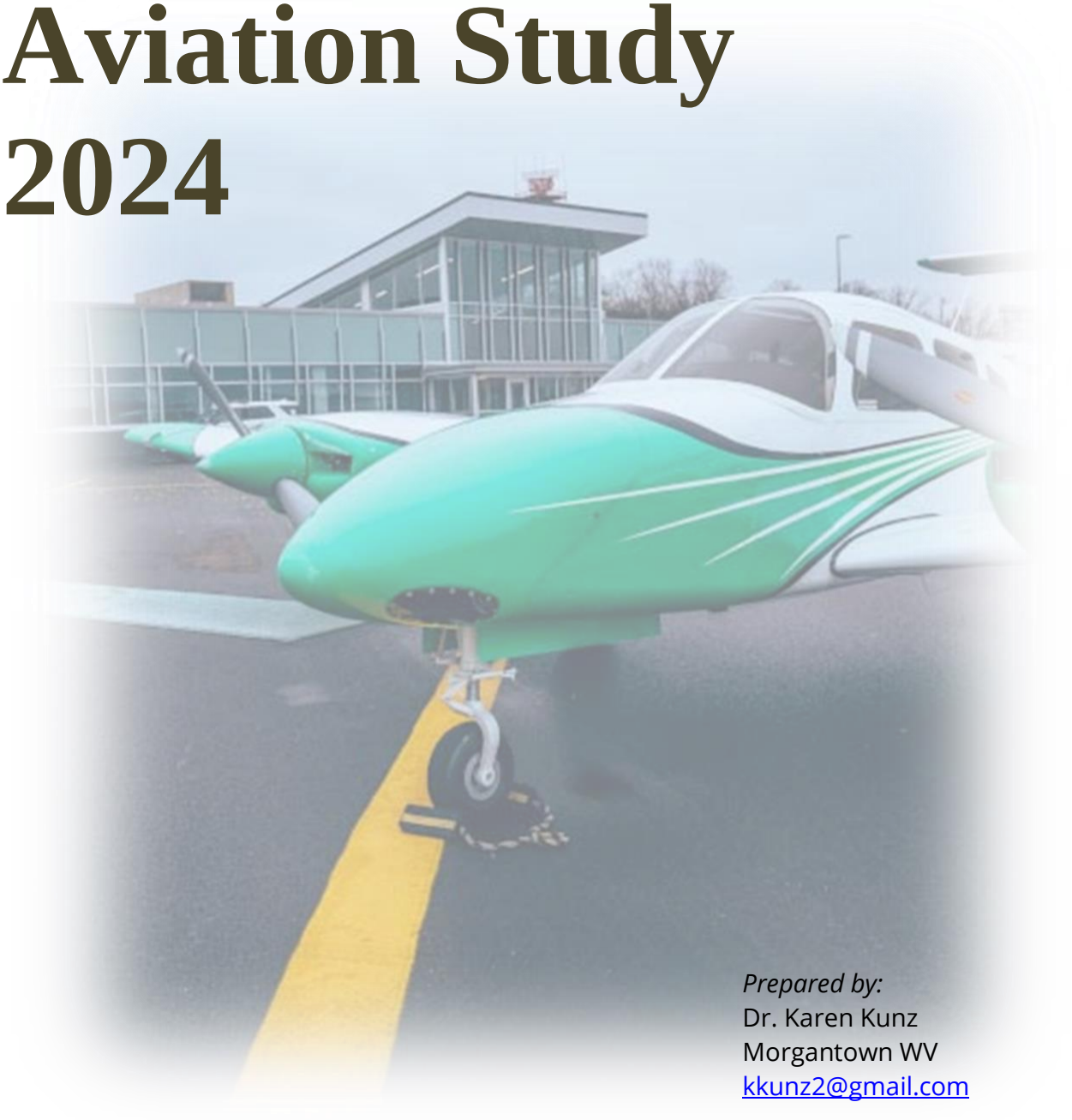
# West Virginia Aviation Study 2024



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In West Virginia, the commercial and general aviation airports and aviation policy overall, appear to be in a perpetual state of *possibility*. This report provides a comprehensive picture of aviation in in West Virginia today. A subsequent report builds on the findings here to explore innovative policy options that will support aviation and economic growth.

Seven commercial airports serve passenger and private air traffic, five of which are also federally compensated to provide essential air services to underserved communities in the state. The most active airports, in order of 2024 enplanement volume, are West Virginia International Yeager Airport (200,733) in Charleston, Huntington Tri-State Airport (101,042), and North Central West Virginia Airport (44,370) in Clarksburg. Total 2024 enplanements for the other four airports range from 4,300 to approximately 8,000.

Sixteen smaller, general aviation airports serve private, corporate, and charter air service, including cargo transport and aircraft storage and maintenance, and provide facilities to or property for development for industry manufacturing, service, and other related businesses. Many of the 23 airports have relationships with Marshall University's aviation education programs, and a number of them share facilities with military units, such as the National Guard and U.S. Air Force.

Income for most airports consist of operating revenues, which consist of passenger aeronautical revenues, non-passenger aeronautical revenues, and non-aeronautical revenues, non-operating revenues such as grants and other miscellaneous income, and capital contributions which generally support construction and airport improvements. Grants and capital contributions, including Federal Aviation Authority (FAA), Aviation Improvement Program (AIP), and other federal grants, cannot be used for operating expenses, meaning that airports must be self-sustaining. Most often, that is accomplished through enplanements (commercial airports only), fuel sales, hanger rentals, parking, and property developments for industrial and aeronautic support businesses. And most often profitability is slim, and that is before accounting for equipment wear and tear. Facilities and equipment maintenance, including terminal updating, parking lot and fence repairs, hanger painting, and striping – all of which usually have to be paid for by operating funds -have been put off, often for more than a decade or two (or more). Marginal

net profits also impair airports' ability to muster matching funds required for federal grants; awards for runway, terminal, apron or other multi-million dollar projects require 10% matching funds from the airport *and* state or local governments or airport authorities. The Department of Transportation's annual stipend to the airports is not enough to cover match demands or even maintenance costs.

Predictions by the Bureau of Business & Economic Research for future state economic vitality, based on activity since 2017, emphasize the absolutely necessity for industrial diversification, and support substantial investment in state aviation:

> "Output growth in four of the healthiest sectors in West Virginia – energy, healthcare, information, and professional services – comes in at a cumulative 24 percent since 2017. Conversely, growth in the rest of West Virginia's economy is negative one percent since 2017. **Overall, this implies that West Virginia desperately needs a healthier level of industrial diversification, or health in a wider swath of industrial sectors**.[1]" (emphasis in original).

Recent indications of budget shortfalls also support investment in airports and aeronautic industry expansion because of their capacity to drive economic growth within local communities and regions as well as throughout the state. A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report[2] notes that "air travel connects small communities across the nation and can drive economic growth through jobs and tourism in those communities." The report goes on to note that several factors have precipitated the decline in air travel in small communities:

- Fewer flights went to small communities, but the aircraft were larger [most WV airports cannot accommodate larger aircraft]
- Pilot and maintenance workforce shortages
- Increased airline operating costs (e.g., fuel and labor)
- Travelers choosing to drive to their destination or use larger airports

The report recommends making more pilots available for hiring and using electric aircraft to address these issues.

[1] John Deskins, PhD. 2024. *West Virginia Economic Outlook 2024-2028*, Bureau of Business & Economic Research, John Chambers College of Business & Economics, West Virginia University.

[2] GAO. 2024 Commercial Aviation: Trends in Air Service to Small Communities. GAO-24-106681, Sep 25. https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106681.

The profiles developed in this report for the commercial and general aviation airports include identification of strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Overall they correspond to the concerns and recommendations offered by GAO. Strengths include developable land for industrial commercial space, strong demand for hangers, and capacity to expand fuel sales, training and education, and military partnerships.

For the most part, the opportunities entail taking advantage of and implementing the strengths. For example, to take make the most of their developable land, Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport and the Wood County Airport Authority formed an economic development committee to recruit MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) companies in the U.S and abroad that are looking for room to provide support for wide body aircraft and other aviation industry needs. However, they will need to install the necessary infrastructure to fully prepare the property for tenants and are looking for grants to facilitate that.

For all the airports, the most immediate challenge is funding. Whether for terminal upgrades, fuel farms, additional hangers, industrial development, parking facilities, or matching funds, the needs are plentiful. State annual subsidies, while larger in 2024 than in prior years, are not large enough to enable airports to complete even one project, such as fence repair or hanger painting. It will take substantial investment by the state to help the aviation industry reach its full economic development potential.

To that end, the Department of Transportation could consider a more active role in aviation development:

- **Develop a comprehensive aviation plan**
  Coordinate the expansion efforts and distribution of resources and support throughout the state to ensure that all facilities have equal access and opportunity. Explore consolidations and collaborative partnerships to support sustainability and advance air transport within the state and with larger hubs in border states.

- Explore economies of scale, such as advertising (develop a unified identity) and equipment repair, runway striping, hanger painting, etc. – the latter might be more applicable for general aviation airports.

- Partner with the Departments of Commerce, Education, Tourism, and Economic Development to coordinate funding and other applicable

resources to support identified projects. For example, the Department of Commerce could support with MOVRA in its efforts to bring European aviation industry to its facility.

- Explore innovative development options. Electric aircraft, as note by GAO, drones, air taxis and ambulances, distribution center as part of the overall aviation plan to make the most of individual facilities and cooperative opportunities.

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# INTRODUCTION

*An aviation plan for the 21st century is possible with innovative, future-facing commitments to building flexible, technology-informed capacity and developing the social infrastructure at levels to support it.*

West Virginia faces a number of challenges in its efforts to develop a comprehensive aviation plan that can promote economic development and shared prosperity throughout the state. This includes expanding capacity for existing commercial and general aviation airports, consolidating or repurposing airports that are inactive, exploring regional collaborative partnerships, and promoting public-private partnerships to advance technology, take advantage of strategic locations and spur innovation. Many facilities have experienced years or decades of neglect; as a result, any new development often takes a backseat to maintenance and may have to include provisions for repairs and updates before moving forward. The significant lack of capacity in a host of areas has left airport managers to fend for themselves. Instead of collaborating for statewide growth, they are often forced to compete against each other for scarce resources.

Creating a growth-oriented aviation plan must also consider a host of demographic challenges, in which the state often ranks at the least advantageous ends of applicable metrics. Aviation policy solutions may have to include social policy supports to achieve the very feasible growth opportunities noted by airport managers. An aviation plan for the 21st century is possible with innovative, future-facing commitments to building flexible, technology-informed capacity and developing the social infrastructure at levels to support it.

## Project Purpose & Goals

Commissioned by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities, this study offers a comprehensive depiction of

the state's current aviation policy and practices. It includes an overview of the structures, purposes and types of traffic and sources of funding, followed by snapshots of the individual airports that illustrate characteristics, discuss economic impacts, and point out strengths, weaknesses and potential opportunities. This provides the foundation for a broader analysis and identification of potential policy options.

Often the terms airport and aviation are used interchangeably, yet aviation has a broader scope, encompassing airports, airlines, and all aspects of the business of air transportation. This study examines all of the airports in the state within the context of state aviation policies, processes, and planning.[3]

There are two main categories of aviation: civil and military. Civil aviation pertains to the transportation of people (civilians) and goods for commercial reasons, whereas military aviation refers to all aspects of air transportation pertaining to the purposes of "aerial warfare and surveillance."[4] The one military airport within the state is identified here but because the interest will remain on public aviation, it is not included in the snapshots section or subsequent discussions except for the possibility of collaborative opportunity.

The emphasis here is aviation management -efficient and effective air services and transport- and policy, based on the assessments of the existing public airports, including policies and practices that ensure efficient and effective operations of commercial and operational priorities, and ensure the safety of flyers and cargo.

The study of airport management and performance encompasses more than just looking at the various characteristics of the facilities throughout the state. It goes further, combining them all to develop functional, critical, and strategic pictures of how each facility contributes to the construction of a comprehensive image of the state's policies for air travel and commerce, and illustrates the state's strategic planning and commitment, or lack thereof, to fundamental support for aviation-related economic development throughout the state.

[3] TransGlobe™ School of Logistics & Aviation Management. 2024. https://www.transglobeacademy.com.

[4] Ibid.

# This Report

This report begins with brief discussion of the state's demographic environment before moving on to an overview of airports, elaborating generally on the various characteristics of the airports, the underpinnings of the federal environment and related regulatory and funding structures, current infrastructure funding opportunities, and other aspect of the environment in which they are situated. This is followed by individual snapshots of each public airport, consideration of closed or inactive facilities and a discussion of private facilities and their roles in meeting public needs. Finally, critical assessment of the overall strengths, challenges, and opportunities of the state's public airports (with an eye on private services) provides a foundation for identification of capacity policy considerations that could make West Virginia's aviation policy more efficient and effective.

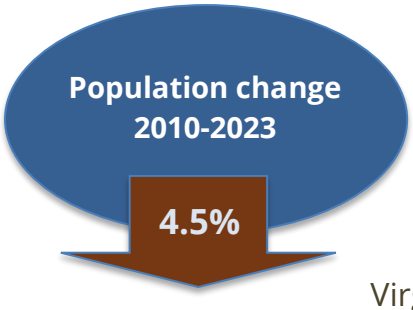
In  West Virginia, the state of aviation overall appears to be in a perpetual state of *possibility*. This report provides a comprehensive picture of aviation today. A subsequent report builds on the findings here to explore innovative policy options that will support aviation and economic growth.

# WHERE WE ARE NOW

## State Demographics

### Population

Between 2010 and 2020, the State's population declined approximately 3.2%, the largest loss of any state in the nation. It was one of just three states to experience a population loss, and that decline continued into the decade with an additional 1.3% loss in just the last three years. The state also holds the record for being the least diverse when It comes to Latino or Hispanic and Asian populations, and 3rd worst in terms of its African American residents. Further, the Legislature has used legislation to make their anti-LGBTQ positions clear.




The number of elderly residents is proportionally greater than most states (21.5% vs. the national average of 17.7%) with more than one in five citizens over age 65. The U.S. Census estimates that by 2023, a third of the population will be over 60, putting West Virginia firmly in the top spot of that demographic. Conversely, just 19.8% of the population is under age 18, with many young adults leaving the state after high school or college, citing lack of economic opportunities, low wages -usually for similar jobs with better pay in border states-and controversial legislative policies[5]

### Economics

According to former Governor Justice, West Virginia's tourism industry experienced significant growth, with visitors spending an estimated $6.3 billion in 2023, for a 5.6% increase over the previous year. The increase in tourism surpassed the State's average GDP of 4.7%;[6] indicating the importance of the aviation industry in West Virginia. Overall the state's economy has been growing strong post COVID, placing ninth in the 2023 in comparison of the other 49 states, which saw averaged

[5] Caseman, Kelli. (2024, Jul 18). Young West Virginia: Will you stay, or will you go? The Register-Herald. https://www.register-herald.com/opinion/young-west-virginia-will-you-stay-or-will-you-go/article_497654d8-4541-11ef-9272-1f53ff0ca7c7.html, and World Population Review. 2024. Obesity Rates by State 2024. https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/obesity-rate-by-state.

[6] Statista. 2024. Percent change in the real gross domestic product of the United States in 2023, by state. https://www.statista.com/statistics/248058/percent-change-in-us-real-gross-domestic-product-gdp-by-state/.

increases of 2.5%. The 2024 new year started out strong, with first quarter growth in 2024 at an annualized rate of 3.1%, but fell to 2.1% in the second quarter and just 0.2% in the third, with the majority of that gain in the mining industry.[7]

Unemployment in the state declined sharply in 2023, down 31% from the prior year as businesses continued to recover from the pandemic. This mirrored the national average of 4.2% at the end of the year. Forecasts for 2026-2027, however, anticipate an increase in unemployment to approximately 5%.

Changes in labor force participation (+2.3%) and employment (+4.6%) in 2023 were not nearly as strong. In a slightly longer view, between 2022 and 2024 labor force participation was flat, reflecting the declining population within the state. The increase in employment rate was double that of new entries into the labor force, indicating that the increase was largely for part-time jobs.[8] State industry growth by revenue was highest for casino hotels ($27.9 billion), hospitals ($9.3 billion), and coal mining ($6.6 billion); however, the health care and social assistance sectors accounted for the largest projected long-term job growth from 2014-2024.[9]

Half of the counties in West Virginia are expected to continue to add jobs between 2024 and 2029. The primary areas of job (and population) growth will be in the northern counties: the Eastern Panhandle, Potamic Highlands, and North-Central West Virginia. The outlook for the remaining counties "ranges from stagnation to significant employment losses."[10]

> "Policymakers should be keenly aware of significant economic differences across West Virginia counties and ensure that economic development strategies consider each region's specific strengths and weaknesses." ~J. Deskins, PhD,

[7] Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. 2024. Gross Domestic Product by State and Personal Income by State, 3rd Quarter 2024. https://www.bea.gov/news/2024/gross-domestic-product-state-and-personal-income-state-3rd-quarter-2024.

[8] Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. 2024. Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject. https://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet. Local Area Unemployment Statistics. https://www.bls.gov/lau/.

[9] Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. 2024. Monthly Labor Review.

[10] John Deskins, PhD. 2024. West Virginia Economic Outlook 2024-2029. Bureau of Business & Economic Research, John Chambers College of Business & Economics, West Virginia University. https://business.wvu.edu/research-outreach/bureau-of-business-and-economic-research/economic-

***Economic opportunity.*** Within Appalachia, West Virginia and Kentucky share the largest areas of economic distress. Fifteen counties in West Virginia have been designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission as economically distressed, and another 13 are considered at-risk. Yet, there are also distressed areas within at-risk and "transitional" counties, making economic stability questionable in all but a dozen of the 55 counties, and even those 12 are considered transitional. Kanawha and Caball counites are home to the greatest number of distressed areas with 14 and 11, respectively. The only county to achieve "competitive" status is Jefferson.[11]

This may go a long way in explaining the outmigration. "Two big reasons why they're [the state's young people] leaving are the economy and our schools. According to the 2024 Kids Count Databook, West Virginia ranks 48th in education and 47th in economic well-being." [12]

## Geography

The U.S. Census positions West Virginia in the South Atlantic region of the United States. The state is centrally located within the region, in easy proximity to Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Washington DC, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. It is the only state in Appalachia whose borders are wholly contained within the Appalachian mountains. This is literally an economic position of strength for West Virginia, particularly from a distribution perspective.

The drawback, however, is the state's mountainous terrain, with elevations ranging from an average of 1,500 feet above sea level (the highest average nationwide) to a high of 4,800 feet in Pendleton County. Included within the state's borders are portions of the Appalachian-Blue Ridge forests in the panhandle and eastern border, and the Alleghanies, which traverse the state. Its natural assets, including

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outlook-conferences-and-reports/economic-outlook-reports/west-virginia-economic-outlook-2024-2029.

[11] Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). 2024. County Economic Status and Distressed Areas by State, FY 2025. https://www.arc.gov/about-the-appalachian-region/county-economic-status-and-distressed-areas-by-state-fy-2025/.

[12] Sean O'Leary. 2024. West Virginia Faces Educational Challenges, According to 2024 Kids Data Count Book. WV Center on Budget & Policy. https://wvpolicy.org/west-virginia-faces-educational-challenges-according-to-2024-kids-data-count-book/; and Ross, Ji,. 2024 (Mar 15). Census Bureau: Kanawha continues to lose people as most WV counties see population drops. Charleston Gazette-Mail. https://www.wvgazettemail.com/news/kanawha_valley/census-bureau-kanawha-continues-lose-people-as-most-wv-counties-see-population-drops/article_a42c4993-0f55-5836-b5a1-59458c7241aa.html.

barrens, peatlands, wetlands, caves, and "home to one of the world's richest temperate broadleaf deciduous forest," make the state a wonder for environmental, conservation and outdoor adventure seekers.

The total surface area of the state is 24,230 square miles; it is a small state compared to nearby Virginia or Kentucky, which are 40% larger, with over 39 thousand square miles each. It is largely a rural state, as well, ranking the 29th most densely populated state in the country. Eighty-eight percent of the state is comprised of rural communities, yet only 26% of the state's population live those communities,

West Virginia is one of just a few states without a city of 100,000 or more residents. In fact, the largest city in the state is Charleston, the state capital, which is home to just 49,736 people. The next largest cities are Huntington (48,638) and Parkersburg (30.991).[13] Federal designation as a 'metro area' is only applicable to cities with populations of 50,000 and above, which is important to remember as the State continues to lose population. Falling under that benchmark has prevented the state's urban areas from getting designated federal funding and made them less attractive for economic development dollars.[14]

## Roads!

It is not possible to consider any aspect of public policy in West Virginia without talking about the state's roads. It seems complaining about the condition of the state's roads has become a regional pastime, and not without cause.

The Division of Highways (WVDOH) "maintains the sixth largest highway system in the nation with its purview extending across 93% of the state's 38,000 miles of roadways; 88% are rural and 12% are urban. WVDOH is one of only four states that maintains both state and county roads, many over mountainous terrain which makes maintenance and safety challenging." In 2017, the fatality rate on West Virginia's rural roads was nearly three times higher than other roads in the state and almost double the national average.[15]

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[13] World Population Review. 2024. West Virginia Cities. https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/west-virginia.

