

# Aviators Properties™

Aviation Real Estate & Destinations | Quarter 2 2020



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Part Two

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# Developing the Airpark: Part Two

Heaven's Landing

GRANT BOYD



In the previous article (Q1 Aviators Properties issue), the reasons for developing and possible challenges of airparks were discussed. Both Joseph Wortman, owner of Sullivan's Harbor Springs Airpark, and Mike Ciochetti, owner of Heaven's Landing Airpark, agree to the importance of building a talented and able team when someone decides to undertake the feat of planning their own residential airfield.

Wortman notes that "if we had to do it all over again, we would spend more time building a more diverse team." He notes that possible parties on

the Developmental Team include a builder, designer, attorney, banker, and "let's not forget a local realtor who believes in the airpark concept".

Ciochetti reiterates the need for a team, due to the sheer amount of aspects needed to successfully develop an airpark, "all of the aforementioned [laws, finances, prospecting, contracting, building, etc.] are involved, and you better be good at every one of them. It takes a renaissance man (or woman) to cover all the bases. I think this is a large reason that so many of them fail. There is nothing easy about it. It is multifaceted."

With all that is to be considered when developing, it is no wonder that no two airparks are truly alike. While Sullivan's Harbor Springs Airpark and Heaven's Landing are similar, they

are unique from one another and all others within the country.

## KMGN (SULLIVAN'S HARBOR SPRINGS AIRPARK)

Northern Michigan is often regarded as one of the United States most beautiful, and underrated, regions of the United States. Residents at this "boutique airpark," enjoy both the endless amount of year-round entertainment located in the area, as well as overall good weather (especially during the popular summer and ski season months)





and the surrounding, breathtaking landscape. Situated on a public airport against Lake Michigan in the Little Traverse Bay area, with about ten planned, one-acre homesites, pilots and aviation enthusiasts are happy to call this development their home or home-away from home.

#### **GE99 (HEAVEN'S LANDING AIRPARK)**

Situated in the picturesque mountains of Northeastern Georgia, the airpark truly is an aviators paradise. With the master plan calling for 300-plus home sites, of which

#### *Heaven's Landing*



about 135 lots have been sold thus far. Lots range in size and options, some of which are situated along the 5,200 foot lighted runway. The region boasts a sizable amount of recreational options, from fishing to horseback riding to hunting and there is a 13,000 square foot recreation center on field, that has: a racquetball court, saunas, dining room with an outside veranda, and much more.

Both owners have learned much throughout their times developing their respective communities with Wortman noting that he had learned their airpark's owners and prospects desired larger hangars than typically found in most airpark homes. This ability to listen to the needs of residents and prospective builders evolve was noted as important for any airpark, since changes will come about even with diligent planner. Another piece of advice he gives to those doing the same as him, which he got from another established airpark developer is to "always have something under construction," both to entice possible residents with new offerings and retain current ones.

Ciochetti too heeds some advice for greenhorn airpark developers, while again noting possible challenges, "It is a very hectic job that requires a multitude of different talents. The unfortunate part is that the market for this type of property is so small that the revenues don't warrant the

hiring of multiple personnel with those individual talents. Hence the need for the "renaissance person."

In the process of "learning, refining, refining," Wortman has found the value in hosting events at the airpark to "break down misconceptions." Aside from this publication and few others, there is very little media over this type of residence-so the general public, and even some pilots, are in the dark about residential airparks. One such event was a "Parade of Homes" tour stop at one of the homes at the airpark, thereby allowing thousands to see the setup and think about a different type of architecture and living situation. It is through such events that the airpark can position themselves well amongst both pilots and others in the local and overall national communities. ■

*for more information:*  
[www.mgn-airpark.com](http://www.mgn-airpark.com)  
[www.heavenslanding.com](http://www.heavenslanding.com)  
*Continued on Part Three..*

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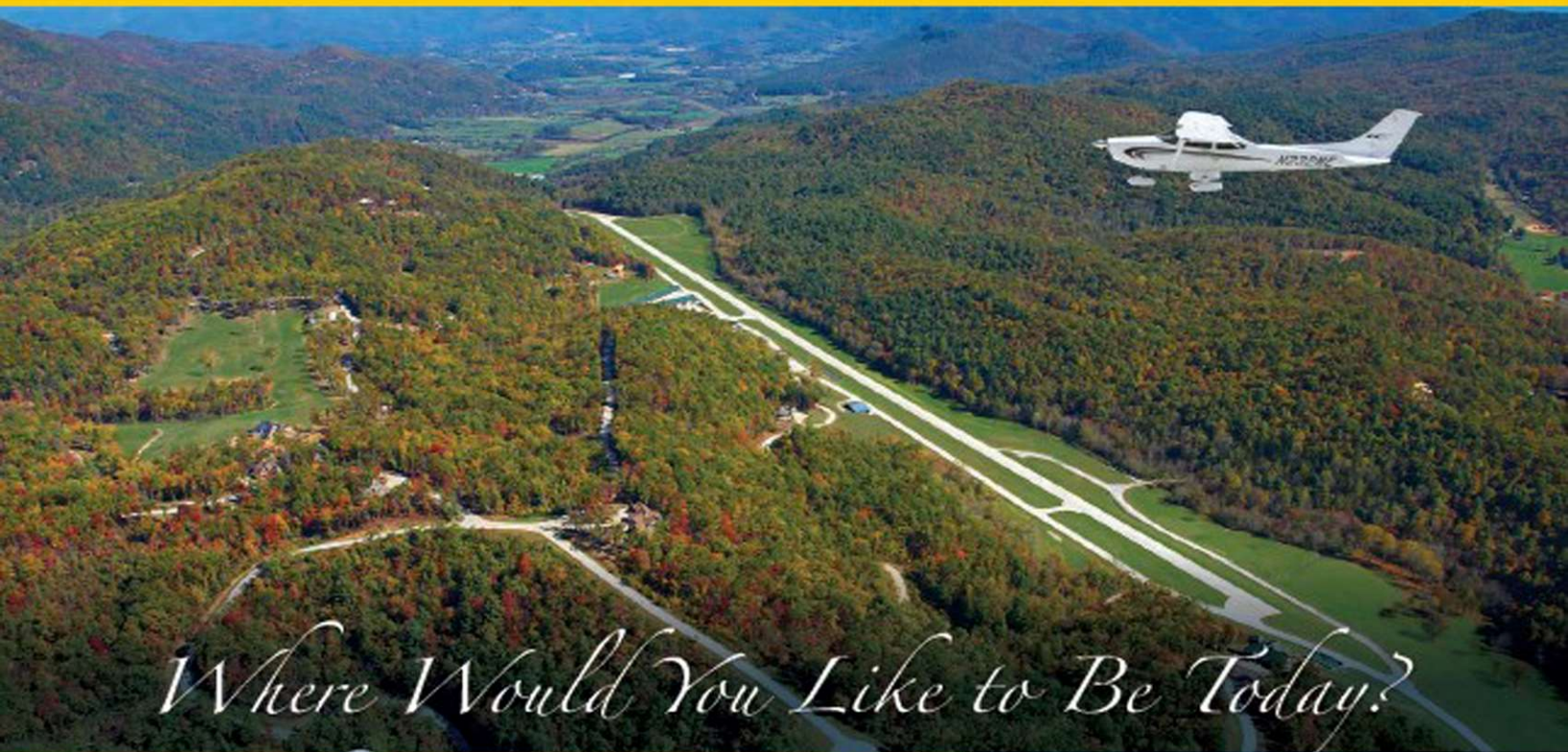
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