

# Borek: Business luncheon to chart course for DeKalb airport growth

5:30 am

The DeKalb County Economic Development Corp. is pleased to welcome back aviation consultant Jack Penning to keynote its first Business Round Table luncheon of 2019 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 6 at Faranda's Banquet Center in DeKalb.

Penning, managing partner for Volaire Aviation Consulting, has consulted for more than 15 years with airport clients throughout North America on air service development projects, strategic business planning and marketing initiatives.

This event will provide insight about the strategic planning, marketing and development plans for the DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport. The airport is an asset to business and economic growth in DeKalb County, as well as for a myriad of businesses throughout northern Illinois.

Penning presented a strategic plan for the DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport to the DeKalb City Council in August. Penning worked with the DeKalb Airport Advisory Board to evaluate and select nine key recommendations from dozens of alternative ideas. The recommendations are intended to promote airport growth, efficiency and profitability and contribute to the economic development of the city and county.

The strategic plan recommends promoting the facility as a regional airport providing jet fuel, aircraft maintenance and sales, and charter and specialized cargo services to national and international businesses and institutions.

Recommendations also include aggressive jet fuel pricing, certification for large charter aircraft and new hangar development.

The development of solar energy production facilities, hydroponic greenhouses and industrial parks on or adjacent to the airport also were recommended.

The DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport generates about \$10.7 million in economic activity and provides 81 jobs, according to the Illinois Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation in 2012.

Industrial companies use the airport for periodic executive visits, customer tours and employee training. Airport manager Tom Cleveland said, "some firms use the airport for expedited delivery of time-sensitive cargo." Retail executives visit local stores. Agricultural businesses visit local seed production facilities.

“Operations at the airport include the DeKalb Flight Center, a full-service fixed-base operator providing fuel, de-icing and aircraft handling and storage,” Cleveland said. “Fly America offers flight training, aircraft maintenance and pilot service. Win Aviation provides aircraft sales, parts and maintenance at its new hangar.”

Additionally, the Kishwaukee Education Consortium hosts flight simulation training for students from five participating high schools.

“The airport’s two runways handle about 30,000 flights a year,” Cleveland said. “Purposes include corporate business, cargo transportation and general aviation or recreation. At 7,025 feet in length, the main runway is longer than any at Midway Airport.”

As a result, the DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport is one of the major economic assets of DeKalb County. The ability for corporate officials to fly directly to DeKalb is a significant advantage for site selection and facility operation.

Registration for the business round table is available at [www.dcedc.org](http://www.dcedc.org). Advance reservations are being accepted through Jan. 11. Standard reservations will be accepted from Jan. 12 to Feb. 1.

For information and assistance, contact Karen Hoyle at 815-895-2711 or [hoyle@dcedc.org](mailto:hoyle@dcedc.org).

- Paul Borek is executive director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corp.