

LONG ISLAND IN THE NEW, NEW YORK

Building Long Island's Fiscal
and Economic Future



STATE OF NEW YORK
MARIO M. CUOMO, Governor

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Calverton presently has two runways, including one that measures 10,000 feet, making it accessible to any type of industrial or commercial aircraft. At the same time, the extensive open space acreage at the site would offer the best buffer zone on the East Coast.

Finally, the site has the important advantage of its proximity to the Long Island Expressway, the William Floyd Parkway, and Route 25A. There is existing rail service to the site and road access from the airport to the proposed site of a high-speed ferry landing at Shoreham on the North Shore. Together these point to Calverton's potential as a centerpiece for air freight transport in the region.

The Long Island Regional Planning Board has recently received a grant from the Federal Aviation Authority to conduct a planning study that will address specific uses for the Airport. I will direct representatives from the State Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and Department of Economic Development to serve on the Planning Board's Technical Advisory Committee for this study. The study will include an examination of potential uses of the Airport as:

- * An Air Cargo Center that would serve Long Island and would avoid the traffic bottlenecks associated with JFK airport.
- * A Wayport or Remote Transfer Airport, to relieve congestion at New York City airports by diverting connecting passengers.
- * A Small Airline Hub facility with originating and connecting scheduled activity.

It is critical that any commercial development of Calverton be balanced with the need to preserve the surrounding environment. Therefore, we will ensure that the Authority carefully identify those areas that should be protected as open space, as well as those suitable for development, during the preparation of the plan for Calverton. We will also provide for maximum opportunity for public participation during the planning process, and the creation of a Citizen's Advisory Board to the Authority. Finally, we will insist that any new development at Calverton comply with all applicable environmental laws and regulations.

Preliminary estimates by the Long Island Regional Planning Board indicate that 10,000 permanent jobs could be created at Calverton within the first five years if the Airport were to be converted to a joint-use facility. Millions of dollars in additional economic activity could be generated for the region by this project.

B) High Speed Ferries

Because of Long Island's unique geographic configuration, travelers and transport from the Island to the New England region often must pass the length of the Island and through New York City before continuing to a northern destination.

commercial/industrial, parkland, and other compatible-use land surrounding the facility. The waters of the Long Island Sound to the north form an additional buffer zone for Calverton. See Map 1.

(Kennedy International is slightly less than 5,000 acres; LaGuardia is about 700 acres.)

The primary barriers to establishing new American airports (only two major facilities have been built in the past two decades - Denver and Ft. Myers) have been: lack of a suitable site; conflict with other potential uses for the land; introduction of noise into sensitive areas; landside access; traffic pattern conflicts; congestion in the terminal-area airspace; opposition by incumbent airlines at existing airports, the large investment needed to build a new facility in a developed area.

Also, the FAA acknowledges that in the past the failure to achieve community acceptance and support for airports has contributed significantly to the lack of airport capacity today.

Calverton appears to have the potential to offset a number of these obstacles. Proper preparation of the community for a public use airport at Calverton is an essential ingredient for success.

Calverton is located in a region that is lightly populated, with adequate access to an expandable surface transport system that includes road, rail and water, linking the facility to nearby areas that it would serve as a regional airport.

In terms of a new concept in airport development and usage, the emerging "transfer airport" concept should be explored, for this might enable Calverton to be positioned as a new type of airport, one that would serve national as well as regional needs.

The FAA's criteria for definition of such a facility (recently stated) is that the "wayport" or "remote transfer airport" would be located some distance from major metropolitan areas, but near enough to local population areas (using the airport), and would serve as a "node" for long-distance air travel routes. Flights could connect at Calverton and other nodes for passenger transfer; a system of 4 to 10 such "transfer airports" could serve the entire United States.

In some ways Calverton Airport fits the profile for one such facility, and this potential should be fully explored. (The concept could be explored and potential identified, and implemented when the need arises and/or the FAA advances the concept further; this would place Calverton in position to be one of the first 21st Century Wayports, or node airports, with great potential for the Nassau-Suffolk economy.)