

Winston airport looks for airline

■ Company will study travel habits of local fliers to help Smith Reynolds draw carrier

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Smith Reynolds Airport has hired a Minnesota consulting firm to help it look for a passenger air carrier.

The Kiell Hendrickson Group of Minneapolis this week will start a survey of the passenger air-travel market out of Winston-Salem and surrounding areas, said Airport Director Edwin Cox Jr.

KHG will survey the travel departments of large corporations and individual travel agencies to better identify the area's travel needs, Cox said. He hopes that the survey and results will be complete in about 12 weeks for KHG to then write up a plan to find certain air carriers.

"We have to start doing this," Cox said. "The only way to get an air carrier here is to show them which destinations will be profitable. We sort of have to do the homework for them."

The project will cost between \$25,000 and \$30,000, Cox said.



EDWIN COX JR.: He hopes an airline will be here by year's end.

CCAir Inc., owned by US Airways Express, stopped service at Smith Reynolds Airport on Jan. 16. The commuter shuttle offered three round-trip flights to Charlotte-Douglas International Airport but its off-peak flight schedule made it difficult for the business traveler to plan trips.

CCAir transported about 500 passengers a month but pulled its service after suffering too many financial losses, Cox said.

The FAA has given the airport about \$500,000 a year in entitlement grants and discretionary grants for having at least 10,000 passengers depart from the airport. Smith Reynolds will lose that money if a passenger carrier is not found.

Cox has said he is optimistic that a new passenger airline will be in place by the end of the year.

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