

John D. Kasarda

The Airport City has become the norm for the strategic development of gateway airports in the 21st century. Emphasizing commercial activities, both airside and landside, it is as much a business model as it is an aeronautical infrastructure model.

The Airport City, in fact, represents the spatial manifestation of the interaction of airport-centered commerce, real estate development, and multi-modal transportation shaped by contemporary financial, marketing, and strategic management processes. These have all come together to position airports as new urban growth nodes.

Airport-centric development has evolved to a point where the airport and its surrounding areas have morphed into major shopping, working, trading, meeting, and entertainment destinations. In the process, they have taken on many of the characteristics (both spatial and functional) of urban places.

On the basis of their daily workforce alone, many gateway airports exceed the United States Census criterion of metropolitan central city status (population of 50,000 or more). Add in the tens of millions of passengers who populate their terminals annually and you have daily demographic concentrations with higher than average disposable incomes that surpass populations of mid-sized cities.

This book takes a major step forward in describing the rise of 21st century Airport Cities and the broader Aerotropolises of which the Airport City constitutes the multi-modal,

commercial urban core. It presents Airport City pioneers—Amsterdam Schiphol, Dallas-Fort Worth, Dubai, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore. Cases are also provided for major up and comers, such as Beijing Capital Airport City, Incheon, Athens and Moscow's Demodedovo. Also covered are Detroit and Memphis which are pursuing broader Aerotropolis development strategies to economically revitalize their regions. Dynamic smaller airports following the Airport City model are likewise highlighted. Included here are Abu Dhabi, Belo Horizonte (Brazil), and Vienna.

Readers will receive excellent updates and insights on the fundamental features of these evolving Airport Cities and the business and development strategies underlying them. You will also catch a glimpse of their ambitions and where many of them will be heading over the next decade in terms of function and form.

From the first Airport City Conference and Exhibition organized by Insight Media in Orlando in 2002, through conferences thereafter in Pittsburgh, Dubai, Detroit, Rome, Hong Kong, Frankfurt, and currently (2008) Dallas-Fort Worth, I have witnessed the remarkable progress of the Airport Cities represented in this book. They are incredible stories certain to be of considerable interest to all who recognize that airports are as important to business location and urban development in the 21st century as highways were in the 20th century, railroads in the 19th, and waterborne movement in the 17th and 18th centuries.

John D. Kasarda
University of North Carolina, USA
April 2008