

# 1. Introduction

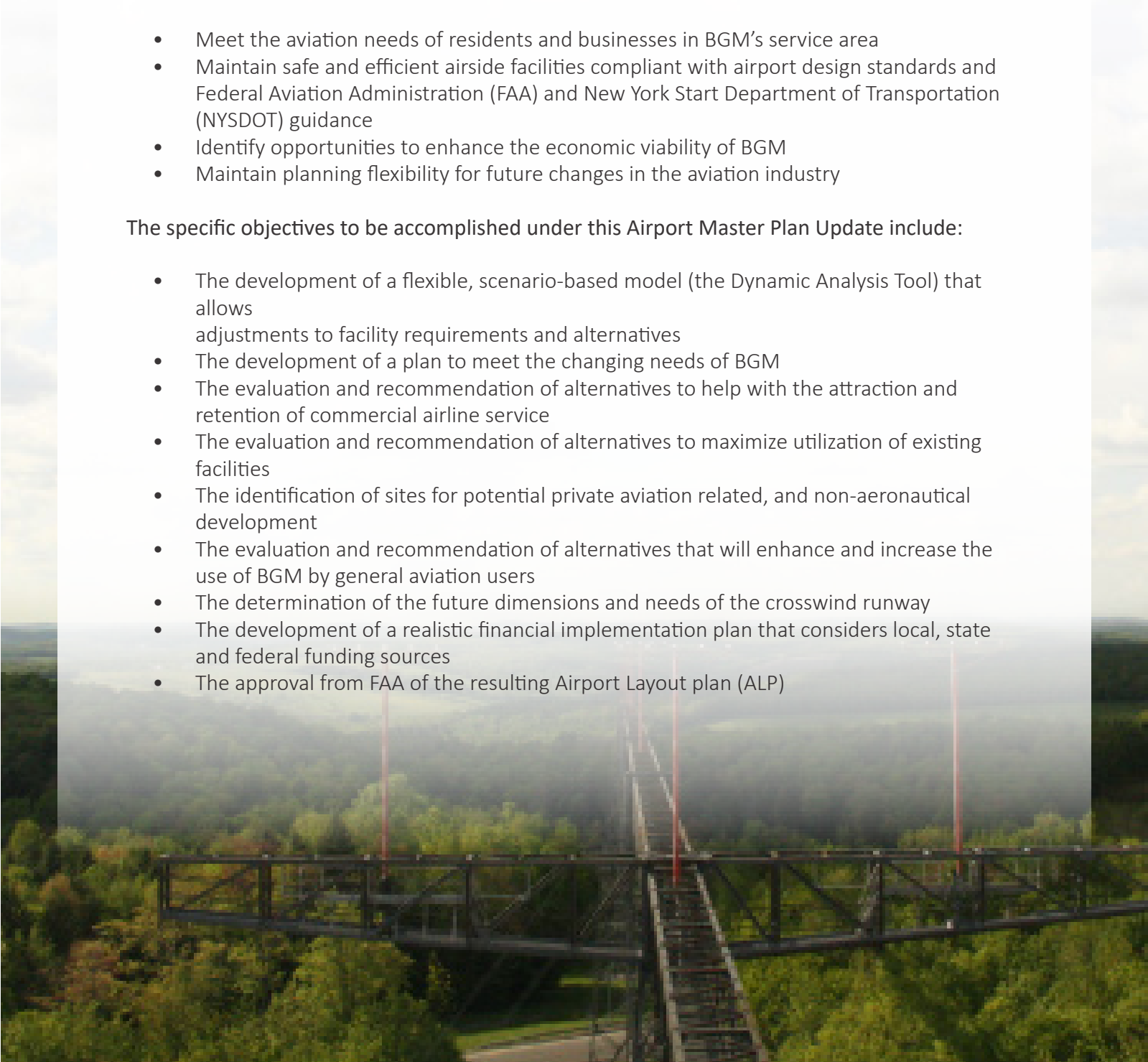
This Airport Master Plan Update has been undertaken by the County of Broome to assure that the Greater Binghamton Airport (BGM or the Airport) and its environs are safe and efficient, and to evaluate the changing needs of BGM, including the needs of Broome County, the airport users, and passengers.

This planning document will serve as a guide to identifying necessary improvements and “right-sizing” those improvements to meet future Airport needs. This document will serve to:

- Meet the aviation needs of residents and businesses in BGM’s service area
- Maintain safe and efficient airside facilities compliant with airport design standards and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) guidance
- Identify opportunities to enhance the economic viability of BGM
- Maintain planning flexibility for future changes in the aviation industry

The specific objectives to be accomplished under this Airport Master Plan Update include:

- The development of a flexible, scenario-based model (the Dynamic Analysis Tool) that allows adjustments to facility requirements and alternatives
- The development of a plan to meet the changing needs of BGM
- The evaluation and recommendation of alternatives to help with the attraction and retention of commercial airline service
- The evaluation and recommendation of alternatives to maximize utilization of existing facilities
- The identification of sites for potential private aviation related, and non-aeronautical development
- The evaluation and recommendation of alternatives that will enhance and increase the use of BGM by general aviation users
- The determination of the future dimensions and needs of the crosswind runway
- The development of a realistic financial implementation plan that considers local, state and federal funding sources
- The approval from FAA of the resulting Airport Layout plan (ALP)