[14] Mike Schneider. 2021 (Jul14). Feds will keep definition of metro at 50,000-person minimum. Great Falls Tribune. https://www.greatfallstribune.com/story/news/2021/07/14/metro-area-still-50-000-person-minimum-per-feds/7964475002/.

[15] ASCE, West Virginia 2020 Infrastructure Report Card: D, https://infrastructurereportcard.org/state-item/west-virginia/.

The state's topography compounds repair progress by making maintenance more costly; in 2021 state repairs cost almost $21,000 per mile. The projected cost of pavement maintenance is reaching $400 million annually, while near-term (2025) travel projections are expected to increase by 37%.[16] Even with these considerations, the pace of progress is slow at best. The WVDOH's program for 2022 was nominal; their "resurfacing program consisted of [just] 106 projects, which addressed approximately 261 miles of roadway.[17] "Program activity in fiscal year 2023 has shown a rebound effect from lower-than-normal numbers reported in the prior year…. The resurfacing program consisted of 951 projects, which addressed approximately 1,994 miles of roadway."[18]

These resurfacing projects were part of the *Roads to Prosperity Program*, initiated by the Governor in 2017. Road maintenance and repairs were/are funded via issuance of $2.8 billion in municipal bonds, adding to the state's long-term debt obligations. By October 2024, 1,231 of the 1,320 projects funded had been completed. That accounted for approximately 9,000 miles of the state's 38,844 miles of public roads.[19]

It should come as no surprise that the state will pay claims for reimbursement for auto damage occurred on state highways.[20] In the last ten years, the state has paid $8.6 million for auto damage caused by driving in the state.[21]

> "…processing these claims can take years, with the average payment being relatively small, often just covering insurance deductibles.

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[16] Ibid.
[17] WV CAFR. 2022 https://finance.wv.gov/FARS/ACFR/Documents/ACFR2022.pdf https://worldaviationato.com/en/airport-control-tower/.
[18] WV CAFR. 2023. https://finance.wv.gov/FARS/ACFR/Documents/ACFR2023.pdf.
[19] WV DOT. 2024. Inside Roads to Prosperity: Changing culture within the WVDOT made roadwork influx possible. https://transportation.wv.gov/communications/PressRelease/Pages/Inside_Roads_to_Prosperity_Changing_culture_within_the_WVDOT_made_roadwork_influx_possible.aspx, and WV DOT. 2024a. Division of Highways. https://transportation.wv.gov/highways/Pages/default.aspx.
[20] WVDOH. 2023. West Virginia Division of Highways Policy: Reimbursable Claims. https://transportation.wv.gov/employees/DOHAdminProcs/DOH0207.pdf;i, and West Virginia Press Association.2016, Sept 19. 'Pot-hole' cases overload WV Court of Claims. https://wvpress.org/copydesk/wv-press-videos/pot-hole-cases-overload-wv-court-claims/.
[21] Culvyhouse, H. 2024. Every year, hundreds of West Virginians take their auto repair bills to the state and get money. Here's how it works. Mountain State Spotlight, November. https://mountainstatespotlight.org/2024/11/14/legislative-claims-commission-potholes/#:~:text=Over%20the%20last%2010%20years%2C%20the%20state%20has%20paid%20%248.6,on%20behalf%20of%20the%20DOH.

> The surge in claims has strained the state's resources and prompted discussions about legislative changes to reduce the financial and administrative burden."

The state's topography makes traveling as the crow flies impossible. Bus transportation, the state's' primary mass transit option, is hindered by topography, as well as poor roads; within cities it often takes periods of time to even run simple errands. This presents unique challenges to residents in rural and particularly isolated areas in efforts to access shopping and health care. Amtrack does run in parts of the State; however routes are minimal and not generally convenient.

For the purposes of this report, the combination of limited mass transit and poorly maintained roads poses a particular challenge for economic development and the ability to attract new businesses into the state. Accommodating increased demand for public and private, passenger and commercial air transport will require solutions to this significant deterrent to economic development.

# Aviation & Airport Demographics

"Airports are primarily government-owned facilities that contribute to the overall economic well-being of the surrounding community through jobs created, activities supported, and taxes generated. Airports are an essential public facility. Recognizing the regional economic impact of airports and the need for a robust air transportation system, the FAA and state and local governments often provide grants to improve and maintain airport facilities…

**The Essential Air Service (EAS)** program was instituted to guarantee that eligible communities are served by certificated air carriers. Mandated by Congress and facilitated and subsidized when necessary, by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the program ensures that specific large- or medium-hub airports are served by two round trips a day with 30- to 50-seat aircraft, or additional frequencies by smaller aircraft. As of Fall 2024, the Department provides EAS subsidy to air carriers, or grants to communities through the FAA's Alternate EAS (AEAS) program.

| Airport Name | Subsidized Essential Service 2024 | Carrier |
|---|---|---|
| Greenbrier Valley+# | $5,389,348 | Contour |
| Mid-Ohio Valley Regional+# | $2,134,573 | AEAS/Contour |
| Morgantown Municipal - Walter L. Bill Hart Field+ | $3,305,353 | Southern |
| North Central West Virginia+# | $5,511,849 | Contour |
| Raleigh County Memorial+# | $2,827,968 | AEAS/Contour |

*+Essential Air Service*
*# Economically distressed area*

Federal and state money is often available for capital projects only, and usually there are restrictions on how it can be used. Airport operating revenue generally must remain allocated to the airport … to help offset operational costs and support capital improvements not eligible for other types of funding….

Generally, smaller facilities, often without the benefit of commercial air service, might not generate sufficient revenue to cover their costs due to market forces and restrictions on participation in some types of revenue generating activities."[22]

[22] Transportation Resource Board. 2014. Aligning Community Expectations with Airport Roles. https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/14041/innovative-finance-and-alternative-sources-of-revenue-for-airports.

Public airports within West Virginia fall into several categories: commercial services, general aviation service, general aviation-private/public use (not considered here), military airports, and those that are inactive or whose use has been discontinued.[23]

## Commercial Airports

The seven commercial service airports in the state are what we would consider "full service" aviation centers. They support both passenger (aka enplanements) and cargo transport, jet, prop-plane, ultra-light, and helicopter service, and provide facilities, maintenance and other support for private, business, and aviation military aviation. Many host aviation industry tenants and partner with educational institutions to offer degree programs and flight training.

These airports are generally required to have annual enplanements of more than 10,000 in order to meet FAA funding support benchmarks , but for some, such as Morgantown Airport, maintaining that standard has been challenging. For most, enplanement increased in 2021, with subsequent highs and lows as pandemic recovery progressed.

West Virginia International Yeager Airport in Charleston is the most active aviation faculty in the state and has the highest annual enplanements. Of the Federal Aviation Authority's (FAA) list of top "US Airports, ranked by 2022 Systemwide* Scheduled Enplanements," Yeager Airport came in at 189 out of the 200 listed, with 164,000 enplaned passengers. Enplanements rose 8.7% in 2023, reflecting a total of 194,898 passengers. Looking at 2023 data for all 1,700 airports nationwide, North Central Airport in Clarksburg was the next West Virginia airport on the list; it was ranked 279 with 42,736 enplanements, down 8% from the prior year. For context, the country's most active airport, Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, processed approximately 45.4 million passengers in 2022, a 23.7% increase over the previous year, and saw almost 51 million passenger in 2023 (FAA 2024).[24]

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[23] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS), 2020, https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/Pages/WV%20AEIS%20Complete%20Technical%20Report_.pdf; AirNav.com,https://www.airnav.com; Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. (FAA). 2024 (Jun 18). CY 2023 Enplanements at All Commercial Service Airports-Preliminary, https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/2024-06/cy23-commercial-service-enplanements-preliminary.pdf.

[24] U.S. Bureau of Transportation. 2022. Airport Rankings 2022.. https://www.bts.gov/sites/bts.dot.gov/files/2023-04/Airport%20Rankings%202022.xlsx; and FAA. 2023. Passenger Boarding (Enplanement) and All-Cargo Data for U.S. Airports. https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/passenger_allcargo_stats/passenger.

| Associated City | Airport Name | FAA ID | Organizational Structure |
|---|---|---|---|
| **COMMERCIAL SERVICE** | | | |
| Lewisburg | Greenbrier Valley+# | LWB | County Airport Authority |
| Parkersburg | Mid-Ohio Valley Regional+# | PKB | County Airport Authority |
| Morgantown | Morgantown Municipal - Walter L. Bill Hart Field+ | MGW | City |
| Clarksburg | North Central West Virginia+# | CKB | Benedum Airport Authority |
| Beckley | Raleigh County Memorial+# | BKW | County Airport Authority |
| Huntington | Tri-State/Milton J. Ferguson Field | HTS | Tri-State Airport Authority |
| Charleston | Yeager International Airport | CRW | Central WV Airport Authority |
| **GENERAL AVIATION SERVICE** | | | |
| Sutton | Braxton County Airport | 48I | County Commission |
| Martinsburg | Eastern WV Regional Airport * | MRB | Regional Airport Authoirty |
| Elkins | Elkins-Randolph County Airport | EKN | Regional Airport Authority |
| Fairmont | Fairmont Municipal Airport | 4G7 | County Apirport Authority |
| Petersburg | Grant County Airport | W99 | County Airport Authority |
| Ravenswood | Jackson County Airport | I18 | County Commission |
| Logan | Logan County Airport | 6L4 | County Airport Authority |
| Moundsville | Marshall County Airport | MPG | County Commission |
| Bluefield | Mercer County Airport | BLF | County Airport Authority |
| Philippi | Philippi-Barbour County Regional Airport-INACTIVE | 79D | County Airport Authority |
| Beckely | Richwood Municipal Airport-Beckley | 3I4 | City |
| Williamson | Southern WV Regional Airport | EBD | County Airport Authority |
| Summersville | Summersville Airport | SXL | US Army Corp of Engineers |
| Buckhannon | Upshur County Regional Airport | W22 | County Airport Authority |
| Wheeling | Wheeling-Ohio County Airport | HLG | County Airport Authority |
| Pinewood | Wyoming County Airport/Kee Field | I16 | County Airport Authority |

Of the 2023 FAA ranking of cargo airports, none of the facilities in West Virginia made the list.

***Commercial airport classifications***. Commercial service airports, by definition, are airports that have scheduled passenger service and more than 10,000 enplanements per year. From there they are subclassified by the extent to which they exceed that minimum. For context, the average *monthly* enplanements for all U.S. scheduled airlines (domestic and international) was 82.9 million.[25]

- Large hub (passenger (service) large or PL) are those facilities that see annual enplanement traffic of 1% or more of total U.S. enplanements.

- Medium hub (PM) airports have annual enplanements of between 0.25% and 1.0% of total U.S. traffic.

- Small hub (PS) facilities account for between 0.05% and 0.25% enplanements each year.

- Nonhub (PN) are those that process less than 0.05% but more than 10,000 passengers per year. The

[25] U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. 2025. November 2024 U.S. Airline Traffic Data. https://www.bts.gov/newsroom/november-2024-us-airline-traffic-data-down-08-same-month-last-year#:~:text=2021%20%2D%20November%202024-,Monthly%20Passengers%20on%20U.S.%20Scheduled%20Airlines%20(Domestic%20%2B%20International,)%2C%20November%202021%20%2D%20November%202024&text=Systemwide%20enplanements%20(82.9M)%20were,million%20reached%20in%20June%202024.

seven West Virginia commercial service airports are classified as PN or nonhub facilities.

There are designations for commercial service airports that fall below the 10,000 minimum benchmark but do have scheduled passenger service.

- Commercial service-nonprimary (CS) are publicly owned airports that have annual enplanements of at least 2,500.

- Reliver (R) airports are exactly that – they are designated by the FFA to relieve congestion at nearby large commercial service airports and to provide more general aviation access to the overall community.

*General aviation airports may be designed by the FAA as* **reliever airports** *for their ability to provide aviation alternatives to busy commercial airports. They ease congestion and improve access to air transport for the community.*

## General Aviation Airports

"GA" or general aviation airports, make up the largest group of airports in the states, as well as the single largest group of aviation facilities in the US. The 16 GAs in West Virginia "accommodate a wide variety of uses including business and leisure flying, aerial surveying, medical evacuation operations" and much more.[26] They generally offer T- and box-hanger rentals and fuel sales, and some also provide flight and maintenance training and service. Some offer educational opportunities, hanger rental, and/or property development for aviation industry tenants. There are eight additional general aviation sites (not listed here) throughout the state that are privately owned but provide public access.

There are also other small, private air facilities scattered throughout the state. Some are not more than a grass landing strip, with aircraft sharing the field with wildlife, while others are more vital sites that accommodate private plans and drone traffic. Their proximity to existing public facilities and viability of their locations may be included in a subsequent report.

Two of the state's smaller publicly-owned General Aviation facilities, in Welch and New Martinsville, are inactive. In addition, the airport in Philippi is currently inactive;

[26] West Virginia Aeronautics Commission. 2021. 2020. West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study. Final Report.

| Associated City | Airport Name | FAA ID | Organizational Structure |
|---|---|---|---|
| **INACTIVE AIRPORTS** | | | |
| Welch | Welch Municipal Airport | I25 | City |
| New Martinsville | PW Johnson Memorial Airport | 75D | City |
| **MILITARY AIRPORTS** | | | |
| Kingwood | Camp Dawson Army Airfield | 3G5 | |

however, one goal of this report is to consider future uses for the facility.

**Military airports**.
The state is home to just one military airport, located in Kingwood. Given West Virginia's central location, it is surprising that it is the only facility. Possibilities for expansion there may be worth exploring.

## Control towers

The FAA provides the structure for all air traffic nationwide via aviation control towers (ATC) and the air traffic controllers who choreograph the comings and goings in US airspace.

> Air traffic control towers are located at over 500 of the 5,000 commercial and general aviation airports in the US. These towers coordinate takeoffs, landing, ground traffic and aircrafts in flight within 5 miles of the airport. Their primary purpose worldwide is to prevent collisions, organize and expedite the flow of air traffic, and provide information and other support for pilots. It is ultimately a safety measure– skies do not have traffic lights!
>
> At smaller airports with less aircraft traffic, the pilots communicate with each other on common radio frequencies. This has proven to be safe at lower volume airports, however as traffic increases and greater efficiency is required an Air Traffic Control Tower is opened.[27]

ATCs control all phases of a flight through

- ***Flight authorization control*** issues the necessary clearances for the flight plan prior to take off.
- ***Ground control*** deals with all aircraft and vehicle movements on the airport surface.
- ***Local traffic control*** coordinates the aircrafts movements on the ground, authorizing takeoffs and landings.

[27] Ellis Airport, (OJA) Jacksonville NC. 2024. The importance of Air Traffic Control Towers. https://flyoaj.com/importance-of-air-traffic-control-towers/.

- ***Approach control*** authorizes and instructs aircrafts in approach with intent to land so they do it safely.
- ***Airspace control*** controls all actions within its airspace.[28]

West Virginia has three ATCs, located in Clarksburg, Charleston, and Huntington. Nationwide, half of the country has three or fewer ATCs. Only six states, including West Virginia, have 3 towers.[29]

## Non-public (private) airports

| PRIVATE AIRPORTS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City | Airport Name | FA AID | City | Airport Name | FA AID |
| Ansted | Lee Massey Airport | WV01 | Hedgesville | Green Landings Airport | WV22 |
| Arbovale | Deer Creek Farm Airport | WV00 | Keyser | Gerstell Farms Airport | WV15 |
| Beverly | Lazy J Aerodrome | 00WV | Kingwood | Moore Field Airport | WV19 |
| Capon Bridge | River's Edge Farm Airport | 38WV | Lansing | New River Gorge Airport | WV32 |
| Chesapeake | Island Airport | WV08 | Martinsburg | Michaels Farms Airport | WV17 |
| Clarksburg | Ruth Field Airport | WV28 | Medley | Heaven's Landing Airstrip | 4WV4 |
| Corinne | Mike Ferrell Field Airport | WV09 | Newburg | Larew Airport | WV53 |
| Craigsville | Herold Airport | WV63 | Newburg | Lynn Airport | 18WV |
| Davis | Windwood Fly-In Resort Airport | WV62 | Pence Springs | Hinton-Alderson Airport | WV77 |
| Elizabeth | Hales Landing Airport | 2WV3 | Poca | Kurt's Field Airport | 27WV |
| Elkins | Fairview Airport | WV70 | Rainelle | Rainelle Airport | WV30 |
| Fairmont | Carr Airport | WV65 | Romney | Lost Mountain Airport | WV06 |
| Fayetteville | Fayette Airport | WV59 | Romney | Eastview Airport | WV67 |
| Gerrardstown | Taylors Airport | WV68 | Rowlesburg | Cheat River Island Airport | 56WV |
| Gerrardstown | Talbott Field Airport | 8WV8 | South Charleston | Mallory Airport | WV12 |
| Glendale | Glendale Fokker Field Airport | WV66 | Terra Alta | McKee Sky Ranch Airport | WV57 |
| Green Bank | Green Bank Observatory Airport | WV52 | Union | Willow Bend Airport | 2WV5 |
| Hamlin | Crazy Horse Airport | 12WV | Valley Point | Valley Point Airport | WV29 |
| Harpers Ferry | Needwood Farm Airport | WV21 | West Union | Nicholson Airport | 75WV |

[28] World Aviation Flight Academy. 2024. Airport Control Towers. Population Review 2024. West Virginia. https://worldpopulationreview.com/states/west-virginia.

[29] Federal Aviation Administration. 2024. Air Traffic Organization, Air Traffic Control Towers (ATCT), https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ato/service_units/air_traffic_services/atct.

# AVIATION IN WEST VIRGINIA

If you've seen one airport, you've definitely not seen them all! The airports within each category – commercial service, general aviation, and even private facilities that are available for public use - share some similarities, but for the most part, each is uniquely designed, structured, funded and operated, with their own strengths, challenges, opportunities and ideas for improvements. The primary characteristic they all share is the deep-seated need for support.

There are specific aspects of each airports that contribute to their individuality, but also lend themselves to comparison to other airports in the same category or region. Those categories include ownership structure and sources of revenue, type of operations and operational capacity, and entrepreneurial activities.

## Airports by Type and Structure

### Ownership Structures

There are various types of airport ownership for public facilities across the U.S., including state, county and municipal governments, airport authorities, government agencies, and private owners. Most airports in the U.S. are operated as non-profit organizations within state or local governments. That holds true in West Virginia as well, where most of the airports in the State are owned and operated by a county or regional airport authority.  A few, however, are controlled by the local government; for example, Morgantown Airport is an agency within Morgantown city government, and the Braxton County Airport is answers directly to the Braxton County Commission.

County and regional airport authorities are typically public organizations comprised of a board and salaried staff that share responsibilities for the management, operation, and oversight of airports located within a specified jurisdiction. Similarly, municipal airport owners share like roles and responsibilities, but direction, oversight and often some funding is provided by city council or county commission. These types of governance are established to ensure the efficient operation of airports, facilitate growth and development, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

The roles and responsibilities of county and regional airport authorities include:

- *Airport management and operations*, such as day-to-day functions, passenger services and security, runway and facilities maintenance, and compliance with aviation regulations; capital improvements and development.

- *Capital improvements and development*, including planning and implementation of expansion and modernization projects, such as terminal upgrades, runway construction, or other infrastructure improvements.

- *Financial oversight*, including management of all financial aspects of airport operation, such as budgeting, revenue generation, and financial sustainability.

- *Regulatory compliance*, which comprises airport fulfillment of all FAA regulations and requirements, state laws, and local zoning and land-use requirements.

- *Public relations and community engagement*, such as serving as liaison between the airport, the local community, and other stakeholders by addressing their concerns, promoting the airport, and ensuring that its activities benefit local economic development.

**Management of a county or regional airport authority** can vary depending on local laws and the size of the airport, but it typically includes the following components:

- Board of Commissioners or Directors. Usually a governing body made up of appointed or elected officials from the county or city, business leaders, experts in aviation, finance, and/or law, and representative of the community and other stakeholders. Responsible for overseeing the authority's general operations, setting policies, approving budgets, and making strategic decisions regarding the airport's growth and development.

- Executive Director/CEO. Typically hired by the board and responsible for managing the daily operations of the airport authority, including human resources, operations, and implementation of board policies. Reports to the Board.

- Operations staff. Includes airport operations managers, safety officers, maintenance and customer service personnel, to manage airport logistics,

airfield maintenance, security, and customer services. At smaller airports fewer staff handle multiple responsibilities.

- Finance and legal teams. Financial officers or accountants oversee the budget, revenue generation, and expenditures. May also include legal counsel for regulatory matters, contracts, land acquisition, and litigation. Smaller airports may contract these services; whereas a few of the larger commercial airports, such as Yaeger International Airport, maintain full-time finance and legal staff.

- Advisory Committees or Task Forces. Specialized committees, comprised of consist of community stakeholders, business leaders, or experts in aviation and environmental policy, are created as needed to address specified issues, such as environmental impact, economic development, or public relations.

Of the seven commercial airports in the state, three are owned by county aviation authorities (Greenbrier, Mid-Ohio, and Raleigh County), three by independent airport authorities (North Central West, Tri-State, and Yeager), and one by city government (Morgantown). North Central West, Tri-State and Yeager are overseen by boards of directors that includes members from the private sector as well as county and state officials.

