

Town of North Topsail Beach

Daniel Tuman, Mayor
Joann M. McDermon, Mayor Pro Tem
Aldermen:
Mike Benson
Jeremy Grove
Tom Leonard
Richard Peters



Bryan Chadwick, MPA
Town Manager

Laura Oxley, JD, MPA
Town Clerk

Nature's Tranquil Beauty

July 15, 2019

Ms. Brooke Chapman
Associate Director
Small Community Air Service Development Program
Office of Aviation Analysis
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Albert J. Ellis Airport (OAJ) SCASDP Grant Application

Dear Ms. Chapman,

On behalf of the Town of North Topsail Beach, I am writing to express strong support for the grant application of Onslow County, North Carolina's Albert J. Ellis Airport (OAJ) under the Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP). The grant funds will be critical to expanding air service to our community which, in turn, will facilitate further economic development in our region.

Onslow County is home to Camp Lejeune, one of the largest U.S. Marine Corps Bases in the country. Locally, over 115,000 active duty service members, family members, civilian employees and retirees are associated with Camp Lejeune and nearby Marine Corps Air Station New River. These individuals, Department of Defense contractors and other residents and visitors require additional air service and better connectivity to Washington, DC and cities in the Western U.S.

Currently, air service at Ellis Airport is limited to American Airlines flights to Charlotte and Delta Air Lines flights to Atlanta. While these services are valued and highly-utilized by travelers, the community is constrained by an overall lack of available airline seats and convenient, affordable connections to important markets. This situation leads to a high amount of passenger leakage to Raleigh-Durham International Airport requiring a 2.5 hour drive each way.

Therefore, we strongly support Ellis Airport's plan to seek and obtain direct air service to Washington Dulles and Dallas/Fort Worth. Washington Dulles service would reinstate nonstop service to Washington, DC which was lost due to antitrust conditions of the US Airways-American Airlines merger. Dallas/Fort Worth service would provide for vastly improved

connectivity to the community's largest markets in the West, including Southern California and Texas.

Thank you for your consideration of Albert J. Ellis Airport's application. We are confident that the SCASDP grant funds will materially benefit the ongoing efforts to attract new air service, increase competition and lower airfares for travelers in our market.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Tuman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being more prominent than the last name "Tuman".

Dan Tuman
Mayor
North Topsail Beach