TEXAS AVIATION
Economic Impact Study

THE TEXAS AIRPORT SYSTEM

The Texas airport system with 289 airports is one of the largest airport systems in the country. It consists of 25 commercial service airports and 264 general aviation airports. These airports play an important role in the Texas economy by providing well-paying jobs, stimulating growth, and serving as critical components in a transportation network that permits the movement of people and goods across the state, throughout the country, and around the world. These airports are responsible for billions of dollars of economic activity, and support a wide assortment of businesses and activities. The state's commercial service airports serve as hubs for United Airlines, American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, FedEx and UPS Airlines. The general aviation airports are host to a variety of businesses. Aerial applicators, such as M&M Air Service, help crops thrive. Air ambulance services, like PHI Air Medical and CareFlight, are based at general aviation airports throughout Texas in order to provide life-saving emergency flights where needed. Aircraft manufacturing takes place at Kerrville Municipal Airport in the Mooney factory. These airports support firefighting and disaster relief efforts. Aviation schools found on general aviation airports feature training for aircraft mechanics, fixed-wing pilots, helicopter pilots, skydivers, and even drone pilots. Military aircrews make use of many general aviation airports for training purposes. Finally, more than a dozen Texas general aviation airports host aviation museums and other nonprofit aerospace organizations that educate and promote the history of aviation.

Thanks to these businesses and organizations, and the millions of visitors that pass through Texas airports each year, the state's economy thrives and grows.

STUDY PROCESS

This study was undertaken by the Texas Department of Transportation's Aviation Division to improve their strategic planning and funding decisions. Knowledge of each airport's economic impacts helps the Aviation Division allocate its resources in its efforts to develop and maintain the airport system as a world-class system capable of attracting businesses and visitors to Texas. This, in turn, aids the Aviation Division in supporting infrastructure development projects intended to promote economic growth around the state.

Through an extensive data gathering effort, information from each Texas system airport was compiled and validated. This data served as the input for a linear economic input-output model that expressed each airport's economic impacts in terms of employment, payroll, and output. Each airport was analyzed for its on-airport, construction, and visitor-related impacts. Multiplier impacts were calculated to show how direct airport activity creates additional benefits. The process followed Federal Aviation Administration guidelines and has been used in previous Texas airport economic impact studies. Additionally, certain qualitative benefits were identified for the system airports.

STATEWIDE BENEFITS FROM AVIATION

The total impacts of Texas system airports amount to 778,955 jobs that received $30.1 billion in wages and benefits. These workers generated $94.3 billion in economic output. On top of this, the Texas airport system provides countless benefits that improve the health, safety, welfare, and quality of life for the people of Texas.

Furthermore, more than 17 million visitors passed through the state's commercial service airports, with another 1.5 million visitors making use of the Lone Star State's general aviation services.

TOTAL JOBS:
778,955

TOTAL PAYROLL:
$30.1 BILLION

TOTAL OUTPUT:
$94.3 BILLION

Economic Impact of
RUSK COUNTY AIRPORT (RFI)

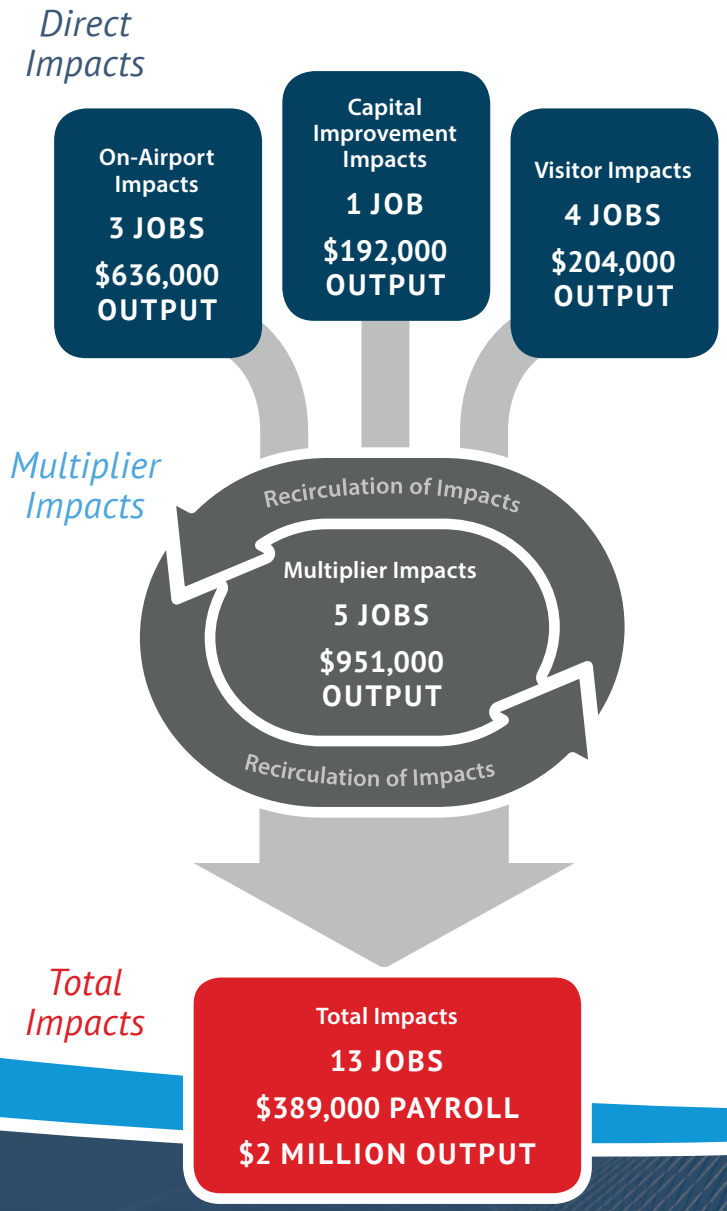
BASIC INFORMATION:

The Rusk County Airport is a public-use, general aviation facility that serves the region's air transportation needs. Major facilities at the airport include Runway 17/35, a 4,006-foot runway and Runway 12/30, a 3,002-foot runway. Runway 17/35 is equipped with medium intensity lighting and operations at the airport are supported by VOR and RNAV(GPS) approaches. Other services include avgas service, aircraft storage in T-hangars, and tiedown parking. Rusk County Airport is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems, making it eligible for federal Airport Improvement Program grants.

QUALITATIVE BENEFITS:

Rusk County Airport is home to one on-airport business focusing on flight instruction as well as a County-operated FBO which offers pilot and aircraft related services. The most frequent general aviation operations at Rusk County include recreational flying, flight instruction, and power and pipeline control operations.

Moving forward, Rusk County hopes to continue to add commercial operations as they have recently built their first commercial hangar. Recent projects have included resurfacing and restriping the taxiway and building new hangar pads to accommodate potential demand. With the support of the Henderson Economic Development Council, the airport participates in hosting businesses that are exploring moving to the area. As the area grows, the airport wishes to be a part of that growth by staying involved with local businesses. The airport hosts an annual fly-in in October to honor veterans and show off the airport to the public and visitors, bringing in about 1,000 attendees.



IMPACT MEASURES

Employment measures the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs related to airport activity including visitor-supported and on-airport construction jobs. A part-time employee counts as half of a full-time employee.

Payroll measures the total annual salary, wages, and benefits paid to all workers whose livelihoods are directly attributable to airport activity.

Output measures the value of goods and services related to airports in Texas. The output of on-airport businesses is typically assumed to be the sum of annual gross sales and average annual capital expenditures.

TEXAS AVIATION
Economic Impact Study