

## *Digby Annapolis Airport – The New Reality for Airports*

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Airports like many other Municipal Services are being challenged to find ways to be sustainable. The maintenance of their infrastructure and the ongoing increases in operating costs are making it more difficult for them.

Activity at airports is being regionalized and smaller Municipal Airports are having to work harder to attract activity to them. At the same time there is demand for additional services and a call for lower costs to the smaller planes flying in and out of these Airports.

**The Digby Annapolis Regional Airport** in Nova Scotia is one such airport **BUT** they are not sitting back waiting for things to get better. They have worked over the last number of years to bring several Municipal Service providers to the Airport as their home base: The local 911 EMO Dispatch Centre – also provides weather and air traffic information for Pilots – it is manned 24 / 7 – They also host the Regional Ground Search and Rescue office. This provides an invaluable partnership of services for manning the Airport as well as these organizations.

They are now working with a group to create a **Fly-In Community** for the airport – they have 500+ acres of land and have identified a strategic parcel off to one side of the Runway. They are in the planning process of designing an **“Active Lifestyle”** Fly-In Community. It will have a variety of homes including - Hangar Homes facing out to the runway – Groupings of Townhomes also facing out to the runway – additional homes set back from the runway - in other places these communities bring together like minded people with a passion for aviation to enjoy a safe, friendly, rural community in Digby Nova Scotia on the infamous Bay of Fundy.

The plans include some interesting Home and Aircraft sharing opportunities – where pilots that do not have the opportunity to fly enough to justify a full time aircraft on their own can share with others an aircraft at easy access.

Maintenance free living is a key component to this development as well – landscape maintenance, snow removal – monitoring while the home owner is away are all included in the fees. The plan is to also have a variety of recreational and social facilities and opportunities.

This Development plan will **provide additional capital dollars** that will go back to the Airport to assist with upgrades and expansions and the significant **increase in activity** will assist with the operational costs of the Airport. If you would like to see and hear more about this exciting way one Municipal Airport is being creative to be sustainable – visit their website

Another key component to this project will be working to encourage more people to be involved in flying – with lessons – rentals – Fly & Stay packages.