## Types of Operations

Generally, airport operations generally fit into two categories: Those that provide passenger and cargo services and those that service private and charter activities.

*Operational capacity* may be determined or limited by the length and number of runway(s), geographic location, and other physical attributes. In West Virginia, the mountainous terrain offers natural restrictions to operational capacity, limiting the number and location of airports that could provide commercial passenger and cargo business, and the size and type of aircraft, and entrepreneurial endeavors.

### Runways

Airport runway lengths determine the types of aircraft that airports can accommodate, and in that way, essentially define their scope of purpose. Lengths range from less than 3,000 feet to 12,000 feet or more.

- Short runways. At less than 3,000 feet, short runways are for general aviation or regional operations service for local or recreational flights. They are often private airstrips, bush airports or smaller regional airports. They

can only serve single-engine planes, small turboprops, and some light business jets, and are ideal for emergency landings, crop dusting, etc.

- Medium-Length Runways. At 3,000–8,000 feet, these runways are long enough for regional and domestic commercial flights at mid-size municipal airports and regional hubs. They are long enough for regional jets and smaller commercial aircraft (e.g., Embraer E-Jets, Boeing 737, Airbus A320) for domestic travel, cargo flights with medium loads and training vehicles for larger aircraft.

- Long Runways. At 8,000 to 12,000 feet, facilities with long runways can accommodate commercial airliners, long-haul flights, and larger cargo planes. They are found at major international airports and serve jets such as wide-body jets like Boeing 747, 777, 787, Airbus A350, and A380. Airports in hot/high-altitude regions where aircraft require longer takeoff distances, and where emergency diversion runways for large aircraft are needed all have long runways.

- Extra-Long Runways. Only airports with runways of 12,000 feet or more have the capacity for heavy aircraft, long-haul flights, and special operations needed for intercontinental flights, military bases, or spaceport operations. Types of aircraft include fully loaded cargo planes (e.g., Antonov An-225), space shuttles, and long-haul jets.

The longest runways in West Virginia are medium-length (3,000-8,000) feet). In addition to the state's mountainous terrain, there are other factors that determine *runway capacity* at the state's commercial and general aviation airports.

- Aircraft Type: Larger aircraft need longer runways.
- Altitude: Airports at higher elevations require longer runways due to thinner air.
- Temperature: Hotter temperatures reduce air density, increasing the required runway length.
- Payload: Heavier planes need longer distances to take off and land.
- Runway Surface: Grass or gravel runways typically require greater lengths than paved ones.
- Wind: Headwinds shorten takeoff/landing distances, while tailwinds lengthen them.

In addition to passenger and freight services, most airports in the state engage in entrepreneurial, for-profit activities, despite their non-profit status. In addition to hanger rental and aircraft maintenance, the most common activities include fuel sales and farming, parking, and flight and aircraft maintenance training. Some airports terminals contain restaurants and cafes, convenience stores, and magazine/book stalls, and others offer commercial shipping or drone commercial services (delivery, surveying, etc.), maintenance and operation training.

## Sources of Revenue

The fiscal foundations for each airport are as diverse as the airports themselves. They rely on a patchwork of sources and means to keep the doors open and the engines running, often by a thread.

### Federal Dollars

The FAA provides the largest amount of funding dollars, but the grants come with considerable use restrictions and matching requirements. Passenger flights provide income from taxes and fees (such as checked baggage fees). However, airports rely on entrepreneurial sources to support most day-to-day operations, salaries, maintenance (too often deferred) and all the other "little things" that are not permissible uses of FAA funds and exceed passenger aviation revenue.

The FAA funds a wide range of activities related to the development, maintenance, and improvement of U.S. airports. Funding programs are designed to ensure the safety, security, and efficiency of the national airspace system and supporting infrastructure improvements at public airports. Each program has specific limitations and criteria on how its funds can be used.

The National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) maintains the roster of the nearly "3,300 public-use airports that are included in the national airport system, the roles they currently serve, and the amounts and types of airport development eligible for Federal funding under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) over the next 5 years."[30]

Funding sources for the NPIAS roster include Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (aka the Bipartisan

[30] Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). 2024b. National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/npias.

Infrastructure Law (BIL)). The BIL establishes formulas and competitive grants for airport terminal projects, airport-owned air traffic control towers, and other projects which historically have received little or no AIP funding.

Airport capital development needs are driven by current and forecasted traffic, use and age of facilities, and changing aircraft technology, all of which require airports to update or replace equipment and infrastructure. These development projects are included in NPIAS's airport capital planning process for funding from federal sources, as well as state and local cost sharing, and creative financing.

The FAA utilizes a variety of data (aviation related activity, ownership, aeronautical functions serving the public interest, etc.) to determine the appropriate category and hub/role of each NPIAS airport. Airports meeting the commercial service requirements (public airports with more than 2,500 enplanements a year and scheduled service) are updated every year and eligible for federal funds.

**Airport Improvement Program (AIP).** This is the primary source of federal funding for the development and maintenance of public-use airports. All AIP-funded projects must meet specific regulatory requirements, including environmental assessments, safety standards, and local planning approvals. Further, airports must demonstrate that the funds are being used appropriately and are subject to audits and oversight. Awards must be obligated within the specified time frames; those not spent at the end of the award period are subject to claw-back and reallocation to other projects. Airports need to carefully plan their projects and adhere to deadlines to ensure they can make full use of the funds.

Permissible uses of AIP funds:

- Runway and Taxiway Construction and Rehabilitation. Expansion, resurfacing, and maintenance of runways, taxiways, and apron areas.

- Airport Safety Improvements. Safety enhancements such as installing airport lighting, improving runway markings, upgrading navigational aids, and improving wildlife hazard management.

- Terminal Building Improvements. Modernization or expansion of terminal facilities, including passenger boarding bridges, security enhancements, and baggage handling systems.

- Airport Pavement Management. Maintenance of paved surfaces, including condition assessments and resurfacing.

- Environmental Projects. Mitigation measures related to noise abatement, wetland restoration, or wildlife management on or around airports.

- Air Traffic Control Systems. Upgrades or installation of air traffic control equipment at airports.

- Security Enhancements. Airport perimeter fencing, security lighting, and other measures to increase safety and comply with TSA regulations.

- Planning and Design. Studies, plans, and environmental assessments to guide long-term airport development, such as master plans or environmental impact statements.

Funding limitations:

- Eligibility. Awards are distributed based on the size and role of the airports within in the national airspace system. The predominance of AIP funds go to primary airports, which support annual enplanements of over 10,000 per year. The commercial aviation airports at Clarksburg, Huntington and Charleston are eligible for this funding. Non-primary airports, such as the other commercial aviation airports and the general aviation facilities, with limited traffic and fewer based aircraft, are still eligible for some grants. The difference between being over- or under the 10,000 enplanement benchmark is a significant differential in the amount of funds an airport is eligible for.

- Matching Funds. AIP generally requires a matching contribution from the local or state government as well as a local share supplied by the airport. The federal share can range from 75% to 95%, depending on the type of project and the airport category.
    - Primary airports (with higher passenger traffic) may receive up to 75% federal funding.

    - Non-primary commercial airports may receive up to 90% federal funding.

    - General aviation airports or small regional airports may receive up to 95% for certain types of safety or infrastructure projects.

- Permitted Uses. AIP funds can only be used for capital projects that directly enhance aviation safety, efficiency, or capacity. Operating expenses are not eligible.

**Federal Grants for Aviation Safety and Security**. The FAA also administers grant programs that focus on specific safety and security initiatives. Those include Airport Security Grants to enhance security measures such as perimeter fencing, surveillance systems, or access control, and TSA Screening Grants to improve passenger and baggage screening, including technology upgrades and enhanced security infrastructure.

Funding Limitations and Considerations:

- Local Matching Requirements. As with AIP funds, airport operators (and local or state government when available) must contribute matching funds to bring total funding to 100% of the project cost.

- Airport Size and Role. Again, as with AIP awards, the availability of funds and the amount of award is dependent on the airport's size and role in the air transportation network. Large commercial airports receive a larger share of AIP funding, while small regional or general aviation airports have to compete for a smaller pool of resources.

- Project Scope. Only projects related to safety, capacity, security, etc. are eligible for awards. As with AIP grants, costs of operational, routine maintenance, and administration ineligible.

**Passenger Facility Charge Program (PFC**). While not directly administered by the FAA, the PFC program allows airports to charge passengers a fee (currently capped at $4.50 per passenger, with some variations for larger airports) to fund specific projects.

PFC Eligible Projects:

- Security Infrastructure. Investments in physical and cybersecurity measures to protect passengers and airport facilities.

- Airfield Improvement. Renovations to runways, taxiways, gates, or terminal access points.

- Environmental Mitigation, Projects designed to reduce the environmental impact of airport operations.

PFC Limitations:

- Projects must benefit the public use or directly enhance passenger services. Funds can only be used for capital improvements. As with other federal awards, monies may not be applied to operational costs..

- FAA approval is required to receive awards. Airports be authorized by the FAA to charge passenger fees; The FAA also determines the total amount (cap) of the fee that can be levied, based on airport size and project scope.

**Other Federal Funding programs**. There are a variety of sources for federal dollars for specific project, including:

- Federal Contract Tower (FTC) Program. This program provides federal funding to airports that operate air traffic control towers under contract to the FAA. This program typically supports smaller airports that do not qualify for a full-time, FAA-operated tower but still need traffic control services for safety and efficiency. The program does not directly fund infrastructure improvements.

- Department of Transportation (DOT) Discretionary Grants. These funds are awarded on a competitive basis for high-priority projects that address airport safety, security, capacity, and environmental sustainability.

- Supplemental Federal Funding Programs (FAA/DOT). Additional funds have been made available through specific federal legislation, such as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). These programs often provide targeted funding for modernization, safety improvements, and expansion of airport infrastructure.

- TSA Grants. These grants to enhance security infrastructure at airports. This includes the installation of new security screening technologies, baggage screening systems, and other security measures.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Grants. These grants fund airports that experience disasters or emergencies. Grants can be used for disaster recovery, emergency planning, hazard mitigation projects, restoring airport operations after natural disasters, improving resilience against future incidents, or emergency management planning. With the relatively frequent occurrence of floods and other disasters, particularly in the southern part of the state, these funds may be particularly important to airports in the area.

Of all the federal programs, two are specifically targeted for airports that serve small communities.

- Essential Air Service (EAS) Program. This program was designed to ensure continued access to the national air transportation system. It helps support airports that might not otherwise be economically viable. This program doesn't provide direct funding for airport infrastructure; however, it supports the viability of airports in remote or underserved areas by ensuring they maintain scheduled air service. Five of the seven of the commercial aviation airports in the state receive Essential Air Service subsidies. Over the years, Congress's commitment to the program has continually increased. Between 2000 and 2024, Congressional appropriations have increased from $50 million (in nominal dollars) to $496 million, respectively.

- Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP). Through SCASDP, established by Congress in 2000, communities can apply for federal discretionary grants to fund strategies to improve their air service and address airfare issues at small airports. The U.S. Department of Transportation awards SCASDP grants to communities with underserved airports that seek to obtain airline service or to implement other measures, including marketing and promotional efforts, to lower the cost and improve availability of air service. Grantees often use the award to fund a minimum revenue guarantee to attract an airline to begin a new service. Minimum revenue guarantees are designed to limit an airline's risk in initiating air service by guaranteeing the airline will generate a specified amount of revenue from the ticket sales associated with new service. In 2022, average grants of $767,000 were awarded to 20 communities across the country to use for minimum revenue guarantees and marketing assistance. [31]

[31] General Accounting Office, U.S. (GAO). 2024. Commercial Aviation: Trends in Air service to Small Communities. GAO-24-106681, Sep 25. https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106681.

## Operating Revenues

In addition to federal funding, sources of funds for the state's airports come from *operating* and *non-operating* revenues. Operating revenues include *passenger aeronautical revenues, non-passenger aeronautical revenues, and non-aeronautical revenues.*

| OPERATING REVENUE | | | NON-OPERATING REVENUE |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Passenger Airline Aeronautical Revenue** | **Non-Passenger Aeronautical Revenue** | **Non -Aeronautical Revenue** | |
| Passenger airline landing fees | Landing fees: GA & military | Land & non-terminal facility leases | Interest |
| Terminal arrival fees, rents & utilities | FBO contract/sponsor-operated | Termina: food & beverage | Grants |
| Terminal apron charges/tie downs | Cargo & hanger rental | Terminal: services & other | Passenter facility charges |
| Federal inspection fees | Fuel tax for airport use | Rental cars | Capitol contributions |
| Other passenger fees | Fuel sales (net) & fuel flowage | Parking & ground transport | Other |
| | Security reimbursement, Fed Govt | | |
| | Other non-passenger revenue | | |

**Aeronautical revenues** come from activities directly related to aviation operations and account for a substantial portion of total airport income. They are generally tied to the use of airport facilities and services by airlines, cargo carriers, and other aviation-related users.

- Landing Fees. Airlines and other aircraft operators pay landing fees based on the weight of the aircraft and/or the number of landings. These fees are used to cover the cost of maintaining and upgrading runways, taxiways, and other airfield infrastructure.

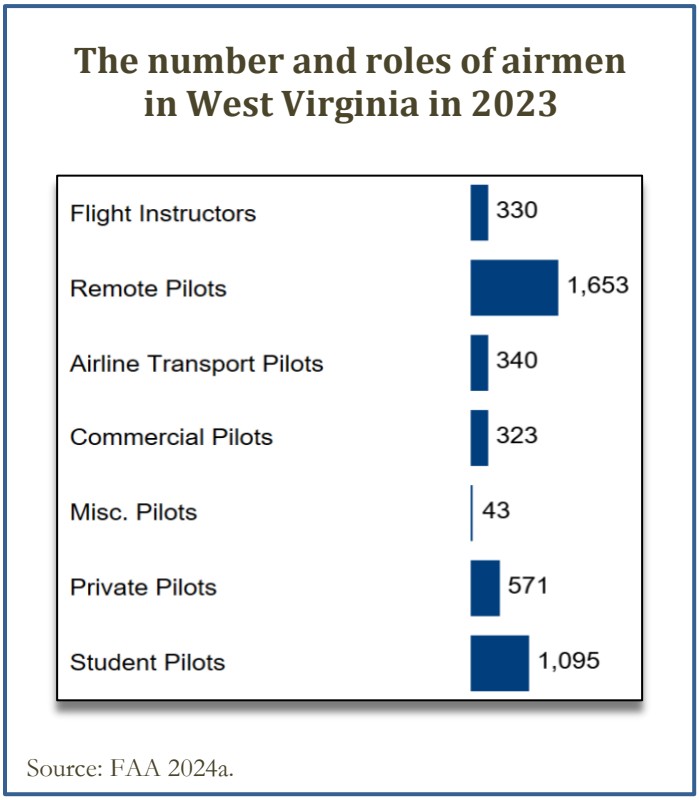
- Terminal Rent (Concessions & Leases).
  Airline leases provide compensation for the use of terminal gates, ticket counters, office space, and other facilities. These leases typically cover long-term agreements for specific spaces within the airport terminal or on the airfield. Cargo handling leases with airlines and freight operators provide rent for cargo handling facilities and warehouses.

- Aircraft Parking Fees. Airlines pay for the use of gates and parking positions at the terminal (also known as ramp fees or aircraft parking charges). These fees may be based on aircraft size, type, and duration of parking.

- Passenger Boarding Fees. Airlines may pay a fee for each passenger that boards a flight at their facility. This fee helps offset terminal operational costs, such as maintenance, security, and boarding services.

- Fuel Fees. Airlines and private pilots are charged for the fuel they purchase at the airport. The flowage fee is typically calculated per gallon of fuel, and it helps cover the cost of fueling infrastructure, such as fueling stations and storage tanks. Fuel farming, in which airports manage the supply and distribution of aviation fuel to aircraft, is a way for airports to increase revenues from fuel sales.

- Hanger rental. Corporate and private aircraft pay for storage in T- or box hangers located within the airport. Correspondingly, airports may provide maintenance services for hanger tenants.



Source: FAA 2024a.

- Cargo Operations. Airports that handle significant cargo traffic can generate revenue from freighters for using cargo facilities, cargo handling services, and specialized equipment. **Freight charges** and **air cargo leases** with freight carriers and logistics companies that store and handle goods moving through the airport, are another revenue generator.

- Education. Some airports have partnered with private flight and maintenance training programs as well as more formal degree programs offered by Marshall University and other institutions in the state. It is anticipated that those opportunities will increase as the demand state- and nationwide for pilots is far greater than the supply. That disparity is expected to get worse in the next decade.

- Drone and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) technologies. This includes development of services currently provided to traditional aircraft, including storage, maintenance, and flight and maintenance training, but applied to drones, helicopters, air taxis and other AAM vehicles. These technologies are

an attractive option for airports in West Virginia because they make the most of the state's topographical challenges and central location within the eastern half of the U.S. The is particularly true for commercial drone package delivery as it also fosters corporate (re)location into the state. This is a relative new avenue of expansion for airports; concerns about the interaction of drones with smaller private aircraft and necessary FAA approvals for AAM aircraft remain to be resolved.

**Non-aeronautical revenues** come from activities not directly related to aviation operations but still related to the airport's role as a commercial and logistical hub.

- Parking and Ground Transportation. Parking fees are one of the primary sources of income for most airports in West Virginia. Some airports provide short- and long-term parking lots or structures to passengers and visitors for a fee. Some airports also have premium parking options closer to terminals. Many airports in the State need investment dollars to expand, maintain or upgrade existing parking lots or build facilities.

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*https://www.tristateairport.com/jet-center/*

Related revenue opportunities include valet services, and ground transportation, such as taxis, shuttle buses, ridesharing (Uber, Lyft), and rental cars. In some cases, airports charge a fee to these service providers for the right to operate at the airport.

- Concessions and Retail Revenue. This includes a host of revenue options, including food and beverage sales (i.e., restaurants, cafes, bars, and convenience stores), wherein a percentage of sales is paid to the airport; retail shops, including everything from duty-free products to souvenirs, clothing, electronics, and books, which generate flat-rate rental or percentage of sales income; and advertising, including sale/rental of advertising space within terminals, on shuttles, on airport signs, and even on aircraft hangers or baggage carousels.

- Real Estate Leases and Development. This option may be limited by topography and land ownership for many airports in the state. For those with land to develop, commercial and industrial leases to corporate entities for aeronautical (such as the Mid-Atlantic Aerospace Complex consortium at Clarksburg) and other industry and non-aeronautical businesses, including hotels, business space, warehouses, etc., provide additional operating income.

- Utility Fees**.** Airports may provide utilities (i.e., water, power, and sewage treatment) to tenants for a fee. Some airports also offer telecommunications services, such as high-speed internet or private network services to airlines and other businesses.

## Non-Operating Revenues

**Government grants and state/local funding.** While federal funds like the AIP are a major source of revenue, airports may also receive *state or local government grants* or funding for specific projects. Some states offer additional programs for airport development or infrastructure improvements. Some states have dedicated aviation funds that are used to support airport operations or projects, often as a supplement to federal funding. West Virginia offers a small annual stipend to its airports, but also provides subsidies to passenger airlines at some of the commercial aviation airports. The doesn't appear to be an overarching criteria for subsidy eligibility or distribution.

Revenues may also be generated by one-time or infrequent events, such as facility rentals, conferences, exhibits, trainings, or unique public-private partnerships to finance or develop infrastructure projects such as terminal or parking expansions or upgrades, hotels or retail developments. Projects not eligible for federal grants may be funded by Airport Improvement Fees (separate from PFCs), in which a fee is added to ticket prices for a specific time and use.

Airports sometimes use *municipal bond financing* (particularly issuance of revenue bonds**)** to finance major capital projects (such as terminal expansions or runway improvements). The bonds are repaid from future revenue generated by the funded project or airport operations. *Tax-exempt bonds* are often used to reduce borrowing costs and increase investor interest for airport infrastructure projects, though they are subject to certain restrictions and approval processes.

**Other revenues.** Finally, airports may generate *interest or investment income* from interest on reserve funds or from investments in financial instruments, real estate holdings, or other assets.

