



U.S. Department of  
Transportation

Office of the Secretary  
of Transportation

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DOCKETS

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400 Seventh St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

OST-2002-11348-21

December 5, 2003

The Honorable Heidi Davison  
Mayor of Athens  
Athens, GA 30601

Dear Mayor Davison:

I would like to update you on the essential air service situation at Athens and give you an opportunity to submit any final comments before we issue a final order selecting a carrier and service option for a prospective two-year period.

As you know, by Order 2003-4-21 (Docket 2002-11348), we solicited proposals from carriers interested in serving Athens following the 90-day notice we received from the incumbent carrier, Mesa Air Group, Inc., (Air Midwest), to suspend service. In response to our request, we received three service options from Air Midwest and two from Corporate Airlines, Inc. (Corporate). Since you should have received copies from both carriers, we will only briefly summarize them below. (The proposals may also be accessed from the Department's Docket Management System at <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchFormSimple.cfm>.)

Air Midwest is a code-share partner of US Airways, and would operate all of its service as US Airways Express nonstop service to Charlotte with 19-seat Beech 1900 aircraft. Under Option 1, Air Midwest would provide 12 round trips per week for \$392,108 annually; under Option 2, 18 round trips per week for \$555,630 annually; and under Option 3, 23 round trips per week for \$874,571 annually.

Corporate has submitted two options for consideration. Under each option Corporate would provide nonstop service to Atlanta with 19-seat Jetstream 32 aircraft. Under Option 1, Corporate would provide 12 round trips per week for \$654,740 annually, under Option 2, 18 round trips per week for \$882,057 annually.

Please note that the average passenger fare shown in each carrier's proposal, \$79.29 in the case of Air Midwest, and \$60.00 in the case of Corporate, does not necessarily reflect the average local fares that Athens passengers would actually pay, but, rather, reflect that portion of the total ticket price, e.g., the Athens - Charlotte/Atlanta portion of an Athens - New York ticket that the subsidized carrier would realize. Also, the fares are net of

certain charges such as Federal excise taxes and Passenger Facility Charges. Of course, the carriers have the discretion to charge fares each deems appropriate, and the passenger fares presented are for comparison purposes only.

We request that you review each proposal and submit any comments you may have before we submit a recommendation to the Assistant Secretary. I have spoken with the airport manager, Tim Beggerly, and he advises me that due to the upcoming holidays, and some airport budget issues, the Airport Authority will not be in a position to submit comments until January 16, so we would ask for your comments by that date also.

Please send an original and one copy of your comments to me at the following address: Essential Air Service Division, X-53; Room 6401; Office of Aviation Analysis; Department of Transportation; 400 Seventh Street, S.W.; Washington, D.C. 20590. You should also send a copy to both Air Midwest and Corporate. In order to expedite the process, we would appreciate your sending an advance copy by fax to 202-366-7638 or by email to [dennis.devany@ost.dot.gov](mailto:dennis.devany@ost.dot.gov) or [mike.waters@ost.dot.gov](mailto:mike.waters@ost.dot.gov). Again, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mike Waters of my staff at 202-366-6494.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. DeVany

Chief, Essential Air Service Division, X-53  
Office of Aviation Analysis