

Recommendations:

Tweed-New Haven Airport

During major events at Yale University, the general aviation ramp is often crowded with private jets - for the 1997 graduation, the corporate jets of Coca Cola and Procter & Gamble were parked nose to nose on the tarmac. The airport also gets heavy use during the annual Pilot Pen Tennis tournament.

-- Wikipedia article on Tweed New Haven Regional Airport

• Findings

- **The citizens of New Haven receive no quantifiable benefit from Tweed.**
 - The majority users of Tweed tend to fall into two categories:
 - Individual and corporate owners of private planes.
 - Business travelers employed by suburban companies.
 - Citizens of New Haven are unlikely to fall into either of those categories.
- **Tweed is unlikely to become self-sustaining any time soon.**
 - An industry expert estimates that Tweed would require 300,000-400,000 departing commercial passengers annually to break even.
 - The current figure is around 20,000.
 - The ground transportation infrastructure around Tweed could not support that level of traffic.
 - The suburban neighborhoods around Tweed would not put up with that increase in noise and disturbance.
- **There is no direct financial upside to Tweed.**
 - All profits generated by FAA-supported airports must be re-invested in the airports themselves, so the city can never realize a profit from the airport.
 - The town of East Haven receives all property tax revenue from the airport, since all Tweed-based planes are "tied down" or hangared in East Haven town limits.
- **Tweed represents a significant potential financial liability for New Haven.**
 - If US Airways leaves, the airport will lose considerable revenue generated by commercial flights.
 - Given the state of the economy and the finances of the carrier in question, it is impossible to predict the likelihood of this event.
 - If the airport is not maintained to FAA commercial aviation standards, the FAA subsidy will decrease by approximately \$900,000.
 - The city will be obliged to repay millions of dollars worth of FAA grants if the airport ceases operation altogether.
- **There are many opportunities to increase revenue and decrease costs at Tweed.**
 - Some landing fees are well below those at the nearest GA airport, Oxford-Waterbury.
 - Other usage fees that could be increased:

- Fuel flowage fee (currently \$0.10).
- Monthly "tie-down" fee (currently \$85.00).
- Monthly heated hangar fee (currently \$1,200 with no vacancies).
- No information on salaries of Authority staff is publicly available, but other CT airports of a similar size are run with much smaller staffs.
- The FAA requires that certain positions be filled, but allows multiple positions to be held by a single individual.
- **Small airports like Tweed are a regional resource, not a municipal one.**
 - All other airports in Connecticut are owned and run by the CT Department of Transportation.
 - There are significant administrative and operational economies of scale to state ownership.
 - There are 14 municipal members of the Tweed-New Haven Airport Authority. Only New Haven provides funds for the airport's budget.