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rent location off Old Highway 76 to Georgia 515.

The project is all about moving local airport operations into the 21st century.

The money appropriated last week is for site preparation only, Airport Manager John Hamler said.

Blairsville Municipal Airport is a destination airport, with tourists and business folks flying into the airport from all over the Southeast.

It's a free enterprise airport, meaning the money it generates goes back into the airport fund, not into the general fund.

"We pay for ourselves," Hamler said. "We operate in the black and pay for everything associated with the airport. It's sometimes hard for people to understand, but we're not a tap on city finances."

The airport serves a regional audience of more than 80,000 people.

There are 66 aircraft that are lodged at the airport with capacity for more than 200 additional aircraft.

"The completion of the North Terminal facility will help the city and the county become strengthened players in attracting economic development," Mayor Conley said. "The Blairsville Municipal Airport will become an increased economic engine for



Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley discusses the Blairsville Municipal Airport project with Council Member Tony Dyer last week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Union County as anything else we could do.

"It's right where all the Development Authority property is," Mayor Conley said. "And to make it even more of an economic development asset, we're working on making the airport instrument approach accessible to the airport."

The project will include adding more touches through 2014.

"All of our operations at the Blairsville Municipal Airport will be moved to the North Terminal," Mayor Conley said. "The current terminal is one of the old houses that were condemned years ago from the Airport Road project and moved there to use as a terminal."

"The Speaker of the House (David Ralston) has been instrumental in helping us with this project," Mayor

Conley said. "It'll mean more air traffic, it will mean better access for charter flights. It'll also be an increase in tourist traffic."

"We've got a facility that people love to come to, and with a new North Terminal, we'll have an airport that more people will be able to access," Mayor Conley said. "It's an economic driver that we fully intend to utilize in the future."

Chambliss ...continued from Page 1A

Georgia's Junior Senator, U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson, (R-GA), said he was saddened by the news that Sen. Chambliss would not be around after 2014.

"Saxby and I have been friends for 51 years and it has been my honor to serve alongside him in the U.S. House and in the U.S. Senate," Sen. Isakson said. "We first met when we attended the University of Georgia together in the 1960s, and our wives - Julianne Chambliss and Dianne Isakson - happened to be sorority sisters at UGA. I have supported Saxby in every political race he's run, and I'm grateful that he has done the same for me."

"Saxby is a true statesman who has worked tirelessly throughout his time in public life to represent the values and interests of Georgians," Sen. Isakson said. "Our state and our country are better because of Saxby Chambliss. I will miss him dearly after 2014, but I look forward to working with him for two more years in the Senate to tackle the tough issues facing our county."

Sen. Chambliss said he was proud of his conservative voting record in fulfilling his commitment to the citizens of Georgia.

"In 2008, I was honored

to receive more votes than any other statewide elected official in the history of Georgia," Sen. Chambliss said. "Lest anyone think this decision is about a primary challenge, I have no doubt that had I decided to be a candidate, I would have won re-election. In these difficult political times, I am fortunate to have actually broadened my support around the state and the nation due to the stances I have taken."

"Instead, this is about frustration, both at a lack of leadership from the White House and at the dearth of meaningful action from Congress, especially on issues that are the foundation of our nation's economic health," Sen. Chambliss said.

"The debt-ceiling debacle of 2011 and the recent fiscal-cliff vote showed Congress at its worst and, sadly, I don't see the legislative gridlock and partisan posturing improving anytime soon. For our nation to be strong, for our country to prosper, we cannot continue to play politics with the American economy," he said.

"I never intended to come to Washington and stay for 20 years," he said. "But in that time, I have been proud to fight for the economic good

of Georgia and the security of our nation. That includes work on four farm bills, 18 defense-authorization bills, chairmanship of the House Terrorism Subcommittee in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, and being chairman or ranking member of major Senate committees for eight of the past 10 years."

"Perhaps the greatest honor has been to champion our men and women in uniform, their families, and the Georgia military bases and contractors who create private-sector jobs," he said.

"I am truly grateful for the love, support, trust and assistance of family and friends who have helped me along the way," Sen. Chambliss said.

"I am especially indebted to my staff - past and present - whose loyalty and knowledge have not only served me well, but have served the people of Georgia superbly," he said.

"There are two years left in my term, and there is lots left to do," Sen. Chambliss said. "I am in good health, and I plan to continue working hard to represent the best interests of Georgians, and to do my utmost to help restore America to its economic greatness."

Sen. Steve Gooch commends passage of Ethics Resolution

The Georgia State Senate took a bold step passing a resolution on the first day of the 2013 legislative session that will amend the Senate Rules to limit gifts from any registered lobbyist or group of registered lobbyists at \$100 per item, event or meal. Sen. Steve Gooch (R - Dahlonega) supports and praises this bipartisan effort to make ethics reform a priority.

"Our work to regulate and limit lobbyist gifts is still a work in progress, but I am pleased with this step in the right direction," said Sen. Gooch. "I sincerely hope these open conversations about ethics between legislators and the public will continue beyond this resolution."

The new rule originates from proactive efforts by the Georgia State Senate to solicit input from both Senators and citizens on how to effectively address lobbyist expenditure



Senator Steve Gooch

concerns. Any violations of the \$100 gift cap will be subject to review by the Senate Ethics Committee.

Leaders of the Senate Majority Caucus also offered the following statements regarding the resolution:

"This resolution is the result of open dialogues not just within the Senate, but also with the people of Geor-

gia," said Sen. Majority Leader Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone). "This measure is an effective, common sense approach supported by both parties in the Georgia Senate."

"I have long supported limitations on lobbyist giving, and I applaud the Senate for the common sense rules passed today," said Sen. President Pro Tem David Shafer (R-Duluth). "I appreciate the bipartisan work of the Senate Ethics Reform Study Committee."

Sen. Steve Gooch serves as Chairman of the Transportation Committee. He represents the 51st Senate District which includes Dawson, Fannin, Gilmer, Lumpkin, Union and White counties and portions of Forsyth and Pickens counties.

He may be reached at 404-656-9221 or via email at steve.gooch@senate.ga.gov.

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"Anyone with information on the whereabouts of Johnson should contact the Union County Sheriff's Office, attention Lt. Tim Derflinger, at (706) 493-6066."

Allen is in search of justice for *Mercy*.

"This is animal cruelty in the worst form . . . in my statement I said that I am going to press charges to the fullest extent of the law," she said. "I cannot say how sick I feel about this."

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