

# HUNTSVILLE

*The Sky is not the limit.®*

## PRESS RELEASE

**CONTACT:** Carrie Rice  
Marketing and Communications Director  
256.535.2018 office, 256.326.2018 cell  
[crice@hsvchamber.org](mailto:crice@hsvchamber.org)

### Regional Leadership Begins Assessments of Potential for *Dream Chaser*® Spacecraft Landings at Huntsville International Airport

PARIS (June 15, 2015) - A coalition of community leadership - including the City of Huntsville, Madison County, City of Madison, Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce, Teledyne-Brown Engineering, the State of Alabama, the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and the Huntsville-Madison County Airport Authority announced plans to initiate a series of preliminary studies to assess the feasibility of landing Sierra Nevada Corporation's (SNC) *Dream Chaser*® spacecraft at Huntsville International Airport today at the 2015 Paris Air Show.

"We are in the early stages of assessing what it would take to land the *Dream Chaser* spacecraft, at the Huntsville International Airport," said Huntsville Mayor, Tommy Battle. "North Alabama has been a leader in space since the beginning, and we have to continue to do the things necessary to explore how we can maintain that leadership. We have a great partnership with Sierra Nevada Corporation, and we are looking forward to the outcome of these first assessments."



SNC's *Dream Chaser* Spacecraft Landing at Huntsville International Airport Rendering



SNC's *Dream Chaser* Spacecraft Landed at Huntsville International Airport Rendering

**Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County, Inc.**

225 Church Street NW | Huntsville, AL 35801-5542 | 256.535.2000 | fax 256.535.2015  
[www.hsvchamber.org](http://www.hsvchamber.org)

SNC's Dream Chaser spacecraft is a multi-mission-capable space utility vehicle able to flexibly operate as an independent science platform, logistics enabler or orbital servicing vehicle. While SNC is currently competing for NASA's Commercial Resupply Services 2 contract to supply cargo to the International Space Station (ISS), it also plans to operate the vehicle on other missions, tailored to a variety of U.S. and international customers. The Dream Chaser spacecraft operates similarly to the Space Shuttle, in that it launches vertically atop a rocket, and lands horizontally on a runway. However, the Dream Chaser spacecraft is the only reusable, lifting-body spacecraft with a commercial runway landing capability, anywhere in the world. Significantly smaller than the Space Shuttle, it is able to land on any runway that can accommodate a Boeing 737 or Airbus 320 class aircraft. The use of non-toxic propellants combined with an innovative concept of operations allows immediate access to payloads and crew upon landing. In addition, the Dream Chaser spacecraft can be easily transported from landing site to launch site using a variety of standard cargo aircraft

"This announcement underscores the aerospace capabilities that exist in Huntsville and across Madison County," said Senator Richard Shelby (R-Ala). "Alabama continues to lead the country in space from the Atlas launch vehicles built in Decatur, to the people and facilities in the area and at the Marshall Space Flight Center. These studies being initiated with Sierra Nevada Corporation once again prove that this region is an asset to the country."

The preliminary studies will assess environmental factors such as airspace, traffic flow, potential impacts to commercial air traffic and the compatibility of SNC's Dream Chaser spacecraft with the existing runway and taxiway environments at Huntsville International Airport, a public use airport.

"I'm very excited about this work," said Dale Strong, Chairman of the Madison County Commission. "We have great skills here in our region for payload operations, integration, space vehicle processing and turnaround, and more. As leaders, we need to do the things necessary to not only keep these kinds of high-paying and highly-skilled jobs here, but to make sure we grow them for the future."

If preliminary assessments are successful, a second phase of work may begin in late 2015, which could result in the issuance of a re-entry license from the Federal Aviation Administration to land the Dream Chaser spacecraft in Huntsville. The Huntsville International Airport would be the first commercial service airport to acquire the permission and ability to accommodate Dream Chaser spacecraft landings whether on missions to the ISS, or other destinations in low-Earth orbit.

"The Madison City Council is proud to partner with these community leaders to sponsor the preliminary studies to hopefully qualify our airport to one day land the Dream Chaser vehicle," said Madison City Council President, Tommy Overcash. "With the airport located so close to Madison, our city truly appreciates the economic and technical importance of having the necessary facilities to continue to support the Tennessee Valley's thriving space industry."

The first studies will be performed by Teledyne Brown Engineering, with support from RS&H Aerospace and Morell Engineering, based in Athens, Alabama.

“The technical and economic benefits of landing the Dream Chaser spacecraft here in Huntsville are significant,” said Dr. John Horack, Vice President of Global Commercial Space at Teledyne Brown Engineering. “Imagine being able to bring back critical or fragile payloads from space, and having them in a laboratory at NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Redstone Arsenal, HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, or elsewhere, within mere minutes of touch-down. No other vehicle and no other region are so well-suited for each other, to accomplish new and great things in tomorrow’s commercial space economy.”

“For decades, Alabama’s Rocket City has been at the epicenter of groundbreaking space exploration technology,” said Greg Canfield, secretary of the Alabama Department of Commerce. “Having the Dream Chaser spacecraft touch down at the Huntsville International Airport after a cargo mission to space would be a fitting new chapter in that ongoing story.”

-30-