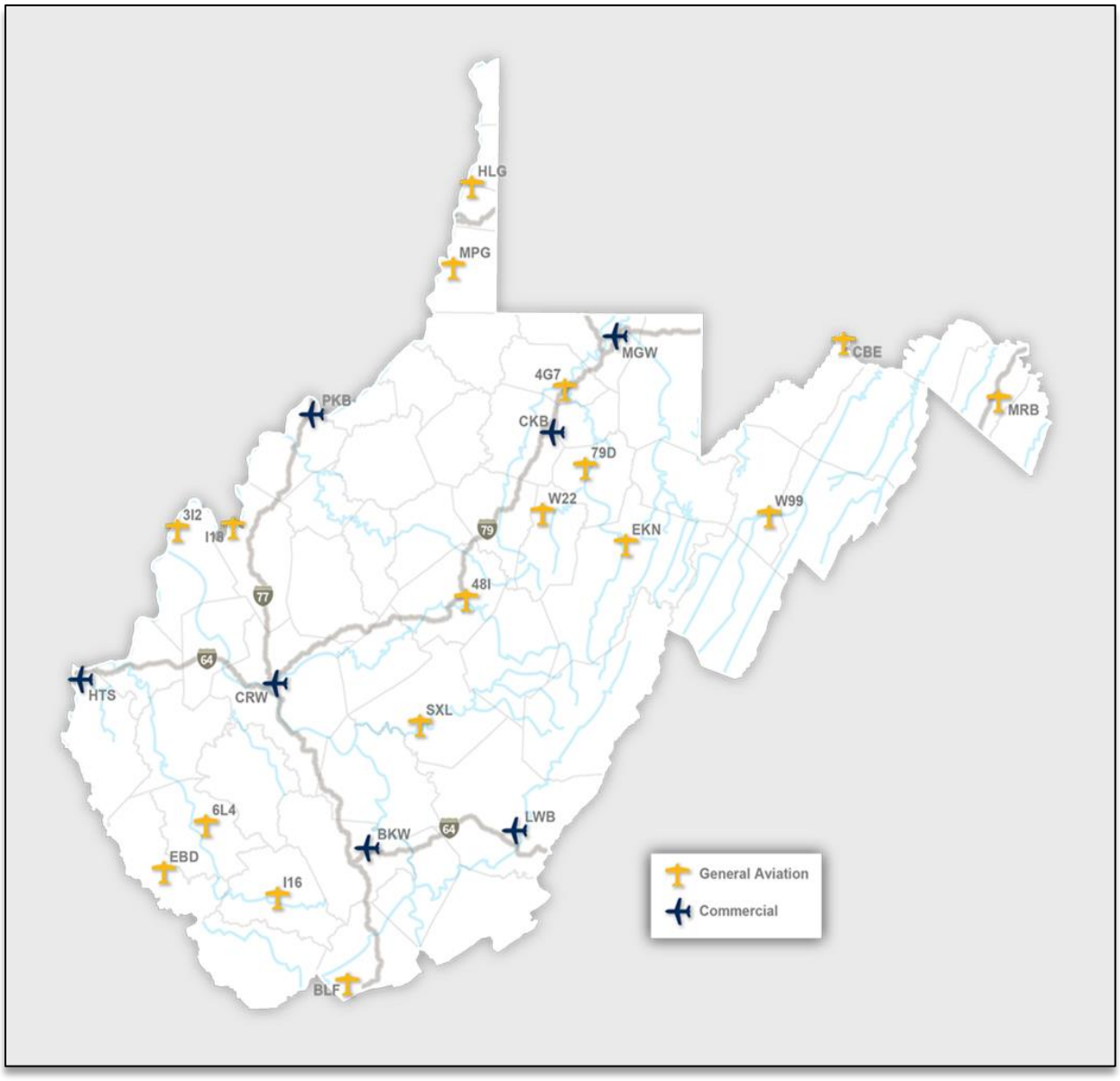
# AIRPORT PROFILES

A. Map of Commercial and General Aviation Airports in West Virginia
B. Overview
C. Commercial Airports
    North Central Airport (Clarksburg)
    Yaeger Airport (Charleston)
    Greenbriar Valley (Lewisburg)
    Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport (Parkersburg)
    Morgantown Municipal Airport
    Raleigh County Memorial Airport (Beckley)
    Tri-State Airport (Huntington)

D. General Aviation Airports (NPIAS)
    Braxton County Airport (Spencer)
    **Eastern WV Regional Airport (Romney)**
    **Elkins-Randolph County Airport**
    **Fairmont Municipal Airport**
    Grant County Airport (Petersburg)
    Jackson County Airport (Ravenswood)
    Logan County Airport (Logan)
    Marshall County Airport (Moundsville)
    **Martinsburg Regional Airport***
    Mason County Airport (Point Pleasant)
    **Mercer County Airport (Bluefield)**
    Southern WV Regional Airport (Williamson)
    Summersville Airport
    **Upshur County Regional Airport (Buckhannon)**
    **Wheeling-Ohio County Airport**
    **Wyoming County Airport/Kee Field (Pinewood)**

E. Inactive Facilities
    **Philippi-Barbour County Regional Airport**
    PW Johnson Memorial Airport (New Martinsville)
    Welch Municipal Airport

# Map of Commercial And General Aviation Airports In West Virginia



# Commercial Airports

West Virginia has seven commercial airports that cater to passenger air travel. They vary in facility and runway size and number of passenger enplanements. The three most active airports in the state also had the greatest number of enplanements in 2024:

- International Yeager Airport with 200,733
- Huntington Tri-State Airport with 101,042
- North Central Airport (Clarksburg) with 44,320.

Enplanements for the remaining five ranged from 7,000* at Mid-Ohio Regional Airport to 8,804 at Greenbrier Valley Airport.[32]

Five of the airports participate in the Essential Service Program (ESP), for which they receive substantial annual subsidies to ensure that residents in the surrounding counties have access to air travel. Those subsidies accounted for an influx of almost $19 million in the state in 2024 alone. Because of their size and capacity, the two largest airports – Yeager and Huntington Tri-State – do not participate in the program. The individual subsidies for 2024 were:

| COMMERCIAL SERVICE | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location** | **Airport Name** | **FAA ID** |
| Clarksburg | North Central West Virginia | CKB |
| Charleston | Yeager International Airport | CRW |
| Lewisburg | Greenbrier Valley | LWB |
| Parkersburg | Mid-Ohio Valley Regional | PKB |
| Morgantown | Morgantown Municipal - Walter L. Bill Hart Field | MGW |
| Beckley | Raleigh County Memorial | BKW |
| Huntington | Tri-State/Milton J. Ferguson Field | HTS |

- Greenbrier Valley Airport: $5.4 million
- Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport: $2.1 million
- Morgantown Municipal Airport: $3.3 million
- North Central West Virginia Airport: $5.5 million
- Raleigh County Regional Airport: $2.8 million

[32] Estimates were used for Mid-Ohio Regional Airport and Morgantown Municipal Airport. No data was available for Raleigh County Regional Airport in Beckley.

The commercial airports also provide general aviation services, often with Fixed Base Operators (FBOs) providing amenities and ground services for commercial, private and charter aircraft and personnel. Most also offer education and training; some offer formal flight and informal schools and others just in informal training, while others offer maintenance programs and/or airport management programs. Several of the airports also host military units and trainings.

All of the commercial airports make significant economic contributions to the state and the communities in which they are located, and have numerous opportunities to drive substantial economic growth. The greatest challenge they all face is funding; meeting the FAA's matching requirements for AIP grants has had them scraping every barrel they can find and often coming up short. In addition, airline subsidies appear to be discretionary rather than competitive or targeted. The airports all have great development opportunities; assistance with marketing and recruiting industry tenants within the US and abroad would also add considerably to their economic impact and support the aviation and aerospace industries.

# North Central Airport (CKB)

Located in Bridgeport, WV, North Central Regional Airport is one of two regional hubs within the state, and one of three airports with a FAA control tower. It is a public airport, operated by the Benedum Airport Authority, and serves Harrison, Marion, and Monongalia counties.

## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

One of the seven commercial service airports in West Virginia, North Central West Virginia Airport is ideally located in central West Virginia to offer passenger service via Allegiant and Contour Airlines to destinations in Florida and South Carolina, with connections to locations throughout the US. Parking and ground transportation are also located within the facility.

Passenger air travel demand after the pandemic has vacillated. The enthusiasm for travel in 2022 was terrific but unsustainable, falling 8% the following year. Enplanements rose in 2024, hopefully marking the beginning of a continuously upward trajectory.

**ENPLANEMENTS**
*Change 5% ↓*

**2024**: 44,320
**2023**: 42,736
**2022**: 46,508

**DESTINATIONS**

***Florida*** Orlando/ Sanford, Destin/Ft. Walton Beach, Petersburg /Clearwater, Tampa

***South Carolina*** Myrtle Beach

As with most other airports across the state, the North Central Airport's geriatric terminal was in desperate need of updating. That recently changed; funding from the FAA, the state, and county and city governments has made terminal renovation and parking expansion a reality. In 2023 the Airport received $2,053,888 from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act for terminal renovations to create a 50,000 square foot, state-of-the-art concourse.[33] The US Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the Airport $3.2 million for four new parking lots (600 new parking spaces) as well as overhead lighting and stormwater management improvements, matched by almost $800,000 in local funds. All this renovation is expected to create or retain 265 jobs and

[33] Charles Young 2024. Another dream come true:' North Central West Virginia Airport terminal building nearly complete. The Exponent Telegram, Nov 1. https://www.wvnews.com/theet/statejournal/another-dream-come-true-north-central-west-virginia-airport-terminal-building-nearly-complete/article_173d32d4-96c7-11ef-9216-1beeac8443a1.html.

[33] WV News. 2024 North Central West Virginia Airport expansion projects receive nearly $5 million in

general $8 million in private investment.[34] This comes on the heels of a $10 million grant from the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council in 2018,[35] and subsequently supplemented by another $10 million loan from the West Virginia Economic Development Administration in 2024. These essential makeovers will enable the Airport to offer more services to its passenger and commercial customers.


*As it nears completion, the airport's terminal construction project will cost close to $54 million. However, once it's completed the airport will be less than $5 million in debt. This will be thanks to a $10 million grant awarded by Gov. Jim Justice back when the project started. At the same time, the airport was able to raise $4.7 million locally from the city and county to do the project. - Esteban Fernandez, Times West Virginian, May 22, 2024.*

**The Mid-Atlantic Aerospace Complexn (MAAC)** markets and promotes the aviation and aerospace capabilities of the North Central West Virginia Airport, along with its component members to government, industrial clients and prospects throughout the world. The MAAC's aerospace industry members play a major role in the region's economic development and provide first-rate maintenance, overhaul, manufacturing and training services for the aerospace industry.

federal funding, Oct 1. https://www.wvnews.com/news/wvnews/north-central-west-virginia-airport-expansion-projects-receive-nearly-5-million-in-federal-funding/article_5857e6f8-804a-11ef-a2cb-e356bbc7478b.html.

[35] Charles Young. 2024. North Central West Virginia Airport officials prepared to sign off on $10M loan. WV News, Jun 24. https://www.wvnews.com/news/wvnews/north-central-west-virginia-airport-officials-prepared-to-sign-off-on-10m-loan/article_1e12054c-3224-11ef-8220-e353aee805bc.html.

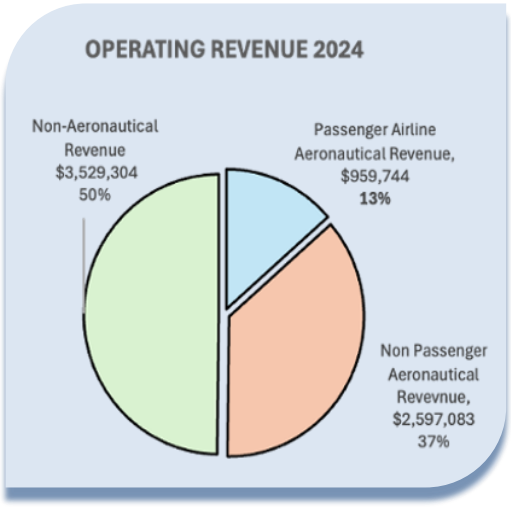
*MEMBERS OF MAAC*: Aurora, EASW, Fixed Wing Army National Guard, FMW Composite, HQ Aero, KCI Aviation, Lockheed Martin, MHIRJ, NASA WVSG, North Central WV Airport, Pratt & Whitney Engine Services, RCBI, RCB NAEC, & West Virginia University.

*North Central Airport sits on 665 acres and is home to the longest runway in the state, at 7,800 feet. The Airport employes 27 and services 39 based aircraft.*

**http://flyckb.com**

## FINANCIAL CONDITION

The Airport's sources of income are categorized operating and non-operating revenues. Operating revenues include *Passenger Aeronautical*, *Non-Passenger Aeronautical*, and Non-*Aeronautical Revenues*. According to reports filed with the FAA,[36] the Airport had total operating revenues of $7.1 million in 2024. Total aeronautical (combined passenger and non-passenger) revenue of $36 million accounted for half of the Airport's total operating income. Of passenger aeronautical income, passenger airline landing fees accounted for just 13% of revenues, but just 5% of total aeronautical revenues; other passenger aeronautical fees accounted for the vast majority of passenger income (73%), and terminal fees and rents made up the remaining 14%. Cargo and hanger rentals of $911,000 (35%) and fuel sales of $1.2 million (47%) generated about three-quarters of non-passenger aeronautical revenues. Non-aeronautical revenues contributed $3.5 million, with land and non-terminal leases of $3.2 million accounting for 91%, and parking, rental car and terminal-food and beverage income making up the remainder.

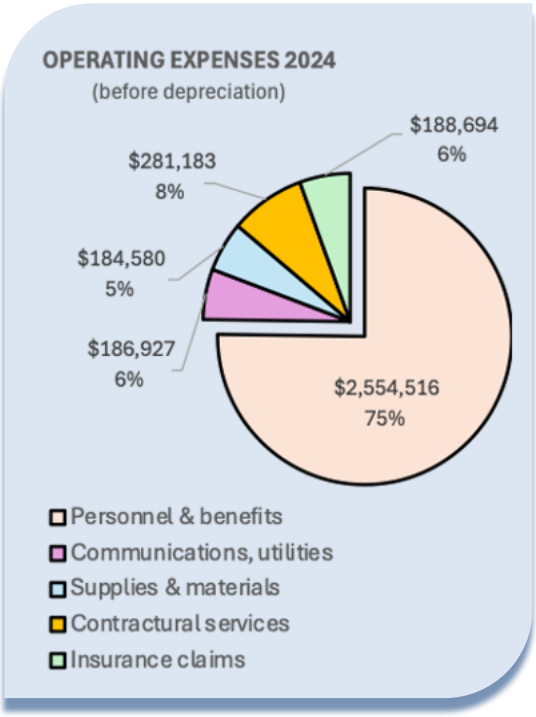



Operating income is used to cover the costs of running the facility, such as personnel costs, utilities, supplies, contractual services, insurance and insurance claims. Operating costs in 2024, before depreciation, totaled $3.7 million; adding in depreciation increased expenses to $5.4 million. As shown here, personnel costs comprised the lion's share (70%) of operating costs. Contractual services costs accounted for $596,657 or 16%.

With operating revenues of $7 million and actual operating expenses of $3.7 million, the Airport was profitable in 2024, with a surplus of approximately half a $3.3 million dollars.

[36] Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). 2024. *(CATS) Operating and Financial Summary Report 127. 5*https://cats.airports.faa.gov/Reports/rpt127.cfm.

After accounting for depreciation, the net operating income fell to $1.7 million, still clearly well in the black with enough money to meet maintenance needs or meet matching requirements for grants requests. This is also a sizable increase from 2023, where operating revenues totaled just $4 million and operating expenses before depreciation were $3.6 million. A slight increase in passenger aeronautical revenue and a substantial increase in non-aeronautical lease revenue accounted for the increased 2024 operating revenues.




Non-operating sources of revenue, including grants for capital projects of $22.5 million, capitol contributions of $7.6 million, and interest income and other federal awards, are applied to non-operating needs, primarily but not always building renovation projects. In 2024, the U.S. Economic Development Office awarded the Airport $3.2 million for construction of four parking lots. The combined contributions from the FAA, the Governor's Office, and county and municipal office (which provided the mandatory 10% FAA match) totaled $54 million for the new Airport terminal, leaving the Airport with only approximately $5 million in debt. The Airport also received a $5.5 million annual (2024) subsidy for essential air service.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Economic benefits are generated by direct and indirect activities, including passenger and other aeronautic activities, as well as non-aeronautic activities including operations and administration (i.e., employment and airport administration, education and training, and tenants) and the revenues generate from capital improvements. Economic impacts are also generated off-airport by out-of-state travel to the state, when air cargo transported via the state's airports supports the operation of off-airport businesses, and through collaboratives like MAAC in their support of aviation activities (i.e. tenant maintenance and education). The expansion of Mitsubishi's regional aerospace manufacturing and service operations, as well as recent moves by the airport to add new commercial flight destinations for travelers and the decision by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to add hangar space are a good example this. They will bring substantial economic benefits to the airport, the region, and the State.

These activities indirectly add to the airport's economic impact by creating jobs and providing goods and services (aka the "multiplier effect"). A 2021 AEIS study indicated that as of 2020, the airport supported approximately 1,325 jobs, contributing $119.6 million in

payroll, $222.5 million in value added, and generating $626.1 million in business revenues.[37] The $3.2 million investment in the parking structure alone is estimated to generate 265 jobs and $8 million in private investment alone. Combined with the terminal improvements, the additional total *annual* economic impact is projected to be approximately $585 million.

North Central Airport is located in one of the fastest growing regions in the state,[38] providing a setting for its continued expansion. The infrastructure improvements and business commitments, coupled with the lack of significant debt will allow the Airport to significantly and creatively increase its capacity for passenger, education and commercial activities. Combined with anticipated growth in the local aerospace industry and expansion of education and training demands, the projected $585 million in annual economic growth is just the start.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Airport is ideally positioned to add significant econmic growth to the state. It was able to meet operating obligations with related revenues, and even had a little left over to put toward maintenance or minor improvements. The addition of the terminal and expanded parking are likely to extend the Airport's growth trend.

### Strengths

- Potential for additonal passenger routes and enplanements, i.e. negotiation with American to add route to Chicago, O'Hare
- Waiting list for hangers
- aircraft maintenance education through Marshall
- MACC cooperative- partnerships with aviation manufacturers
- 95-acre property for development
- Strong fule sales

### Challenges

- Fuel tanks and hangers are long overdue for maintenance and updating
    - New tanks are needed and there is a customer waiting list for more hanger space
- Other airports that can offer airlines subsidies for new routes reduce the Airport's negotiating advantages.

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[37] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2020, p. 3-9. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Chapter-3_Findings_060721.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

[38] Brian Lego. 2022. North Central West Virginia Economic Outlook 2023-2027. Bureau of Business & Economic Research. West Virginia University. https://business.wvu.edu/files/d/71161f60-67f1-47f4-bf4e-1a6df92b1a9e/north-central-wv-economic-outlook-2023-2027.pdf.

- Buildouts to suit new tenants for the 95-acre property devleopment will require funds.
- Net profits from operations don't come close to satisfying the 10% match required for even one capitol project (hangers, runways, etc.), let alone all those needed.
- The state annual stipend, while nice, is not even enough to purchase a piece of equipemnt (mowers, etc.).

**Opportunities**

- Replace/add fuel tanks: Fuel sales income is the largest driver of operating income. Replacement of the antiquated existing tanks is essential to maintaing even the current sales, however additing additional tanks would enabble the Airport to increase sales and income.
- Level the subsidy playing field: Providing equitable subsidies to carriers across airports (DOT negotiating opportunity here as well) would give the Airport the support needed to successfully negotiate with Breeze and other carriers to add unique routes for passenger travel.
- Add hangers: There is a waiting-list demand for hanger space; new tenants could be signed as the each hanger goes up.
- Property development; Working with developeres to build out the 95-acre parcel to infrastracture-ready status would attract additional tenants, such as manufacturers and other aviation support.
- Embrace technology: Adding aviation capacity for drone/AAM flights, maintenance, and perhaps education/training would propel the Airport into entirely new areas of development.

The opportunities facing the Airport double as weaknesses simply because the Airport does not generate the operating income needed to cover actual or matching costs. State annual support of $12,500 - or the $30,000 provided in 2024 – is not enough to bring about even one of these ideas, let alone to fund one piece of needed equipment, paint a hanger or repair a fuel tank. Nor is it enough to qualify as the government portion of matching funds requirements

# West Virginia International Yaeger Airport (CRW)


**#AlmostHeaven**

Located in Charleston, the home of the state capital, West Virginia International Airport is owned and operated by the Central West Virginia Regional Airport Authority, which is overseen by a board comprised by representatives from Kanawha, Putnam, Lincoln, Boone and Nicholas Counties, and City of Charleston. The Airport is the largest airport in the state, and boasts one of the State's three FAA Control Towers. Unlike many of the other commercial airports, the Airport does not receive any subsidized funds for essential service.

## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

The Airport is the busiest airport in the state. More passengers travel through its doors and it offers more amenities than all other airports. The facility includes three concourses to accommodate the different airlines: Concourse A for United, Concourse B for Delta and Breeze, and Concourse C for American. The terminal includes amenities for traveling families –the CAMA Women & Children's Nursing Room, and the CAMC Children's Play Area- the Java Moon Café, and The Junction Charleston & Gift Shop. Nearby parking and rental car options are available as well. The Airport also has a full-service fixed-base operator (FBO) for general aviation (GA) users and supports cargo carriers including UPS.

**ENPLANEMENTS**
*Change 22% ↑*

**2024**: 200,733
**2023**: 194,896
**2022**: 164,249

**DESTINATIONS**
*Atlanta GA, Charleston SC, Charlotte NC, Chicago IL, Orlando FL, NY/Newark (EWR), Washington DC (DCA)*

The Airport is considered one of West Virginia's home bases for military flight training operations. It hosts the Woody Williams Military Operations Center that provides a variety of amenities, including a flight planning room and a 12,000-square-foot heated hangar with direct access to the ramp. The airport also hosts the McLaughlin Air National Guard Base, 130th Airlift Wing, which operates eight C-130J-30 Super Hercules aircraft from McLaughlin Air National Guard Base located at the airport.

