



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Airports District Office, FAA
Campus Building
1701 Columbia Avenue, Suite 2-260
College Park, Georgia 30337-2747
(404) 305-7150 FAX: (404) 305-7155

December 20, 2004

Mr. Danny Bridges, Chairman
Harris County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 365
Hamilton, GA 31811

Dear Mr. Bridges:

Reference is made to a phone call received in this office on December 16, 2004 from Carol Silva, Harris County Administrator. We understand from Ms. Silva that Harris County is considering closing the Callaway Gardens – Harris County Airport.

As you may know, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provided grant funds in 1965 for the initial construction of the Callaway Gardens – Harris County Airport. Since that time, and as late as 2003, we have provided funding for the development of your airport. To date, we have granted in excess of \$310,000 to your airport. In addition, you currently have entitlement funds available in the amount of \$600,000. Harris County is obligated, by your existing grant agreements, to continue operation of the airport in a safe and serviceable condition.

The FAA opposes the closure of the Callaway Gardens – Harris County Airport. To do so would be a breach of the Authority's agreements with the U. S. Government. Over the past 40 years the FAA, in conjunction with our partnerships with Cities, Counties, and State DOT's, has built the safest, most efficient aviation system in the world. Every airport is an integral part of that system.

Your airport provides the aviation and corporate community a gateway to your community. New airports are extremely difficult to build, especially in environmentally sensitive areas. There has been only one new public airport built in Georgia in the past 30 years. There have been over one dozen attempts but only one successful project. It is, therefore, essential that existing airports be preserved.

The FAA would like to discuss this matter with you and some or all of the other County Commissioners, if they are available. Please contact this office at 404-305-7151 at your earliest opportunity to coordinate the meeting. Thank you, and we look forward to working with Harris County.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

Scott L. Seritt
Manager

cc: Mr. Edward Ratigan, Georgia DOT