

# Airport expected to make \$550,000 for Liberty Co.

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As intended, the MidCoast Regional Airport is generating funds for Liberty County, with a little more than \$500,000 expected this fiscal year.

The Liberty County Development Authority, the Board of Commissioners and the City of Hinesville partnered to support the airport, but the LCDA serves as operations manager.

LCDA director of administration and finance Carmen Cole said the authority hopes to bring in \$550,000 in revenue by the end of June.

They are budgeting \$830,000 a year for expenses.

Approximately 300 civilians use the airport for take-off or landing, according to fixed base operation manager Mark Davidson. The traffic mix is a combination of both corporate and recreational pilots.

“Over the past 15 months, the traffic has been spread evenly among days of the



File photo/Coastal Courier

**Mid-Coast Regional Airport is expected to generate about \$500,000 for Liberty County this fiscal year.**

week and months of the year,” Davidson said. “During the weekend the airport has an increase of recreational pilots.”

He finds the joint-use civilian and military airport is quickly becoming a backup for Savannah air traffic.

Military usage has picked up and hangars are being rented out at a high occupancy rate. Some would-be renters have been placed on a waiting list.

“We want to double every year,” Davidson said. “It’s brand new so it’s unlimited. We want to keep on getting people in here.”

The airport hosts a fly-in, complete with contests, discount offers and refreshments, each quarter to help in advertising.

The next event is scheduled for March 7.

“The only thing we’re faced with is trying to get the word out about our airport,”

Davidson said.

Corporate and recreational pilots make up the prime marketing pool.

“The biggest thing is letting the clients know that it’s open,” Davidson said. “They think it’s still closed. They don’t realize it’s a partnership with military.”

In addition to ramps and hangars, the airport also offers fuel, and Davidson said sales are positive.

“The global economy has also affected smaller airports,” Davidson said, indicating the normal seasonal dips and spikes in prices. “The lower fuel prices have helped a little bit.”

Plans for another air show, which debuted last June, are still pending.

Davidson described the airport as a community gateway, giving visitors a first impression and last impression.

“It just starts their whole experience to Hinesville and Fort Stewart,” Davidson said.

For more information, visit [www.midcoastregional-airport.com](http://www.midcoastregional-airport.com).