To accommodate multiple aviation degree programs, including Cessna and helicopter fixed wing and rotor wing pilot training, the facility is home to the FAA-certified Part 141 flight school offered through the Bill Noe Flight School at Marshall University.[39] It is anticipated that by the end of the decade there will be demand for an additional 10,000 pilots, giving the Airport's educational offering room to grow.

[39] CRW. 2025. Passenger Amenities. https://flycrw.com/passenger-amenities/.

The Capital Jet Center, situated at the southeastern end of the Airport, provides 24/7 service for private and corporate aircraft. The facility includes a flight planning and weather briefing room, a pilot's lounge with panoramic ramp views. The Center provides comprehensive police and fire protection and manages weather challenges, such as snow removal to ensure safety.[40] The Capital Jet Center also provides charter aircraft services & charter coordination; it facilitates all ground handling requests and makes necessary arrangements with other airport departments and businesses for inbound flights. Other aircraft services include re-fueling, quick turn, towing, hangaring, tie downs, de-icing, cargo handling, courtesy vans and crew cars, dual overwing hose downs, and maintenance.

In addition to facilities and amenities, the Airport also provides community aviation events, such as the Wings For All® program to be held at the start of 2025. Wings for All® is a unique airport rehearsal program designed specifically for individuals with autism or other intellectual and developmental disabilities. This incredible event gives families the opportunity to practice every step of the air travel process in a safe and supportive environment.


**Airport & Airfield improvements**

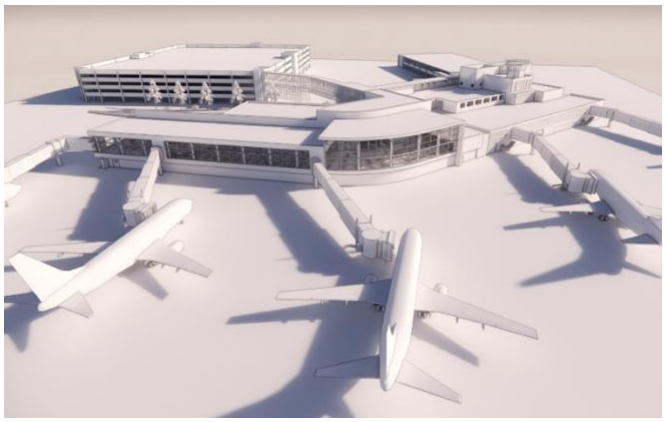
The Airport is in the process of a significant, 3-year improvement initiative that will upgrade and expand the terminal and supplement amenities for passengers and airlines, make improvements to the airfield and install runway connections. In 2023 and 2024, it received almost $10 million for the project from federal sources: $8 million and a subsequent

$1 million from the Infrastructure Investment Act for the terminal, and $964,648 from the US Department of Transportation for the airfield. In addition, the Airport was awarded

[40] https://flycrw.com/capital-jet-center-at-crw/

$134,940 for construction of a 1,200-foot retaining wall to stabilize the apron embankment.[41]

*The CRW Next Terminal Project* will significantly improve operational efficiency and comfort with ADA-compliant facilities, a streamlined security checkpoint, and additional passenger amenities. Two outdated concourses will be replaced with one new, state-of-the-art concourse, and renovating key areas of the original terminal. In February 2023, the Airport received $1 million through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Program's Airport Terminal Program, for terminal upgrades, including improvements to ADA compliance and the installation of a new roof.



The new concourse will include:

- 60,000+ sq ft. of new floor space
- New central passenger screening area
- New meter/greeter space
- Modifications to circulation areas & vertical circulation
  Improvements to the terminal lobby
- Improved restaurant and concession space
- New, central post-security restroom & family restrooms
- New passenger hold rooms[42]

***Airfield improvements***

Significant changes to the airfield – the apron, runways and runway connectors- and airfield infrastructure are also part of the Airport's major overhaul. Funding for this portion of the project include the U.S. Department of Transportation grant, used for the purchase of equipment to maintain safe runway operations.[43] The new equipment includes a snow broom to keep the airport serviceable during snow periods, a power sweeper to remove debris from the runway surface, and friction measuring equipment to maintain runway safety.

When complete, the newly expanded airfield will include

- Five aircraft gates supporting Aircraft Design Group (ADG) III aircraft

[41] Regional MOV Airport. 2024. MOV Airport Receives $69K in Federal Funding as Part of $7M WV Airport Improvements Announced by Senator Manchin. News & Events, Aug 6. https://flymovra.com/federal-funding-movra/.

[42] https://flycrw.com/capital-jet-center-at-crw/.

[43] Caroline MacGreggor. 2023. Three West Virginia Airports Receive Federal Funding For Operations. WB Public Broadcasting, Mar 9. https://wvpublic.org/three-west-virginia-airports-receive-federal-funding-for-operations/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

- 30,000 square feet of new apron pavement
- 1,400-foot portion of Taxiway A, located between Taxiway A1 and A2, would be shifted to the east by approximately 120 feet to accommodate FAA separation standards for a parallel taxiway
- New connector Taxiway A2 would be constructed between Taxiway A & Runway 5-23.

***Construction & cost***

It is expected to take three years to demolish the existing structures and complete construction of the terminal and airfield infrastructure and amenities. Project plans, an environmental impact study and concourse lobby renovation and additional baggage belt are complete. The remaining construction will move forward in phase with anticipated funding.

- Construction Phase 1 – Concourse C would be demolished, followed by the concourse reconstruction. During this phase, all commercial aircraft operations would be transferred to Concourses A & B.
- Construction Phase 2 – Concourse A would be demolished, and commercial aircraft operations would move to the new gates.
- Airfield improvements would be ongoing and phased throughout construction to limit operational impacts.
- Renovations to the B Gates and Lobby would complete the terminal project and can be phased over time.

The price tag for this transformation is estimated at $60-$77 million. The majority of the project funding will come from federal grants, including the FAA's Airport Terminal Program (ATP) and the Airport Improvement Grant (AIG), both key FAA-funded awards, however, the Airport has also applied for $20 million in Congressional directed spending in the FY 25 federal budget for the terminal portion and will repeat the request for in 2026. The Airport also qualifies for funding from the Department of Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Rural Projects Program and will apply for that and also explore other funding and physical alternatives for various construction portions.

*employes 100+ and services 66 based aircraft: single- and multi-engine planes, jets, helicopters, and military aircraft, including the C-130J-30 Super Hercules aircraft.*

**http://flyckb.com**

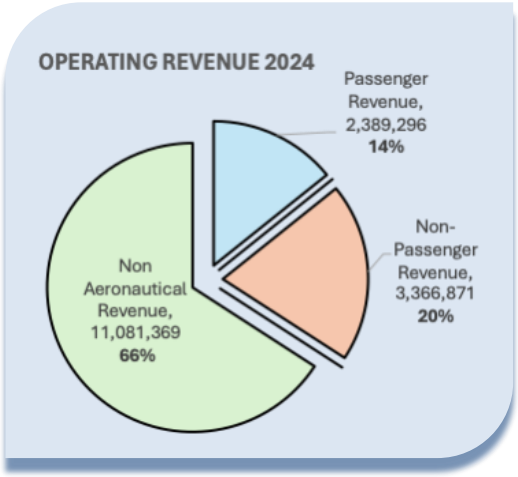
## FINANCIAL CONDITION

Yeager Airport's budgeting process implements fund designations to provide a detailed view of the activities that contribute to anticipated aeronautical and non-aeronautical operating revenue.

- The *Airport Fund* revenue is generated by tenant rent, airline landing fees, and concession fees paid by the rental car agencies and restaurant.
- The *Parking Fund* generates revenue through parking fees, monthly passes, and parking violations.
- The *Marketing Fund* earns its revenue through rented advertising space located throughout the Airport.
- The *Capital Jet Center* generates revenue through fuel sales, landing fees, service fees, office rental, glycol sales, and fueling agreements with the airlines.

These allocations are helpful for understanding how the Airport generates revenue. The end result -did they meet the fund projections?- as shown in statements filed with the FAA, categorize revenues into operating and non-operating silos. Operating revenues include *Passenger Aeronautical*, *Non-Passenger Aeronautical*, and Non-*Aeronautical Revenues*.

According to reports filed with the FAA in 2024,[44] operating revenues totaled $11 million, an 11% improvement over the $9.8 million generated in 2023. Passenger aeronautical revenues were $2.4 million, over half of which ($1.3 million) were derived from terminal arrival fees, rents, and utilities. Airline landing fees of $717,138, apron charges and tiedowns of $180,000 and other passenger-related fees of $170,414 made up the remaining $1.1 million.

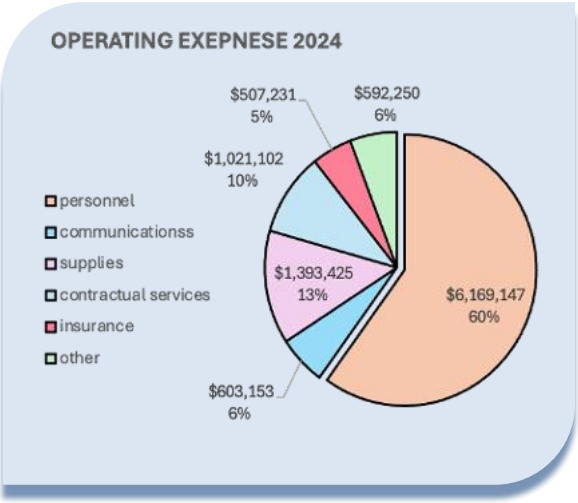



Non-passenger aeronautical revenue of $3.4 million included $1.9 million from fuel sales, $380,723 in cargo and hanger fees, $299,251 in FBO revenue, $144,360 from military and GA landing fees, and $613,762 in other non-passenger income. The combination of passenger and non-passenger aeronautical income totaled $5.7 million, approximately half of the Airport's operating income.

Non-aeronautical income totaled $5.5 million. The largest sources of income were car (non-facility) rental income of $1.3 million, parking and ground transportation of $2.9 million, and land leases ($671,422). Terminal services such as food and beverage ($264,619), other services ($113,780) and other income ($68,777), totaling $437,176 made up the remaining revenue.

[44] Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). 2024. *(CATS) Operating and Financial Summary Report 127. 5*https://cats.airports.faa.gov/Reports/rpt127.cfm.

Operating expenses for 2024 included personnel costs of $6.2 million, $1.3 million in supplies, $1.0 million to contractual services, $603,153 for communications, $507,231 for insurance, and $592,250 for other expenses, for a total of $10.3 million before depreciation. That left the Airport with a 7% net operating profit for the year. That is not much of an operating margin, however, it is a significant improvement over the previous year.




After depreciation, the Airport was not profitable, but the net operating loss in 2024 was -$6.5 million, down from -$7.3 million in 2003.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Direct economic benefits are generated by airport activities, including passenger and cargo fees and services, corporate/private and military aircraft housing, support, and maintenance, and fuel sales. Other non-aeronautic activities, including parking and rental car, terminal operations, education, and capital improvements also contribute directly to the local and state economies, and generate jobs and related revenue to support those activities and personnel. Indirect economic impacts are also generated off-airport by out-of-state travel to the state, when air cargo transported via the state's airports supports the operation of off-airport businesses, and through collaboratives like that with the military in their support of aviation activities.

According to the 2021 West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study, the Airport was already a significant contributor to the State's economy, supporting almost 3,000 jobs generating over $100 million in payroll, $147 million in added value, and $225 million in business revenue, annually.[45] In 2020 multiplier effects accounted for almost $150 million in value added revenue to the state.

Upgrades and additions of this magnitude *The CRW Next Terminal Project* typically yield substantial economic benefits, including job creation during the construction phase, increased passenger traffic, enhanced operational efficiency, and the attraction of new airlines or routes. Once complete, they often lead to increased tourism, business travel, and cargo operations, further stimulating the local and regional economy.

[45] AEIS 2020. West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study, p. 3-9. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Chapter-3_Findings_060721.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

## THE AIRPORT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP)[1] is a national initiative sponsored by the FAA and managed by the Transportation Research Board (TRB). It focuses on developing practical solutions to challenges faced by airport operators across the United States.

While not an active member, Yeager Airport's projects contribute to the broader goals of improving airport operations and sustainability. The Airport has engaged in various research and development projects that align with the ACRP programs. Of note is it's hydrogen production and dispensing facility, which was designed as a platform for research, development, testing, and evaluation of hydrogen innovations.[2]

Additionally, Yeager Airport has received federal grants for environmental impact studies and infrastructure improvements. For instance, the Airport Authority secured a $5.6 million grant from the FAA to conduct an Environmental Impact Study for proposed runway safety enhancements.

The Airport's initiatives align with the objectives of the ACRP by addressing environmental concerns and advancing airport infrastructure.

1. https://www.trb.org/ACRP/ACRP.aspx?utm_source=chatgpt.com
2. https://www.energy.gov/fecm/articles/hydrogen-production-and-dispensing-facility-opens-w-vaairport?utm_source=chatgpt.com

For context, a previous environmental impact study related to a runway safety project at the Airport projected a potential economic impact of $300 million and the creation of hundreds of jobs. While this figure pertains to a different project, it underscores the significant economic potential associated with major airport infrastructure enhancements. *The CRW Next Terminal Project* will also add potential for additional or expanded engagements with the McLaughlin Air National Guard Base, 130th Airlift Wing, and the Air Force, or the continued expansion of the Part 141 flight school at the facility. Being located near the State Capital adds other advantages, such as the ability to attract new routes and spur passenger travel and tourism , and expansion of the Capital Jet Center to accommodate more based aircraft of various sizes.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

West Virginia Internatonal Yeager Airport is ideally located in the State Capital. It is already the dominant facility in the state; construction and completion of the new, larger terminal and expanded airfield will add significant econmic growth to the Airport and the State through additional jobs and aeronautic and non-aeronautic opportunties. Currently the Airport's aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenues (before depreciation) just covered operating costs, but without reserves for maintenance or improvements.

**Strengths**

- Location, location, location
- Variety of *subsizied* routes support a variety of passenger destinations
- The Capital Jet Center
- McLaughlin Air National Guard Base, 130th Airlift Wing
- The Part 141 flight school
- Strong fuel sales
- Parking & rental car facilites
- Terminal amenities, i.e., Java Moon Café and Gift Shop
- Hangers, amenities and support services for based aircraft and crew
- Community engagaement events, such as Wings For All

**Challenges**

- Funding
    - Any deduction in the WV Deportment of Transportation's current airline subsidy structure could negatively impact the number of flights and destinations currently offered
        - State efforts toward subsidy parity across the State's commercial airports would also cut into the Airport's stability.
    - The current annual stipends provided by the State, whether the traditional $12,500 or a match of 2024's $30,000 is not enough to pay for annual maintenance or provide a 10% match grant match
    - Financing needed for the hotel project
    - The net profit margin (before depreciation) of is insufficient for sustainable operations.
- Maintaining facilities and aircraft/crew/personnel support and increasing enplanements (if trends continue) in the midst of such an extensive construction project could produce challenging and possibly unforseen situations.

**Opportunities**

- Airport hotel: there is an interested developer, however, financing has been elusive
- Completion of *The CRW Next Terminal Project* will open new opportunites in the terminals for passenger and flight crew amenities, new equpiment and storage, etc.
- Expansion of strong flight school additional parking and students.
- Possible additional destination to Morgantown/Pittsburgh?

# Greenbrier Valley Airport (LWB)

Greenbrier Valley Airport (LWB) is located in Lewisburg, in Greenbrier County, West Virginia. The Airport Is managed by the Greenbrier County Airport Authority and serves the Greenbrier Valley in West Virginia, the Allegheny Highlands of Virginia and surrounding areas via Contour American Airlines. It is the closest major airport to The Greenbrier, The Homestead, and Snowshoe Mountain Resorts.

## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

With just one commercial carrier and a sole destination (with connections to nationwide locations), Greenbrier Valley Airport is a mid-range airport within the State's aviation system. Commercial air service via Contour Airlines is subsidized by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Essential Air Service Program, which was created to ensure that certified airlines maintain a minimum level of scheduled commercial service to communities that could otherwise not support air transportation. In 2024 that EAS support totaled $5.4 million.

**ENPLANEMENTS**

*Change 14% ↓*

| | |
|---|---|
| **2024**: | 8,804 |
| **2023**: | 8,323 |
| **2022**: | 10,048 |

**DESTINATIONS**

*Charlotte, North Carolina*

The Airport's newly renovated terminal boasts amenities offered at larger airports, such as free parking and WI-FI, ATM and vending machines, and a Mexican restaurant in the south lobby. In addition its General Aviation FBO provides 24/7 services and ground support equipment for the largest commercial jet to the smallest single engine aircraft, with comprehensive apron support for charter services. In 2024, the Airport was awarded $6.5 million via the Infrastructure Investment Act to restore the facility's 7,003 foot runway to ensure structural integrity and reduce debris.

The Airport partners with the Greenbrier Valley Economic Development Corporation to develop adjacent properties within the facility. The West Side Office Park, a ten-acre site, is currently available for development as a light professional office suite. The East Side Air Park, an 80 acres parcel, has been fully equipped with utilities and fiber optics and is ready for development for aeronautical and non-aeronautical use. In addition, another site, with capacity for construction of a 20,000+ square foot hanger, is also available.

The Airport is also home to the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). The CAP is a congressionally chartered, federally supported non-profit corporation that serves as the official volunteer civilian auxiliary of the United States Air

Force (USAF). In addition, Jet America, a pilot-owned charter company, offers private jet charter services, aircraft sales and management.

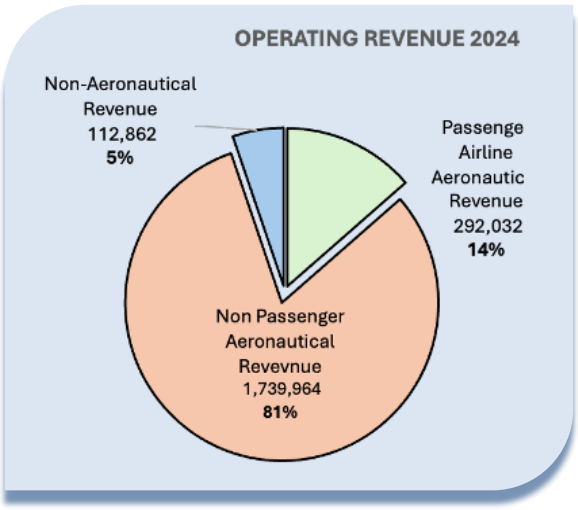
As the newest satellite location of Marshall University's Bill Noe Flight School, the Airport provides educational training and degree programs. Starting in 2025, individuals interested in obtaining pilot's licenses or honing their skills can train at any time; the degree program is more structured, with the first classes beginning in the fall.

*Greenbrier Valley Airport sits on 472 acres, with a 7,003 ft. runway. It employes 27 and services 18 based aircraft.*
**https://mylwb.com**

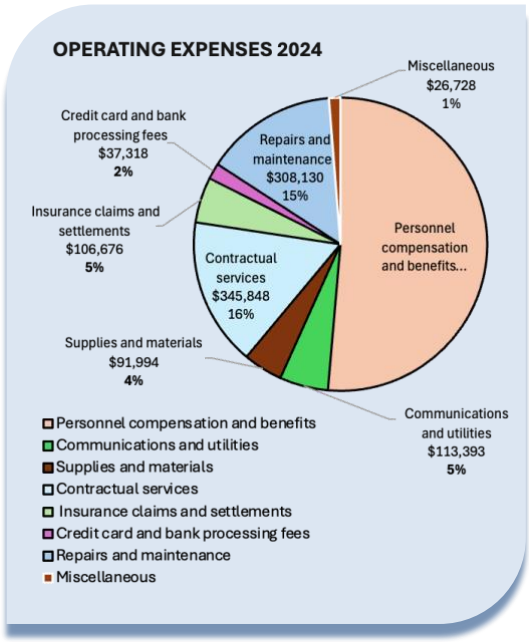
## FINANCIAL CONDITION

The Airport's revenue falls is categorized by operating revenue and non-operating revenue, such as interest income, federal and other grants, miscellaneous charges, and state and local allocations. In addition, as noted above, the Airport receives an annual revenue from the Essential Air Service Program; in 2024, that subsidy totaled $5.4 million. Similarly, expenditures are allocated as either operating or non-operating expenses.

Operating revenues are allocated to three categories: *Passenger Aeronautical*, *Non-Passenger Aeronautical*, and Non-*Aeronautical Revenues*. According to reports filed with the FAA,[46] Greenbrier Airport had total operating revenues of $2.14 million and operating expenses of $2.12 million in 2024 for a narrow net profit of just $26,694. That is an improvement over the prior year's loss of $600,865 ($1.28 million in revenue vs. $2 million in expenses). After accounting for depreciation, that loss deepens to $3.5 million in 2023, but improves to a loss of $2.9 million in 2024. This indicates growth from 2023 to 2024; however net operating profit margins will have to continue to increase in future to ensure sustainability.




