

Public Act No. 22-118, Section 426

Sec. 426. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2022)

- (a) The state shall, consistent with and supportive of the goals of promoting the health, welfare and safety of the people of the state and increasing their quality of life, boosting tourism, stimulating the economy and enhancing the ability of people to enjoy the Connecticut River, assess the benefits and opportunity costs to the city of Hartford and to the state of the current use and alternative uses of the Hartford Brainard Airport property.
- (b) To further such assessment and identify the related costs, the Department of Economic and Community Development shall have an analysis conducted that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- (1) The economic impact, direct, indirect, quantitative and qualitative, of the current use of the property to the state and to the region surrounding the property;
 - (2) The economic impact, direct, indirect, quantitative and qualitative, of alternative uses of the property, including commercial, residential and recreational opportunities, to the state and to the region surrounding the property;
 - (3) Identification of any environmental or flood control obstacles to the development of alternative uses of the property, including the conducting of any required testing of the site, and the possible avenues and associated costs to render the property environmentally developable;
 - (4) Identification of any federal, state or local governmental obstacles, including existing contractual obligations, to the development of alternative uses of the property, the possible avenues to remove each such obstacle and the associated costs of pursuing each avenue; and
 - (5) The highest and best use of the property if not its current use, taking into consideration the findings of subdivisions (2) to (4), inclusive, of this subsection and the goals set forth in subsection (a) of this section.
- (c) (1) To accomplish the analysis, the Department of Economic and Community Development shall issue a request for proposals for an entity to oversee the analysis and the production of the report required under subsection (e) of this section. Once selected, such entity shall issue separate requests for qualifications to engage consultants or entities, or both, to undertake (A) the economic components of the analysis, (B) the environmental components of the analysis, and (C) the regulatory components of the analysis. Such entity shall select consultants and entities whose expertise best lends itself to analyzing the specific subject matter components of the analysis.
- (2) The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection shall obtain from the United States Army Corps of Engineers any information or reports generated in the preceding ten years by said agency pertaining to the Connecticut River in Hartford and Wethersfield. Said department shall provide such information or reports to the Department of Economic and Community Development, for distribution to the appropriate consultants or entities under subdivision (1) of this subsection to inform the analysis.

- (d) (1) The Connecticut Airport Authority, established pursuant to section 15-120bb of the general statutes, shall assist and work collaboratively with the entities and consultants engaged under subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of this section to accomplish the analysis.
- (2) For the period commencing July 1, 2022, to May 31, 2024, inclusive, the Connecticut Airport Authority shall not enter into any agreements or incur any obligations that would further encumber the property or that would prohibit or impinge the development of alternative uses of the property, unless such agreement or obligation provides for its termination without liability in the event the property is no longer to be used as an airport in the future, in which case such agreement or obligation shall terminate not later than six months after a decision is made to close the airport.
- (3) The provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection shall not apply to the acceptance of federal grants from the Federal Aviation Administration for items deemed to be necessary for the safe operation of the airport, provided nothing that extends or will have the result of extending a runway shall be considered necessary for the safe operation of the airport.
- (e) Not later than October 15, 2023, the Department of Economic and Community Development shall submit a report of the findings of the analysis to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding.