.

The second phase will cost over $8 million and will see improvements to the terminal building, the relocation and enlargement of the Combined Services Building and parking.

“The contributions by the provincial government and ICET puts us in a very strong position to move ahead with our project,” Mr. Pink said.

“We are delighted to have such strong backing from provincial and regional sponsors. It demonstrates the importance of improved connections in the mid-island region.” said airport commission Vice-Chair, Russ Burke.

The improvements are required to resolve winter reliability issues and to meet the demands of a growing mid-island population.

President and CEO Mike Hooper pointed out that growth in the area continues to challenge the Nanaimo Airport facilities.

“There is a need for modern airport services that will ensure reliability and safety. We are committed to developing an environmentally sound plan for the airport improvement project, supporting a long-term sustainable management strategy,” he said.
We want to hear from you …

Tell us about your experience

Tell us about your experience

Would you recommend Nanaimo Airport?

Comments