Passenger aeronautical revenues were minimal in 2024, totaling just $292,032. However, with fuel sales of $1,2 million, non-passenger aeronautical revenue accounted for the vast majority of the Airport's income. Adding in non-aeronautical revenue of $112,862 brings the total 2024 operating revenues to $2.1 million. Grant revenues of $12 million accounted for almost all of the Airport's non-operating revenue ($12.3 million). That corresponded with the $13 million spent on airfield construction of ten new T-hangars, a meeting room and bathroom facilities, and water and sewer lines.




## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Greenbrier Airport provides air service to the some of the area's most popular tourist areas: the West Virginia's Snowshoe Mountain Ski Resort and the Greenbrier luxury resort, in the Allegheny Mountains, and the Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Spring, Virginia. According to the 2021 West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study (based on 2019 data),[47] Greenbrier Valley Airport supported approximately 365 jobs, generated

[46] Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. (FAA). 2024. *(CATS) Operating and Financial Summary Report 127. 5*https://cats.airports.faa.gov/Reports/rpt127.cfm.

[47] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Summary. 2020. Greenbrier Valley Airport. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/LWB-FINAL.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

about $15.26 million in payroll, added around $26.65 million in value, and produced approximately $50.51 million in business revenues annually. At that point, enplanements totaled 12,858, up almost 20% from 10,359 in 2018.[48] In 2022, as most businesses, airports and economies began to recover from the COVID pandemic, the Airport's enplanements rose to approximately 2018 numbers. In 2023 and 2024, enplanements dropped substantially, to 8,323 and 8,804, respectively. The Airport's economic impact likely followed suit.

In October 2024, however, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration awarded the airport $2.8 million in federal funding for infrastructure improvements and expansion. The project includes construction of ten new T-hangars, a meeting room and bathroom facilities, and installation of water and sewer lines.[49] These improvements should increase interest in in the two properties available for development and occupation, and given the Airport's waiting list, the additional T-hangers should fill as quickly as construction is complete. This is expected to attract more aviation enthusiasts and businesses to the area, fostering job creation and additional economic development, all increasing the Airport's economic footprint.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

### Strengths

One of Greenbrier Valley Airport's greatest strengths is its location. Nestled near three popular resorts, the Airport has a relatively-built in clientele for commercial and corporate/private plan traffic.

Other advantages include:

- A new hanger site is available for construction of 20,000 square feet of hanger space, which would provide facilities and related support for corporate and private aircraft. The Airport's waiting list will ensure that new hangers will be filled as built.
- Two parcels available for development will accommodate new tenants. These would be prime locations for aircraft maintenance and other aviation related activities. This would generate additional income in several ways.
- Addition of the flight school in a part of the state where the option is not currently available. The degree program will attract students to fill existing and growing demand. On demand training for individuals will encourage more private aircraft sales and storage, which will increase hanger demand and encourage other types of support, such as aircraft maintenance (which, in turn, could encourage another degree and/or on-demand training.

[48] Ibid.

[49] WV Daily News. 2024. Greenbrier Valley Airport (LWV) Awarded $2.8 million from the US EDA, Oct 9. https://wvdn.com/147016/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

**Challenges**

- In need of new equipment: a tractor, trucks, fire department equipment.
- Need 50 T-hangers. “Hanger homes” are becoming popular. There are 25 names on the waiting list now, with more demand likely. There are 12 existing, old hangers in need of refurbishment.
- A dedicated classroom is needed to accommodate the flight school.
- The biggest challenge is funding. The Airport has a variety of opportunities to grow and increase their economic footprint, but need investment dollars.
- Advertising sales could increase significantly but require funds to renovate hangers and create backlit terminal spaces to provide ad space.

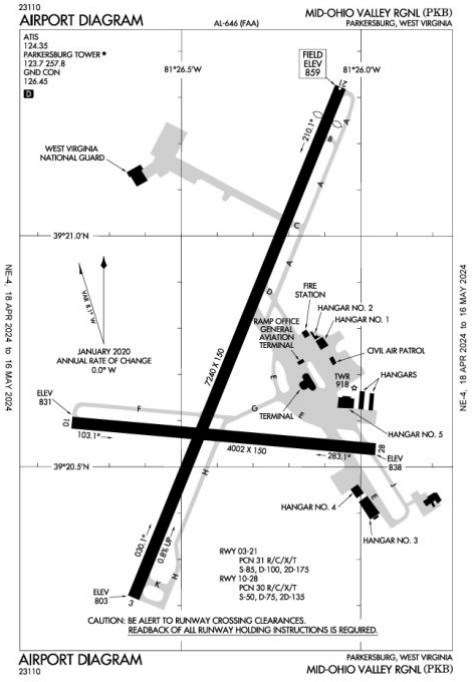
**Opportunities**

- Three larger airlines have expressed interest in adding flights/destinations; however, the runway would need to be lengthened to accommodate some of them.
- The Airport could easily fill 50 new T-hangers. In addition, they have customers interested in three large commercial hangers; those alone could add $75,000-$100,000 in annual revenue, plus additional income from fuel sales and maintenance. The recent funding for 10 hangers is a drop in the bucket.
- Development of the two available parcels would accommodate new tenants, pand erhaps foster an expansion of the Marshall Flight School to accommodate more students or additional degrees and training or both.
- Fuel sales is an income generator. Refurbished and additional tanks would enable more sales.
- There is capacity to expand cargo air traffic.
- Collaborative investments by the WV Departments of Tourism, Commerce, Transportation, and Economic Devleopment could exponentially drive economic growth that would benefit the investors (Departments), communities, and State coffers. Further, that type of investment would benefit from dollars spent by residents and tourists from neighboring states.


# Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport (PKB)

Located in Parkersburg-Williamstown, in Wood County, West Virginia, the Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport (MOVRA), also known as Gill Robb Wilson Field. The Airport serves the Mid-Ohio Valley area, which includes the Ohio cities of Marietta and Belpre, and is owned and managed by the Wood County Regional Airport Authority. Passenger service is provided by Contour Airlines to destinations throughout the country via Charlotte, North Carolina. The airport offers both commercial and general aviation, and engages the surrounding communities directly by hosting fly-ins and interacting with the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Young Eagles.

The Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport is classified as a nonprimary by the FAA; in essence that means that as a regional airport it is eligible for funding through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program (AIP). As an a participant in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Essential Air Service Program (EAS), the Airport received $2.1 in subsidies for the 2024 to ensure air transport in the region.




## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

The Airport's facilities consist of the terminal, including an airport cafe, *Jay's Fly Away Kitchen*, the apron and runways, of course, and on-site parking, with shuttles, taxis and rental car offices nearby. The site includes *two* runways, one of which is a crosswind runway that supports all types of instrument approaches. This runway and the training space available within the terminal supports all levels of licensing and training, making it especially advantageous for the pilots that use the Airport.[50]

Enplanements in 2024 were estimated to be slightly less than those in 2023, however, still greater than in 2022, fostering discussions of ways to increase passenger traffic. Explorations include "potentially partnering with Contour Airlines…to create different deals to entice customers to fly through the local airport instead of Charleston or larger cities in Ohio."[51]

[50] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2020. PKB Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/pkb-FINAL.pdf.

[51] Gwen Sour. 2024. Airport Authority discusses enplanements, FAA inspection. The Parkersburg News & Sentinel. Aug 14. https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/local-news/2024/08/airport-authority-discusses-enplanements-faa-inspection/.

The Army National Guard, which employs over 200 full- and part-time members, also maintains a facility at the Airport. Having completed its move into a new building, the Airport plans to convert the Guard's former facility into classrooms and training rooms for a formal flight school.

> "Military aircraft from Charleston have flown up for training flights out of the airport, giving extra traffic to the airport. These flights work on syllabus maneuvers with the North American T-6 Texan aircraft including formations, according to…the airport manager."[52]

**ENPLANEMENTS**

*Change 39%* ↑

**2024**: 7,000*
**2023**: 7,178
**2022**: 5,032

**DESTINATIONS**

*Charlotte, North Carolina*

*Estimate by Airport Authority discusses enplanements, FAA Inspection *Parkersburg News & Sentinel*, Aug 14 2024.

The Airport also hosts a robust general aviation business. The Fixed Base Operator (FBO), *MOV Aviation*, provides professional services for pilots and aircraft. The FBO handles parking, fueling, baggage/cargo loading and unloading, and towing services. Amenities include courtesy cars, pilots' lounge, maintenance, fueling, and flight instruction.

The Airport has also been exploring ways to increase its general aviation business, looking particularly for companies that specialize in aircraft maintenance, repairs and overhaul, or "MRO." The first step in that direction came with the renovation of the 11,000 square foot Hanger 4 for River Town Aviation LLC; the ribbon cutting for that new facility took place in fall 2024.

MROs – especially those domiciled outside the U.S.- are looking for locations in the U.S to expand their businesses. The Airport has the capacity for that type growth, and their

[52] Ibid.

proximity to Ohio and central US makes them an ideal candidate. Some MROs are looking for sites where they can paint wide body planes that fly overseas, like Airbus 320s and Airbus 350s, or overhaul engines. The Airport's unique runway structure can accommodate those wide-body planes, again, making the Airport a prime destination to those support businesses. Hanger 4 is a great example of what the Airport can do to develop these business opportunities.

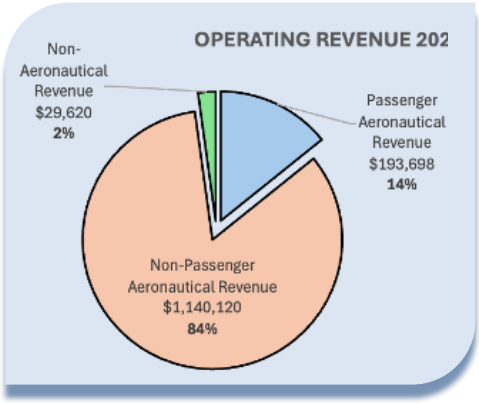
Current efforts have focused on companies that manufacture seats, install WI-FI and video systems, and paint airplanes; however the Airport must also identify ways to create more site-ready, usable land and amenities. To help, in late 2024, it was awarded $69,159 in AIP funds for critical infrastructure projects. That funding is being used to restore 13,860 feet of the existing 81,900 foot non-revenue generating parking lot.

*The airport spans 1,103 acres, at an elevation of 859 feet. Two runways measure 7,240 and 2,207 feet, respectively. It has 62 based aircraft.*

**https://flymovra.com**

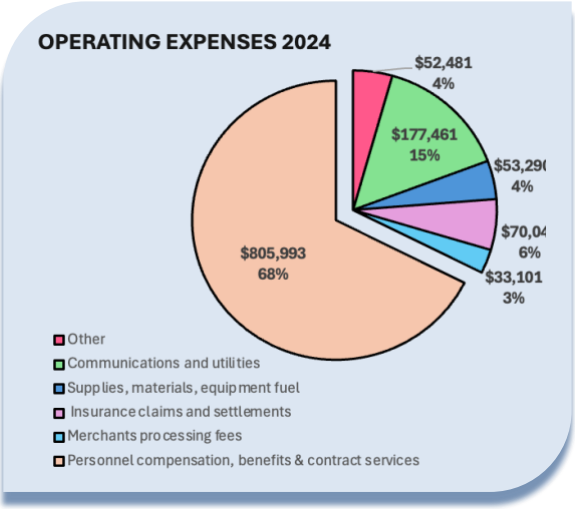
## FINANCIAL CONDITION

Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport's sources of income include operating revenue, and non-operating revenues. In addition, as noted above, the annual EAS subsidy for 2024 was $2.1 million.




The Airport had total operating revenue in 2024 of $1.4 million, which was relatively unchanged from the prior year. Passenger airline aeronautical revenue of $193,698 was a 21% increase over 2023 revenues ($152,927). Nominal income from terminal arrival fees of $182,644 account for 99% of this revenue.

Non-passenger aeronautical revenue for 2024 totals $1.14 million, a 4% decline from 2023's total of $1.18 million. The primary source of income in that category is fuel sales of almost $1 million ($912,195). Other sources include cargo & hanger rentals of $93,986 and minor contributions from military and GA landing fees, security reimbursements and other non-passenger fees. Non-aeronautical revenues from land and non-terminal facility leases rose 4% over 2023 income, but that only accounts for 2% of the total operating revenue in 2024.




Correspondingly, operating expenses before depreciation were 19% higher in 2024 than in 2023 ($1.2 million vs. $0.95 million, respectively). The most significant increase was in personnel costs, with minor increases in the remaining categories. Net income from operations was approximately $171,000; however after depreciation, the Airport was left with a loss of $1.5 million, which was 21% higher than the $1.2 million loss in 2023.

In non-operating revenue, capitol contributions increased five-fold, from $63 thousand in 2023 to $308 thousand in 2024, fueled in part by the $69,159 AIP grant. There was a 14% increase in passenger facility charges income but the total was inconsequential in both years. Of note is that the net assets declined over a million dollars in 2024 and 2023 each.

Overall the Airport can cover operating costs, however that is not sustainable after considering the cost of wear and tear on equipment. Increases in revenues and/or additional sources of income are essential to the fiscal health of the facility. Fortunately, the Airport is actively pursuing both. The 2024 infrastructure grant should help with that.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport contributes to the local and state economy in various ways:

*Employment and tax revenue:* The facility supports numerous jobs and generates substantial business revenue. According to the 2021 WV AEIS Technical Report, the Airport supports approximately 1,000 jobs, generates an annual payroll of around $30 million and contributes about $100 million in business revenues to the state's economy.[53] In addition the Airport's operations contribute to state and local tax revenues through on-airport activities and visitor spending.

*Capital improvements fuel economic development*. The AIP award ($69,159) provided funding for parking lot restorations and airport infrastructure to enhance user experiences -both would make the Airport more attractive GAs and related industrial businesses. To that end, the Airport formed an economic development

[53] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Technical Report. Appendix D. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/Pages/WV%20AEIS%20Complete%20Technical%20Report_.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

committee in late 2024 to secure funding to prepare developable sites, including the addition of several 50,000 foot hangers.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Airport has strong economic potential, but it faces challenges due to limited airline service and financial dependency on government support. However, with recent expansion efforts, increased infrastructure funding, and new business development plans, the Airport is working to strengthen its role in regional economic growth.

### Strengths

- Strategic location. The Ohio-Valley is ideally positioned for general aviation.
- EAS funding ensures air service despite low enplanements at the airport.
- Strong general aviation & charter service support for private, corporate, military and corporate flights contributes actively to economic activity.
- Available land for expansion provides potential for growth
    - The Economic Development Committee is actively soliciting funding for development and related infrastructure to support recruitment of MROs and related industries.

### Challenges

- Limited commercial airline service -just the one destination -makes the Airport less competitive. Reliance on subsidies makes it difficult to attract more flights.
- Financial sustainability at current activity levels is unlikely.
    - Aging infrastructure is a significant deterrent.
    - Low enplanements make it harder to expand carriers or routes.
        - Passenger aviation revenue is insignificant
    - Dependence on subsidies makes long-term sustainability uncertain.
- Time and resources. The time incurred in applying for FAA grants, obtaining the matching funds required for them, and then completing infrastructure improvements needed to attract MROs and other tenants will make or break recruitment success.

*"With general aviation can come opportunities for the entire community."*

### Opportunities

- Strengthen general aviation and private/corporate aviation services
    - Improvements in FBO (Fixed-Base Operator) services, such as fuel availability, maintenance, and VIP lounges, could attract high-end clients.
    - Promotion of tourism-related charter flights, air tours, or seasonal flights for visitors, and collaborating with local tourism boards and businesses could boost demand. The Mid-Ohio Valley region has a growing tourism industry.

- Expand aerospace & aviation business development

    - Prepare available land for aviation-related industries, such as MROs, manufacturing and parts suppliers, aviation education and training schools
    - Recent efforts to secure funding for new hangars could make the airport a hub for aviation-related business.
- Expand air cargo services and partner with companies to establish distribution centers for air freight
- Solicit government and military partnerships (i.e. National Guard, state agencies, federal programs) for emergency response operations and/or military training exercises.
- Invest in green initiatives and renewable energy could attract environmentally conscious businesses. Green energy grants could reduce operations costs while upgrading antique infrastructure. *This is subject to fiscal policy ideologies and budget capacity at state and federal governments.

# Morgantown Municipal Airport (PKB)

Morgantown Municipal Airport, also known as Walter L. Bill Hart Field, is three miles east of Morgantown, in Monongalia County, West Virginia. It provides passenger service via United Midwest Express, an upgrade to jet service from the former Southern Airways carrier, and is part of the Essential Air Service Program, with an EAS subsidy in 2024 of $3.3 million.

The Airport is a small, regional facility serving north central West Virginia and located just 80 miles south of Pittsburg International Airport. It primarily serves business travelers, university-related travel (West Virginia University), and local residents. It is classified as a primary commercial service airport**,** but for years has struggled to meet the 10,000 enplanement threshold required for full federal funding. Despite the proximity to Pittsburgh, there are no connecting flights to that destination; rather United Express (SkyWest Airlines) serves Chicago O'Hare and Washington-Dulles Airport in Washington DC.

## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

The terminal was built in 1962, with a lower addition added by the US Navy in 1974 for the North Atlantic Fleet, and an upper addition funded by the City of Morgantown in 1995. The result of the patchwork additions is that the terminal floor has breaks  where the additions meet. The tower, built in 1973, is also dated, and with just three stories, is not tall enough for visibility to the end of the runway extension currently in progress.

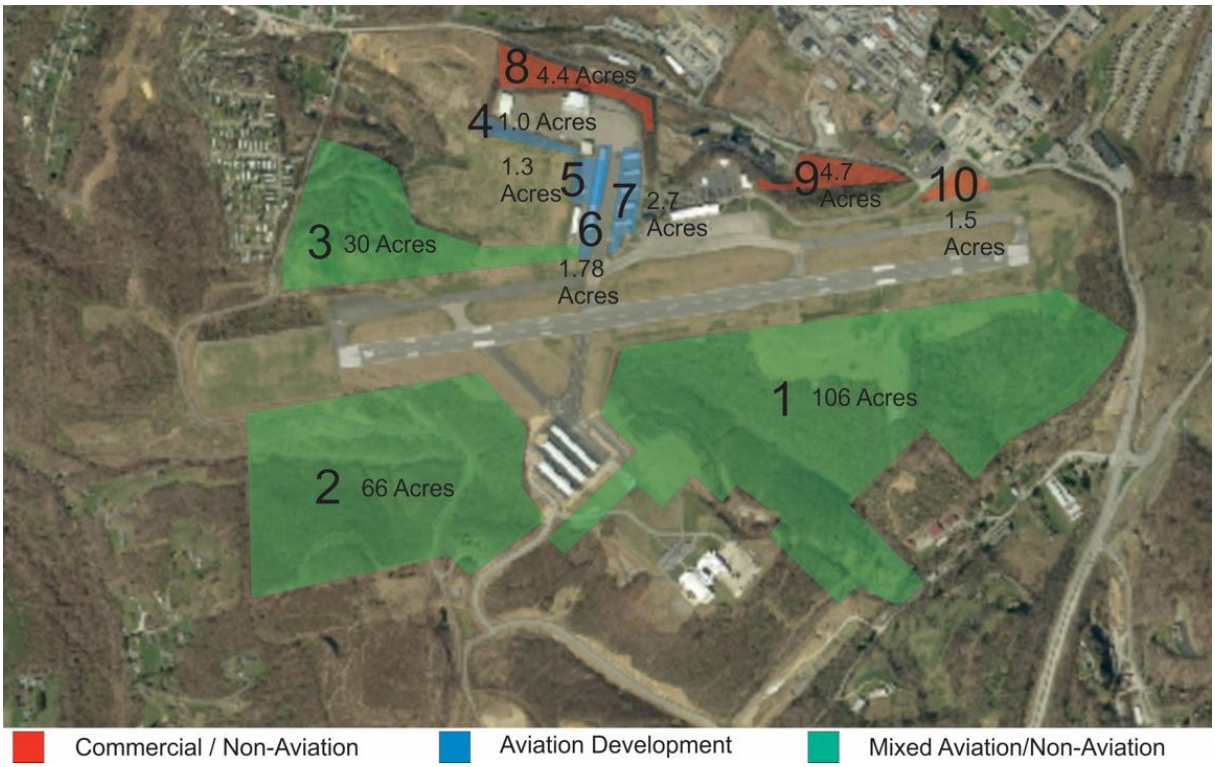

In 2023, the City purchased 105 acres at the cost of $157 million. The land acquisition was crucial for the runway extension and related infrastructure needs. When completed, the project will have added 1,001 feet to the current runway, which will accommodate larger aircraft and improve service reliability. Unfortunately, the project has been subject to several financing-related delays, resulting in progress in phases.

- *Phase 1:* Preliminary preparations began March 2021.
- *Phase 2*: Land clearing, environmental mitigation and rock excavation in preparation for subsequent construction took place between November 2022 through July 2023.

- *Phase 3:* Initiated in late 2023, this phase continues embankment and stream enclosure efforts started in Phase 1, and, in early 2024, blasting activities for rock removal. This phase was predicated upon securing FAA funding.
- *Phase 4:* In April 2024, the City requested $30 million in federal earmarks to support the project. By September 2024, the FAA allocated $7.5 million for Phase 4 of the project, with an additional $2 million grant bringing the total to over $9 million for that portion of the project. This funded the significant earthmoving and grading activities initiated in September 2024.