This Airport Master Plan Update will be ordered into the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Inventory
3. Aviation Forecasts
4. Environmental Overview
5. Facility Requirements
6. Alternatives
7. Implementation Plan
8. Financial Feasibility
9. ALP Summary

## 1.1. AIRPORT BACKGROUND

BGM is a non-hub, primary commercial service airport serving the Southern Tier region of New York State and portions of northeast Pennsylvania. Airports that enplane less than 0.05 percent of all commercial passenger enplanements, but which have more than 10,000 annual enplanements, are categorized as non-hub primary airports<sup>1</sup>. The Airport serves Broome, Tioga, Cortland, and Chenango Counties in New York, and also serves Susquehanna and Bradford Counties in Pennsylvania. BGM is served by Delta Air Lines. Non-stop flights are available to Detroit with an average of 2-3 daily departures on 50-seat regional jets operated by SkyWest Airlines and marketed as Delta Connection. The Airport was previously serviced by United Express, with non-stop flights to Newark on Saab 340 turboprops through late 2016 and US Airways Express/American Eagle with non-stop flights to Philadelphia on Dash 8 family turboprops through early 2017, with other airlines having served the Airport over the past decade.

The Airport is owned and operated by Broome County and its Department of Aviation and is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) 2017-2021. The NPIAS identifies 3,340 airports that are significant to national air transportation and therefore are eligible to receive federal grants under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP)<sup>2</sup>. The NPIAS includes all commercial service airports, all reliever airports, and selected general aviation airports. Per the NPIAS, BGM is considered a “primary” airport. A primary airport is defined in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 5090.3C, *Field Formulation of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS)*, as a commercial service airport that enplanes more than 10,000 passengers annually. The Airport maintains an operating certificate under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 139, *Airport Certification*.

The passenger terminal building offers amenities such as wireless internet access, a business center workplace, rental car counters, a conference center meeting room, and electronic airline check-in kiosks. In the summer of 2017, Binghamton Brewing Company opened a bar inside the departure lounge serving beer, wine, snacks, coffee, and soft drinks. The bar opens about an hour

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<sup>1</sup> FAA Report to Congress 2013-2017.

<sup>2</sup> “Report to Congress, National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (2017-2021).” FAA, 30 Sept. 2016.

and a half before outgoing flights<sup>3</sup>.

The Airport is the sole access point of scheduled air service in Broome County, and accommodates general aviation and charter services. The Airport's general aviation activities are located on the West Apron and the North Apron. The fixed base operator (FBO), FirstAIR, which occupies two hangars on the West Apron, provides aircraft services such as maintenance, fueling and deicing, and aircraft parking/tie-downs, as well as pilot services such as a pilot's lounge, kitchen, and weather information room. Aero Techniques, which is based in one of the FBO's hangars, offers flight training at the Airport.

### 1.1.1. Airport History

The Tri-Cities Airport located in Endicott, New York was the Southern Tier's main airport until the 1940s when the demand for scheduled air service increased. In 1944 the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA), now known as the FAA, ruled that the Tri-Cities Airport would not be approved for commercial operations other than clear, daytime flights due to location and terrain. As a result, the location for a new airport was sought and in 1945 construction of Edwin A. Link Airport on Mount Ettrick in Maine, New York began. The new airport was officially dedicated on Sunday, May 27, 1951 and was referred to as the Broome County Airport until the 1970s, when its name was changed to Edwin A. Link Field-Broome County Airport. In the 1990s, the Airport was renamed Binghamton Regional Airport. In 2003 the Airport was again renamed the Greater Binghamton Airport to match the area's new marketing campaign.

The field on which the Airport lies is still named for Edwin A. Link. Link was a pioneer in aviation, having invented the "Blue Box" also known as the "Link Trainer," a flight simulator, which set the standard for the flight simulation industry. Together with his wife, Marion Clayton Link, he managed "Link Aviation, Inc.". Edwin A. Link contributed a great deal to the Binghamton, New York area, where he set up a production facility that at one time employed thousands of workers. There is an original "Blue Box" on display in the Greater Binghamton Airport terminal lobby<sup>4</sup>.

## 1.2. ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

The Airport is owned and operated by the Broome County Department of Aviation which is overseen by the Broome County Legislature's Public Works & Transportation Committee. Fifteen members comprise the Greater Binghamton Airport Advisory Board whose members meet monthly. The members are appointed by the Broome County Executive and confirmed by the County legislature for two-year terms. The Commissioner of Aviation oversees the day-to-day operations of the Airport with help from 19 full-time employees, and two part-time parking attendants.

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<sup>3</sup> "Binghamton Brewing Co. Opens Bar at Greater Binghamton Airport." BINGHAMTONHOMEPAGE, 27 June 2017, [www.binghamtonhomepage.com/news/local-news/binghamton-brewing-co-opens-bar-at-greater-binghamton-airport/752146795](http://www.binghamtonhomepage.com/news/local-news/binghamton-brewing-co-opens-bar-at-greater-binghamton-airport/752146795).

<sup>4</sup> Greater Binghamton Airport, *Master Plan Update*, McFarland Johnson, 2009