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Groundbreaking Set For New Regional Airport

HALIFAX – Halifax and Northampton county officials will break ground Friday morning for a new regional airport. The ceremony is scheduled for 11 a.m.

"We're extremely excited about getting the ground broken," said Kenny Hale, chairman of the Halifax-Northampton Airport Authority.

The event is the culmination of eight years of work on the \$14 million project. The work included clearing environmental and financial hurdles. Close to \$13 million of the airport's price tag is coming from grants.

"Just in building, we hope there will be an economic impact in jobs and money spent," Hale said.

Officials hope the new airport, located at 1619 Gregory Farm Road, will be yet another incentive to lure new jobs and industry to the area.

Northampton County Manager Wayne Jenkins said he was pleased to see the airport finally come to fruition after more than eight years of planning. "It carries in itself a regional concept for developmental approaches. I think it's going to offer opportunities for corporate officials."

Having an airport that cannot accommodate corporate jets has been a drawback in the area. The new airport will have a 5,500-foot runway and equipment that makes landing in inclement weather by pilots using instrument flight rules possible. Currently, planes cannot land under cloudy conditions.

"It signals one more step in the process of economic recruitment in Halifax and Northampton counties," said David King, vice chairman of the Halifax-Northampton Regional Airport Authority. "It's going to be as modern a general aviation airport as money is going to buy."