With all the financial and logistical hurdles, completion of the runway extension is planned for 2027. It is expected to enhance the airport's capacity and attract more commercial airlines, thereby boosting regional connectivity and economic growth. This assumes a substantial rise in enplanements.

The Airport's terminal is home to a full restaurant (*Ali Baba*), two life insurance offices, rental car offices and an auto detailing company, with free parking for all who use these services as well commercial and general aviation customers. A Fixed-Base Operator provides fueling, hangars, services for private and corporate aviation, and space for aviation industry support business and education. Those include Trademark Aviation, which provides maintenance, aerial photography services and charter flights service, RSA Flight School, and West Virginia University, which is anticipated to replace RSA's flight training. RSA's hanger would then revert to the airport for much needed equipment storage.



**Commercial development.** In mid-2023, the Airport leased approximately 47,300 square feet of land to Ground Speed Aviation for the construction of a new 10,000-square-foot hangar. This development aims to attract more aircraft maintenance and storage businesses, increasing the number of based aircraft in the future.
There are a number of other parcels for development within the airport, ranging from 100 acres to just an acre or two.

The City and the Airport are actively working to promote commercial leasing. For example, TiFF financing  was used to develop Commerce Park as a light industrial site. The Airport is hoping to secure UPS or FedX truck to air delivery services and an air mobility company as tenants.

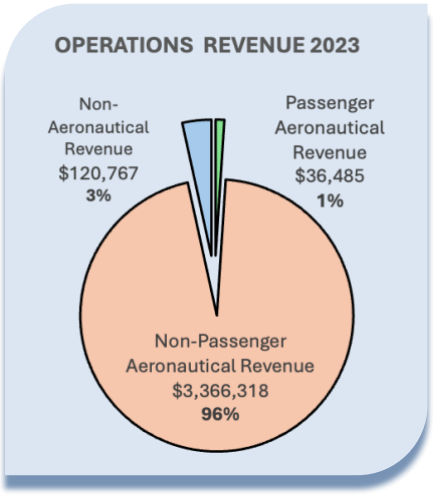
The Airport also hosts activities to engage the community. *Ali Baba* has been a long-time community favorite. The Airport hosts interactive events for city and county residents, such as Young Eagles Day, Art at the Airport, and another long-standing community favorite, *Balloons Over Morgantown*.

*The airport spans 599 acres. The current runway is 5,199 feet; however, the runway extension in progress will add 1,001 feet, bringing the length to 6,200 feet. The airport has 23 based aircraft.*

**https://www.morgantownairport.com**

## FINANCIAL CONDITION

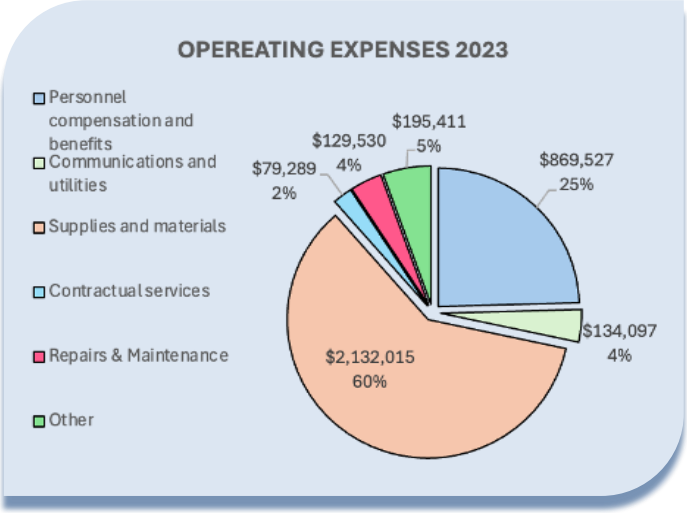
The Morgantown Municipal Airport benefits from its City ownership in ways that the other authority-owned commercial airports do not. The City provides the Airport with human resources, fire, and police services, as well as $1 million in capital, and assumes responsibility for equipment depreciation..




In 2023, (the most recent financial data available from the FAA) the sources of revenue for the Airport consisted of operating and non-operating income.

Operating revenues included passenger aeronautical and non-passenger aeronautical revenues as well as non-aeronautical revenues. Passenger aeronautical revenues totaled $36,48, comprised of $26,267 in passenger airline landing fees and terminal fees and rents of $10,218. Non-passenger aeronautical revenue of $3.4 million was the primary source of funds for the Airport, and of that, fuel sales of $2.5 million accounted for 75% and FBO revenues made up another 18%. Landing fees, hangar rentals and other non-passenger revenue rounded

out the remaining seven percent. Non-Aeronautical Revenues were negligeable: terminal services of $90,714 made up the majority of the $120,767 total. All in all, operating revenues for 2023 totaled $3.52 million




With operating expenses of $3.54 million, it cost slightly more to run the faculty than the Airport brought in. Supplies and materials account for 60% of costs, and personnel compensation and benefits make up 25%. The remainder of the expenses were for communications, repairs and maintenance, contractual services, and a combination of less significant costs for insurance, equipment and equipment rental, bank charges, training, etc. The net results was a loss for 2023 operations of $16,999. Fortunately for the Airport, the City absorbs depreciation deductions or the loss (on paper) would have been significantly higher.

The Airport's non-operating revenues included a $3.7 million FAA grant, and minor contributions from interest and passenger facility fees (totaling $41,663). It was included in the July 2024 FAA AIP grant allocations, receiving $1.45 million in entitlement funds and $4.8 million in discretionary funds for a total of $6.3 million to apply to the runway extension project.[54]

**ENPLANEMENTS**

*Change 4% ↑*

| | |
|---|---|
| **2024**: | 8,000* |
| **2023**: | 6,908 |
| **2022**: | 6,621 |

**DESTINATIONS**

*Chicago, IL & Washington DC*

**FFA data not available. Estimate WAJR, undated*

***Enplanements.*** Passenger Aeronautical Revenues in 2023 were not a significant portion of the Airport's income, in large part because of low passenger demand. Final enplanement figures for 2024 were unavailable at the time of this report, however, the Airport anticipates 8,000 enplanements for the year. That is a little over a thousand more than the prior year (6,908 in 2023 per FAA reports), which, in turn, was greater than 2022 enplanements. While the trend is positive, for more than a decade the Airport has consistently failed to meet the FAA's 10,000 enplanement threshold required for increased federal funding. The difference between meeting that threshold of not is significant. When enplanements are below 10,000, FAA

[54] Federal Aviation Administration. 2024. 2024 AIP Grants, Sept 6. https://www.faa.gov/media/84256

funding falls from $1 million to $150,00, a loss of approximately $850,000. That shortfall will likely continue to slow down the runway extension project.

***Essential Air Service Program***. Carriers receive EAS subsidies to make up for low enplanements to ensure community access to air transport. Over the past years, Morgantown Airport has exceeded the $200 per passenger subsidy cap but received waivers from the U.S. Department of Transportation to maintain funding. While these subsidies are federally funded, the city's efforts to secure waivers and maintain eligibility reflect its commitment to supporting airline services. The City provided United Express (aka Sky West) with a 3-year, annual guarantee beginning in September 2024 (FY 2025) that includes incremental raises.

- **Year 1**: $5,992,164
- **Year 2**: $6,411,615
- **Year 3**: $6,860,428|

The switch to Sky West brings with it a route to Chicago, in addition to the existing Washington DC route. It is hoped that that the new destination will encourage additional enplanements.

Prior to the engagement of SkyWest, Southern Airways Express held the EAS contract for Morgantown Airport. During their tenure, from November 1, 2020, through October 31, 2024, they received annual subsidies starting at $3,146,083 in the first year, with incremental increases each subsequent year.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Morgantown has experienced significant job loss in the last few years. Closure of the Mylan plant in 2021 affected approximately 1,500 employees. It caused a cumulative job loss of more than 4,600 jobs over the subsequent year and resulted in nearly $63 million in lost state and local tax revenue. West Virginia's "academic transformation," initiated in response to budget shortfalls, resulted in the closure of 28 majors and the loss of approximately 430 faculty and staff between 2023-4, as well as reduced enrollments and indirect jobs within the community that supported all aspects of the University activities.

The economic impact of these losses impacts the local economy, which includes city finances (and the extent to which they can support the airport) as well as airport activity. While enplanements have slowly increased over the last few years, expectations of economic support within the community to reach the 10,000 threshold may be unrealistic for the foreseeable future.

The 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study of the Morgantown Municipal Airport estimates the Airport's total economic impact at approximately $75 million. That includes combined direct and multiplier impacts of $13 million in payroll, $20 million in value added

growth, and $42 million in business revenue. Taking into consideration the job losses and growth in enplanements, it's likely the net economic impact is little changed.[55]

That said, the airport has considerable potential. Available land for commercial development and the recent agreement with Ground Speed Aviation for hangar construction hold promise for increased revenue streams. The runway expansion and new route to Chicago point to opportunities for increased enplanements. All of which will move the economic impact needle in positive directions.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & WEAKNESSES

### Strengths

- Strategic location. Proximity to WVU, WVU Healthcare, Pittsburg as a connection and destination.
- EAS subsidies support commercial service despite low enplanements.
- Runway expansion (when completed) will allow for larger aircraft and support increased enplanements
- Commercial development supports expansion of the Airport as a general aviation hub.
    - Recent agreement with Ground Speed Aviation and additional hangar will expand general aviation services

### Challenges

- Limited commercial service and reliance on EAS subsidies
- Competition from larger airports including Pittsburgh International Airport and Central West Virginia Airport (Clarksburg)
- Financial constraints. The Airport is reliant on city supports and is currently not self-sustaining.
    - Runway funding delays, infrastructure funding needs (taxi lanes, apron areas, roadways and parking), outdated fuel farms, equipment and manpower needs
    - State funding is just enough for minor terminal repairs (the 2024 subsidy paid for replacement glass in terminal). Need $150,000 per year for maintenance and equipment (i.e., snow removal)
- Need and demand for additional hangars
- Fire service training needs

### Opportunities

- The runway extension (when completed) could attract new airline partnerships – larger aircraft and additional destinations- which could increase enplanements. This

[55] WV AEIS. 2021. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/MGW-FINAL.pdf

would increase chances of meeting/exceeding the 10,000 FAA threshold.

- There are multiple and various-sized parcels of land for general aviation commercial development. Establishment of the TIFF district will be attractive to commercial tenants.
- New fuel tanks would increase fuel sales, encourage FBO services, and encourage additional based aircraft.
- Additional hangars would support the a portion of the demand for more facilities and support expansion of Civil Air Patrol and relationship with the US Air Force.
- The central location, with easy access to larger markets (Pittsburgh, Chicago, Washington DC) is ideal for establishment of distribution centers and services including UPS, FedX, etc.
- There is a potential for expansion into drone, helicopter, and AAM aircraft facilities and support. Potential partnerships with WVU to provide flight and support training?
- Possible new route connecting Morgantown to Charleston? And/or Morgantown to Pittsburgh?

If the switch to Sky West/United Express doesn't boost enplanement numbers over 10,000 within the three-year subsidized period, it may be worth reconsidering commercial service at Morgantown Airport. Given the considerable opportunities for expansion of general aviation services, as well as the proximity of the North Central Airport in Clarksburg and its active commercial service, perhaps it would make more sense for Morgantown Airport to focus on expanding GA activities. WVU travel and occasional passenger travel could be facilitated through charter arrangements connecting to Clarksburg or Pittsburgh and private aircraft.

# Raleigh County Memorial Airport (BKW)

Raleigh County Memorial Airport is a public airport located near Beckley, in Raleigh County, West Virginia. Owned and operated by the Raleigh County Airport Authority, the Airport serves passenger travel via Contour Airlines. In addition it servers general aviation needs in the region, including a full-service Fixed-Base Operator. The Airport's location supports tourism destinations such as the New River Gorge.

## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

With two perpendicular runways, Raleigh County Memorial Airport is uniquely positioned to accommodate passenger and general aviation air traffic. The 24,000 square-foot main terminal, completed in 1978, houses a waiting area, restaurant, conference room, and gift shop. The restaurant serves breakfast & lunch, and provides customers with a call-ahead, cooked-to-go option that allows flyers to take meals with them. The gift shop, located next to the restaurant, provides souvenirs from nearby outdoor venues, such as the New River Gorge.

A $1.3 million terminal upgrade is designed to improve passenger experiences and increase commercial air traffic. This is important to the Airport as enplanements are significantly below the 10,000 FAA funding threshold, and declined from 2022 to 2023. As expected, the Airport is part of the EAS program and received a $2.8 million subsidy to ensure community access to air transport in 2024.

**FAA IMPROVEMENTS TO MATCH MODERN AVIATION STANDARDS**

January 2025, the FAA proposed extending the Airport's Class E surface airspace to700 feet above the surface to help with Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations and ensure safer navigation.

The proposal also replaces the outdated VOR radio system = with newer GPS-based navigation technology.

*This reflects the FAA's projected 3.1% enplanement growth between 2025 and 2044.*

To improve general aviation at the Airport, a $10.4 million improvement and expansion project, funded by a consortium of federal, state and local contributors, will facilitate the transformation of a 105 acre site adjacent to the airport into an industrial park. The expansion includes the installation of essential infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and sewer lines, creating at least 16 new seven-acre sites. Notably, four of these sites will have direct access to the airport's runways, a strategic feature to entice aerospace industry businesses.

This new project adds to the existing 160 acres of infrastructure-equipped property on the runway that is currently available for development. In addition, the East and West Industrial Parks at the end of the runways provide over 250 acres of commercial properties ranging from cleared sites that are ready to build to links for utilities to wooded sites. All of the property is available for industrial development as well as hangar construction.

In addition to the property , the Airport provides hangars for lease, and hangar space to rent on a first come-first served basis. The FBO, *Albatross Air*, offers minor and major aircraft maintenance and service, and other amenities such as fueling. In addition, a CFI is available for flight checks. The FBO also make training available for both private and multi-engine pilots and includes instruction for various pilot certifications, including: *Private Pilot Certificate, Commercial Pilot Certificate, Instrument Rating, Multi-Engine Rating*, and *Flight Instructor* Certification. These programs encompass both ground school and practical flight training, utilizing aircraft such as the Cessna 172 Skyhawk.

**ENPLANEMENTS**

*Change 2.4% ↓*

**2024**: unavailable
**2023**: 4,882
**2022**: 5,004

**DESTINATIONS**

*Charlotte, North Carolina*

Education is a predominant focus for the Airport. In addition to collaborations with *Albatross Air*, the Airport partners with other educational institutions to enhance aviation education and workforce development in the region, including

- New River Community and Technical College (New River CTC)
  - *Aviation Maintenance Technician Program, via a* FAA-certified Part 147 Aviation Maintenance Technician School at the airport. This program provides specialized training for students pursuing careers in aircraft maintenance.
  - *Support for Aerospace Industry:* through focus on workforce development and educational opportunities, training is tailored to industry needs.
- West Virginia University Institute of Technology (WVU Tech)
  - *Aerospace Engineering Degree* programs provide comprehensive education and training in aerospace principles, preparing students for roles within the industry.

The Airport also serves as a strategic site for military training exercises. In 2019 it hosted *Sentry Storm 19,*[56] a joint operation led by the West Virginia National Guard. This event involved multiple military and civilian organizations, focusing on casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) training. During the exercise, medical personnel from the 167th Medical Group conducted simulated patient transports, enhancing their readiness for real-world scenarios. In addition to military/community events like this, the Airport has hosted fund-raising events, such as the WV Auto Fair, which brought together car enthusiasts and

[56] W.Va. Air National Guard medical personal receive valuable joint training during Sentry Storm 19. 2019. Air Force Medical Service. https://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/News/Display/Article/1912441/wva-air-national-guard-medical-personnel-receive-valuable-joint-training-during/

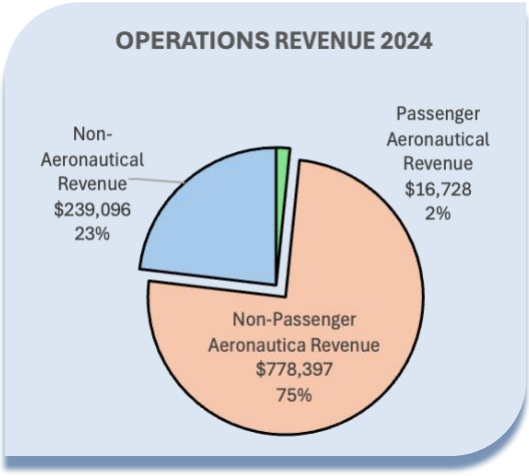
the local community to raise funds for organizations like Hospice of Southern West Virginia and Brian's Safehouse.


*The airport spans 1,433 acres at an elevation of 2,504 feet. It has two runways: 6,750 feet by 150 feet and another 5,001 feel by 100 feet. There are 12 employees and 33 based aircraft.*

**https://www.morgantownairport.com**

## FINANCIAL CONDITION

Like the other commercial airports, Raleigh County Municipal Airport's operating revenues consist of passenger and non-passenger aeronautical revenue and non-aeronautical revenue. And while it is a commercial airport, its 2023 (the most recent year for which data is available) passenger aeronautical revenue of $16,728 (terminal fees and passenger landing fees) is less than two percent of the total operating revenue of $1 million.

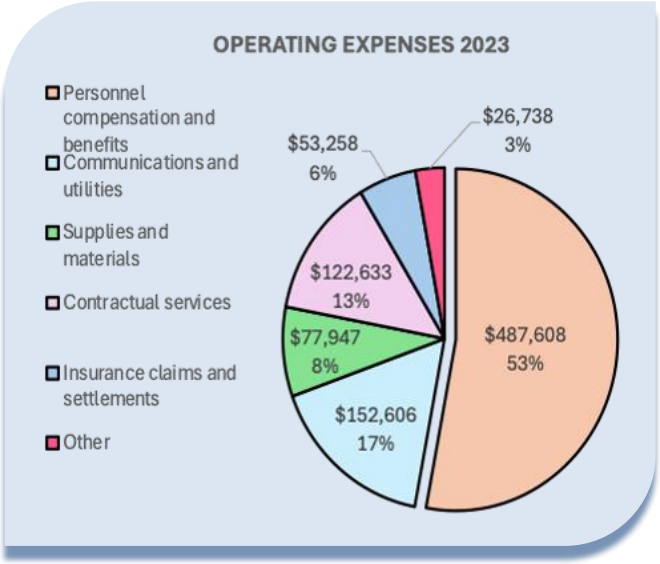



Non-passenger aeronautical income of $778,397 represents the largest portion (77%) of the Airport's operating revenue. Fuel sales of $556,020 is 70% of the non-passenger revenue, with cargo and hanger rentals of $102,518 (14%) the second largest source. Rental cars income and non-terminal facility and land leases make up the remaining $239,096. Non aeronautical revenues adjust $239,096 to total operating income.

Operating revenues exceeded the cost of operations before depreciation - $1 million less $920,790, respectively -, for a net profit of 12%. Personnel compensation and benefits of $487,608 accounted for more than half of the expenditures, and contractual services and communications made up the other primary expense. Accounting for depreciation ($878,880), however, resulted in an operating loss for the Airport of $765,449.

Non-operating revenue and capital totaled $2 million, with grant receipts of $1.8 million making up the lion's share. Capital expenditures and construction costs of $1.7 million, correspond to the grant revenue.

The airport has very little debt ($28,419) and unrestricted cash and investment of $681,218. Unlike grant dollars, these funds can be used for operating expenses if desired, which is a boost for the Airport. That money can be applied to snow removal, equipment repairs, terminal maintenance or even personnel costs.




## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Raleigh County Memorial Airport is a strong driver of economic development in the region and perfectly poised to significantly increase its economic impact. Through partnerships with the Raleigh County Airport Authority, the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, the New River Community and Technical College and West Virginia University Institute of Technology the Airport has community support to expand industrial and educational opportunities. Commercial aviation aside, growth of general aviation, development of industrial parks within the facility, and sale or lease of property "outside the fence" will allow the Airport to thrive and contribute to a greater regional economic footprint.

The new terminal expansion and upgrades will allow the Airport to grow its commercial aviation activity. The improvements will double the passenger seating area, providing the Airport with greater capacity for passenger traffic, which will hopefully lead to increasing enplanements and potential interest to add routes or carriers.

The park and other developable areas within the facility may, according to FAA rules, only be leased or rented to aviation and aerospace industry tenants, including hanger construction for small plane storage, and related educational activity. The "outside the fence" properties can be *sold* to any type of commercial development.

> "The industrial park is divided into three site-ready pads, a 44-acre pad, a 15-acre pad and a 30-acre pad, which is already half filled with an AEP substation. Roughly 15 acres are left of the 30-acre pad with the AEP substation. Unlike the other pads…the site-ready property near the AEP substation can be sold as it's

what's known in airport terminology as "outside the fence," meaning it's not under FAA oversight."[57]

This gives the Airport considerable latitude to attract a wide range of support businesses, making the plots easier and quicker to move. That many are already infrastructure-ready is all the better. Further, the community is eager to help out. For example, the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority is soliciting bids from agencies to market the industrial park as well as the airport's commercial flight services.

