



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: David Goldenberg  
O: 312-768-4743; M: 202-277-7349  
[david.goldenberg@resoluteconsulting.com](mailto:david.goldenberg@resoluteconsulting.com)

***Gary/Chicago International Airport  
Hires Airport Operations and Safety Leader  
as New Executive Director***

**(GARY, Ind. – January 19, 2018)** - Gary/Chicago International Airport (GYY) is kicking off 2018 with a new executive director who will help lead the airport at a time of continued growth and opportunity.

The GYY Authority Board voted unanimously today to hire airport operations and safety leader Col. Duane Hayden as the airport's next executive director. For more than two decades, Col. Hayden has worked in the aviation industry and built a reputation as an experienced broad-based aviation manager and safety expert.

"The airport today is very different than what it was just four years ago. Our infrastructure, service capabilities and marketability have improved exponentially and the recent and significant investments from the private sector underscore the excitement around the airport's future," said GYY Authority Board Chairman Stephen Mays. "Col. Hayden's significant experience in airport operations and safety are exactly what we need to continue moving the airport forward, and we are thrilled to have him step into this new role."

For the last year, Col. Hayden has served as GYY's Chief Operating Officer and Interim Airport Manager through AvPorts, which manages the airport. He was deputy executive director at GYY from 1999 to 2001. In between, Col. Hayden spent more than 15 years working in various roles for the Chicago Department of Aviation at O'Hare International Airport, including Assistant Commissioner for Terminal Operations, Assistant Commissioner for Airside Operations/Vehicle Services, and Assistant Commissioner for Safety. Col. Hayden also served as general manager of Meigs Field and worked for United Airlines.

Col. Hayden has been a member of the Illinois Air National Guard since 1986 and was deployed to various conflict regions over the last two-plus decades, including serving in Operations Desert Shield, Deny Flight, Noble Eagle, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

"Gary/Chicago International Airport has experienced tremendous growth over the last few years, particularly since the runway extension was completed," said Col. Hayden. "There is great momentum at the airport, and I am excited for the opportunity to help lead."



Current GYY Executive Director Dan Vicari will remain involved with the airport in a limited role. Under a cooperative agreement between the GYY Airport Authority, Gary Sanitary District and Gary Storm Water Management District, Vicari will assist the Airport Authority develop a long-term strategy for the airport and help represent the airport before various governmental entities and regulators. He will also continue in his role as executive director of the Gary Sanitary District.

“2017 was a banner year for the airport and we are grateful to Dan for the work he has done to grow and strengthen the airport during his time as executive director. The Authority also appreciates Dan will continue to work with the airport in a limited role to ensure continuity in the leadership of certain critical projects as we plan for the future,” added Chairman Mays.

Airport operations and revenue generated from landing and fuel fees - all key performance indicators for the airport - have risen steadily over the last five years, including a 150%+ increase in landing fees and 85%+ increase in fuel revenue. Year-over-year operations totals are also up and grew 11% when comparing August-December 2016 to August-December 2017.

“There is tremendous opportunity at the airport, and I’m ecstatic for the future as the airport fulfills its potential as a leading economic engine for the region,” said Vicari.

Also at today’s GYY Authority Board meeting, the Airport Board took approved a number of construction package contracts to advance complete construction of a new permanent General Aviation U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility at the airport. Specifically, it awarded the following four contracts:

- Concrete laying: Walker Construction of Merrillville, IN
- HVAC installation: Gatlin Plumbing & Heating of Griffith, IN
- Plumbing installation and upgrades: Gatlin Plumbing & Heating of Griffith, IN
- Carpentry installation and upgrades: Gariup Construction Co of Gary, IN

The new customs facility is anticipated to open the first half of 2018.

#### **About Gary/Chicago International Airport**

Located minutes from the shores of Lake Michigan and just 25 miles from downtown Chicago, Gary/Chicago International Airport (GYY) is a full-service airport and a premiere destination for corporate and weekend flyers in the Chicago metropolitan region and Northwest Indiana. To learn more, visit the airport’s new website at [FlyGYY.com](http://FlyGYY.com).

###