According to the US Economic Development Administration,[58] the collectively financed $10.4 million industrial park initiative is poised to create approximately 624 additional jobs and attract an estimated $48 million more in private investment. That does not take into consideration the advantages of regional development authority support.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, & WEAKNESSES

The Airport's upgrades, education and development projects, strong unrestricted cash, and community development support add to the Airport's potential sustainability, providing the flexibility to address unexpected needs and add personnel as needed to accommodate terminal and industry growth.

### Strengths

- Fiscal strength (unrestricted cash)
- Strategic location.
    - New River Gorge and other tourism opportunities.
    - Strong community support.
- AEROReady certification from West Virginia Department of Commerce -certifies that labor, development sites, customization of labor training and infrastructure are in place to support the aerospace industry.
- The Terminal renovations and expansion in progress
- The new business park and other developable properties.
    - Infrastructure upgrades (roads, electricity, water/sewer).
    - New training hangar dedicated to an FAA-certified Part 147 Aviation Maintenance Technician School.

[57] Josephine E. Moore. 2024. Advancements at Raleigh Airport Grow Economy and Benefit Community. Aviation Pros. https://www.aviationpros.com/airports/news/55166399/advancements-at-raleigh-airport-grow-economy-and-benefit-community?utm_source=chatgpt.com.
[58] Economic Development Administration, US. 2021. U.S. Department of Commerce Invests $1.75 million to Expand Raleigh County Business Park in Beaver, West Virginia. https://www.eda.gov/news/2021/02/04/us-department-commerce-invests-175-million-expand-raleigh-county-business-park?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

- The current and upcoming education and training programs through the New River Community and Technical College and WVU Institute of Technology – complete with a new hangar via the Industrial Park project for hands-on training.
- Two perpendicularly positioned runways with different dimensions enable a variety of aircraft.

## Challenges

- The greatest challenge: increasing enplanements
- Demand for more hangars but not enough funding to for construction.
- Assistance with meeting matching fund requirements
- The need to broaden fuel capacity to increase sales

## Opportunities

- The industrial park and developable property within the facility and "outside the fence" provide opportunities for a wide variety of industry, training and direct and indirect support (health clinic, convenience store, etc.) growth.
    - Potential to vastly increase and diversity based aircraft
- Potential to increase enplanements with terminal expansion
    - Potential to negotiate with carrier(s)
    - Potential to *eventually* meet 10,000 enplanement threshold
- Increase funding from community and state partners
    - VW Department of Tourism
    - US & WV Department of Commerce
    - US & WV Department of Environmental Protection
- Increased marketing through regional partners
    - AEROReady certification
    - New River Gorge Regional Development Authority solicitations to market the industrial park and commercial services.
    - The West Virginia Development Office has a network of aerospace companies and executives that can help with marketing.

# Huntington Tri-State Airport (HTS)

Located in Huntington, in Wayne County, West Virginia, the Tri-State Airport (aka Milton J. Ferguson Field) serves West Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio. The Tri-State Airport Authority, which owns and operates the Airport, is made up of members from the three states. The airport is classified by the FAA as a Primary–Nonhub airport and is eligible for federal aviation funding through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

The Tri-State Airport is updating its Airport Master Plan to help guide near-and long-term improvements. This study will incorporate a 20-year outlook, as recommended by the FAA, which will account for economic, local, regional, and national trends. The Plan Update will outline a strategic vision and development, along with recommendations for capital improvement projects in the near-, intermediate-, and long-terms. It also includes the Airport's recent efforts to enhance runway safety.

## THE AIRPORT FACILITIES

The Airport provides robust commercial services through American Airlines and Allegiant Air, to destinations in North Carolina and Florida. The Airport is one of the two airports in the state (Yaeger Airport is the other) that is not part of the EAS program. And in terms of enplanement numbers, it is second only to Yeager Airport.

**ENPLANEMENTS**
*Change 9% ↑*

**2024:** 101,042
**2023:** 88,888
**2022:** 91,091

**DESTINATIONS**
**North Carolina:** Charlotte
**Florida:** Orlando, St. Pete/Clearwater
Myrtle Beach* & Punta Gorda*

**seasonal*

The Airport's single terminal is divided into landside and airside areas. It supports an on-site, full-service restaurant and catering, as well as a lounge accessible to travelers and the public. Beyond the TSA screening area, vending machines and a snack cart provide additional refreshments. The terminal also houses a gift shop, and there is a play area for families with children near the gate. Avis and Enterprise car rental counters are located in the terminal, and parking facilities are directly connected to the terminal.

The Airport was awarded grants for specific development projects: In October 2021, it received $2.9 million for taxiway construction, and in March 2023, $1.0 million was designated for passenger terminal expansion.

General aviation activities are equally vibrant. The Huntington Jet Center is the facility's FBO, providing comprehensive amenities for aircraft, including passenger handling and aircraft fueling and ground services including fuel, deicing, tie-down, baggage handling and

a lounge, catering and a conference room for pilots and crew. In addition, it provides information on aircraft rental services.

***MRO/Aeroplex,*** situated within the Airport facilities, is a general aviation development site available for aeronautical and non-aeronautical industry businesses. It offers hangers and support space for corporate, personal and charger aircraft, and also access to a Federal Express hub that can accommodate heavy air freight service.

There are several factors that make the Airport and the MRO/Aeroplex attractive to developers and tenets. As noted above, the Airport has the second longest runway and is the second busiest airport in the state. On-site FedEx Air and ground freight operations and access to the only FedEx B-757 hub in the state provide unique service and delivery opportunities. And the terminal offers amenities for private, business and passenger air and ground travel.

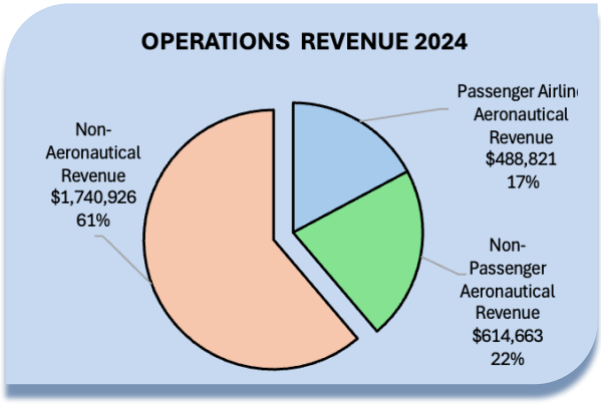
The Airport offers other services as well. *Surf Air* offers private charter services and other flexible travel options via a fleet of various sizes and styles of aircraft. And through a collaboration with Mountwest Community and Technical College, Marshall University offers a 24-month Aviation Maintenance Technology program. This hands-on program offers an Associate of Applied Science degree and FAA certifications in airframe and powerplant maintenance.


*The Airport sits on 1,300 acres. The runway is the second longest in the state, measuring 7,017 feet. There are approximately 36 based aircraft, including single- and multi-engine planes, jets and ultralights.*

**https://www.tristateairport.com**

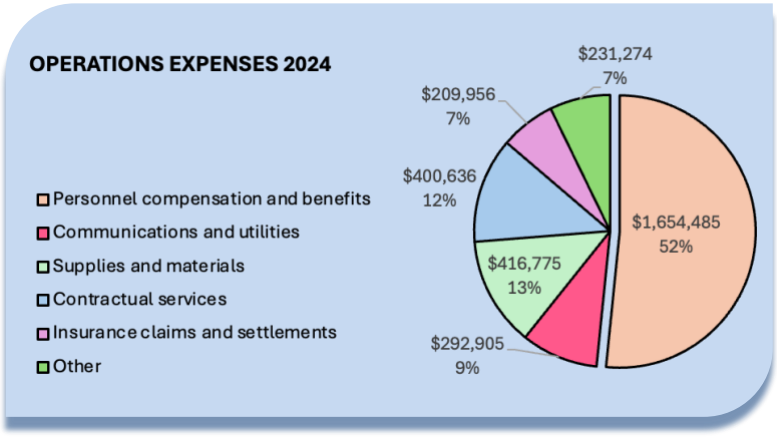
## FINANCIAL CONDITION

As with the other commercial airports, the sources of operating revenue are categorized as passenger aeronautical revenue, non-passenger aeronautical revenue, and non-aeronautical revenue. In 2024, the Airport's operating income totaled $2.8 million, and of that, just 17% ($488,821) came from passenger activities, where passenger landing fees accounted for 61% ($297,763). Terminal arrival fees, rents and utilities, and apron charges made up the remaining passenger-related income. Non-passenger aeronautical revenue of $614,663 was derived from fuel sales (70%, of $427,117), cargo and hanger rentals (22%, or $137,580) and cargo landing fees (8% or 50,390).




Non-aeronautical income of $1.7 million made up the lion's share of the Airport's income. Unlike the other airports, and the Airport's previous year's income, in 2024 parking and ground transportation comprised the majority (50%, $851,045) of revenue. Land and non-terminal leases (30%, %528, 398), rental car services (17%, $303,586), and terminal food and beverage (3%, $56,921) accounted for the rest of the category.

Prior year revenues were considerably higher; total operating revenues in 2024 were $2,8 million whereas they were $6.35 million in 2023. Passenger aeronautical revenue in both years were nearly equal, but terminal fees were greater ($264,847 or 55%), and landing fees and terminal apron fees made up the remainder.




The big difference between the two years came in non-passenger aeronautical revenues of $5 million in 2023 vs. $1.1 million in 2024. In 2023, fuel sales of $3.8 million (85% of non-passenger income) sales were substantially larger 2024's sales of just $424,117; this accounts for the difference, but the reason for the decline in 2024 is not identified. Non-aeronautical income was almost $350,000 less in 2023, with the difference due to reduced rental car sales.

In summary, between 2023 and 2024, enplanements increased but total passenger-related aeronautical income was virtually unchanged. And fuel sales ($3.8 million vs. $424,117, respectively) and cargo and hangar revenue ($552,532 vs. $137,580, respectively) declined significantly. The decline in fuel sales can be attributed *somewhat* to a softening throughout the industry. "According to the Aviation Business Strategies Group's Annual FBO Fuel Sales Survey, 41% of Fixed Base Operators (FBOs) reported a decrease in fuel sales in 2023 and was attributed to factors such as elevated Jet A fuel prices and a gradual market softening."[59]

Similarly, operating expenses declined between the two years. In 2024, operating expenditures before deprecation totaled $3.2 million. Salaries, wages and benefits accounted for 52% ($1.65 million), with supplies and materials ($415,775), and contractual services ($400,636), communications ($292,905), insurance claims ($209,956) and other ($231,274) rounding out the remaining outlays. In 2023, however, operating cost before depreciation were $4.3 million, 25% greater than 2024. Conversely, depreciation of $3 million was greater in 2024, than the $2.3 million cost in 2023.

The operating net loss for 2024 was -361,621; accounting for depreciation brought the loss to -$3.3 million. In 2023, the operating net profit was $2 million ($6.3 million in revenue vs. 4.3 million in expenses); depreciation reduced that to a net loss for 2023 of -$232.431.

In 2024, capital receipts and spending were much less than the prior year. Grant funds included $3.4 million in grant receipts and $2 million in " other" capital revenues for a total of $5.9 million, with capital and construction expenditures of $4.8 million. In 2024, capital revenues totaled $1.7 million, primarily from grant receipts; capital expenditures and construction spending totaled $1.5 million.

The significant decline in fuel sales in 2024, and the insignificant increase in passenger revenues despite increased enplanement, coupled with the loss of the last two years calls into question the Airport's ability to sustain operations in coming years. Capital improvements of $6.2 million to upgrade facilities may mitigate concern and improve financial performance.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Being located in the intersection of three states provides the Airport with several advantages. In addition to support from the state of West Virginia and Huntington city and regional economic development efforts, city and regional organizations in Ohio and Kentucky also provide resources for economic support. Tourism and commerce are strongly promoted in all three regions, which offer additional resources for Airport growth.

[59] FBO Fuel Sales and Forecast. 2024. Aviation Business Journal, March 16. https://avbizjournal.com/fbo-fuel-sales-and-forecast/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

Commercial aviation growth could support additional destinations into Ohio and Kentucky, connecting flights to airports within the state, and other external destinations.

The airport also has room and support for general aviation growth. The 7,000 foot runway, access to Fedex Air and ground freight and their added capability to handle heavy air freight cargo, and again, their central location, provide unique advantages to industry tenants. The aircraft maintenance school is another advantage, and the opportunity exists to expand their flight training and education with a more integrated arrangement with Marshall University's programs.

The 2021 the West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study seems relevant today, before the planned capital improvement are completed. The Study estimated the Airport's economic contributions as:

- Jobs: 471 (Direct: 315/ Indirect: 155)
- Payroll: $21.6 million (Direct: $14.8 million / Indirect: $6.8 million)
- Value added: $32.4 million (Direct: $22 million / Indirect: $10 million)
- Business revenue: $62 million (Direct: $40 million/ Indirect: $22 million)

There is a tremendous potential and support. The improvements will likely increase enplanements and the MRO/Aeroplex and other general aviation and education opportunities will draw interest as well. All of which should increase the Airport's financial stability and economic footprint.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

### Strengths

- Location.
- Strong, growing enplanements.
- Strong support for general aviation and support industries.
    - MRO/Aeroplex
    - Surf Air
    - Long runway that can accommodate variety of aircraft
    - FedEx air and ground, and especially heavy air freight capability
- Education and training opportunities.

### Challenges

- Fiscal sustainability.
- Proximity to Charleston.
- Support for interstate commercial aviation growth.
- Availability (lack of) of matching funds for FAA AIP grants.

## Opportunities

- Expand general aviation sources of revenue
    - Recruit industry tenants for MRO/Aeroplex
    - Recruit industry tenets that need proximity of heavy air freight service.
- Tri-state collaboration to advance commercial and general aviation growth.
    - Market tri-state tourism opportunities
    - Promote tri-state location for [drone] delivery service
- Expand collaboration with Mountwest Community and Technical College and Marshall University to expand educational offerings to include airport management.
- Explore collaborative opportunities with other WV, Kentucky and Ohio airports.

# GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORTS

> *"GA airports serve as integral gateways to communities across the state and accommodate activities such as emergency medical operations, business and recreational operations, mail and cargo transportation, remote access, and many more emergency medical services, civil air patrol, and land surveying."*[60]

There are 16 general aviation (GA) airports throughout the state, as well as three inactive public airports, a military airport (Camp Dawson Army Airfield, in Kingwood), and eight private general aviation airports. This report focuses on the public airports. However there may be opportunities for public and private airport collaborations to extend air service for public transport or tourism events in the areas of the state where access is especially difficult.

| GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location** | **Airport Name** | **FAA ID** |
| Sutton | Braxton County Airport | 48I |
| Cumberland* | Greater Cumberland Regional | CBE |
| **Martinsburg** | **Eastern WV Regional Airport *** | **MRB** |
| Elkins | Elkins-Randolph County Airport | EKN |
| Fairmont | Fairmont Municipal Airport | 4G7 |
| Peterburg | Grant County Airport | W99 |
| Ravenswood | Jackson County Airport | I18 |
| Logan | Logan County Airport | 6L4 |
| Moundsville | Marshall County Airport | MPG |
| Bluefield | Mercer County Airport | BLF |
| Point Pleasant | Mason County Airport | 3I2 |
| Williamson | Southern WV Regional Airport | EBD |
| Summersville | Summersville Airport | SXL |
| **Buckhannon** | **Upshur County Regional Airport** | **W22** |
| Wheeling | Wheeling-Ohio County Airport | HLG |
| Pineville | Wyoming County Airport/Kee Field | I16 |

The general aviation airports do not serve commercial passenger transportation, although they may be designated by the FAA as reliever airports for their ability to provide aviation alternatives to ease congestion and improve access to air transport for the community. GAs service private, corporate and charter aircraft and industry tenants whose businesses range from manufacturing and maintenance, cargo transport and delivery services, to flight training, aircraft rentals, and FBO services and amenities.

Sources of revenue for most GAs include fuel sales, hanger rentals, tenant leases, and education services. The greatest challenges for them is funding hanger construction; many have a sizeable waiting list that they could fill immediately if they could afford to add more

[60] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS). 2021. Upshur County Regional Airport. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/W22-FINAL.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

T- and box-hangers. And, for many, fuel tanks are outdated or beyond repair, but repairs or replacements are unaffordable, and they could increase revenues if they could expand fuel farms. Having an on-site FBO seems to support and encourage GA users and tenants, which then increases revenues from a variety of non-passenger and non- aeronautical sources. Finally, marketing and collaboration with nearby commercial airports would go a long way to helping them recruit industry and aircraft tenants, allowing them to expand their economic footprint within the state and community.

The 2024 Aviation Business Journal[61] survey of FBOs detailed their top industry concerns. Their greatest concern was the decline in fuel sales in 2023, fueled by increased inflation, a downturn in Part 135 flights –unscheduled charter and air-taxi services and private, on-demand flights- and confidence in the economy. They note that "the top 5 FBO concerns are [in order of importance] the high cost of constructing new hangars"; inflation/the higher costs of doing business; the high cost of updating/replacing 100LL fuel with 100UL fuel, including quality control and availability issues; the high cost of GSE repair and replacement; and finding and keeping qualified employees, including training and retention. These mirror concerns voiced by airport managers during this study. Other challenges mentioned include runway maintenance and extensions, and state support for general aviation in general throughout the state.

This section provides brief descriptions for the general aviation airports and longer profiles for two of the more active facilities (bolded in the list above). Brief explanations of economic impacts are provided for all.

*Greater Cumberland Regional Airport, in Cumberland MD, is not included in the analysis here. It is a joint venture between West Virginia and Maryland, and primarily under the control of Maryland authorities.

[61] Aviation Business Journal. 2024. FBO Fuel Sales and Forecast. https://avbizjournal.com/fbo-fuel-sales-and-forecast/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

# Braxton County Airport (48I)

Located in the center of the state, in Sutton, West Virginia, the Braxton County Airport is a public-use general aviation facility owned by the Braxton County Commission**.** The Airport is classified by the FAA as a Non-Primary-Basic airport, making it eligible for AIP funding. In 2024 the Airport received a $72,483 grant to construct airport drainage and erosion control.[62]

The airport covers an area of 76 acres and its runway measures 3,995 feet long and 60 feed wide. That limits the types of aircraft it can accommodate, but those that can use the facility include emergency medical operations, business and recreational users, mail and cargo transportation. The Airport also suports corporate events, aerial photography, and aerial inspections. It provides aviation services such as fuel, ramp and tie-down parking, and pilot amenities, including 24/7 fueling. There is no manager on site so pilots have to be aware of potential wildlife, such as deer, on and around the airfield.

The most recent economic impact assessment, the 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study, examined the Airport's footprint in several categories: jobs, payroll, value added, and business revenues. Via direct and indirect (multiplier) impacts, the Airport's annual contribution to the local community included four jobs for a payroll of $61,000; added value activities of $87,000, and business revenue of $253,000 for a total of approximately $400,000 per year.

[62] FAA. 2024. 2024 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants, Sept. 2024.

# Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport (KMRB)

Located near Martinsburg, in Berkeley County, West Virginia, the Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport (aka Shepherd Field) is a public use general aviation airport. The Airport is owned by the Eastern WV Regional Airport Authority and designated by the FAA as a reliever airport. It serves the Eastern Panhandle, as well as parts of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

The Airport is the largest general aviation airport in the state. Its terminal was updated in 2006. More recently, the Airport received AIP grants of $46,000 in 2021 for general use, and $978,500 for runway lighting.[63] In 2023, the Airport received Congressionally directed funds of $20 million to extend the taxiway and enhance airfield safety.[64] The runway is primarily a combination of asphalt and cement and measures 8,815 by 150 feet, with paved asphalt shoulders of 25 feet on either side and two additional 400-foot paved blast pads on either runway end, making the total paved surface dimensions approximately 9,615 feet in length and 200 feet in width. It is by far the largest runway in the State.

The Airport leads West Virginia's general aviation sector, housing more based aircraft than any other airport in the state. It offers various aircraft storage options, including large and small T-hangars, box hangars, and both grass and paved tie-down spaces.[65] As of July 2024, there were no vacancies in any of the T-hangers or box hangers, and 15 openings out of the 28 paved tie-down spaces. The facility also has a community heated hanger.

MRB Aviation provides full-service FBO services, including air charter, aircraft maintenance and management, fuel sales, hanger rentals, and flight training in collaboration with Bravo Flight Training. Tenants and on-site organizations include the Civil Air Patrol, Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1071, which promotes recreational flying, the West Virginia National Guard's 167 Air Wing and Operations Group, which occupies the State's largest airbase, and HealthNet Aeromedical Services. The Airport is also home to two flight training companies, including an FAA Part 141-certified flight training school. Development opportunities include John D. Rockefeller IV Science & Technology Parks North and South and the MRB Aviation South Corporate Jet Facility, along with MRB Aviation Complexes on the east and west side of the Airport. It also offers the state's only

[63] FAA. 2021. 2021 AIP Grants. https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/grant_histories/2021.
[64] FAA. 2024. 2024 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants, Sept. 2024. https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/2024_aip_grants?utm_source=chatgpt.com Sep 2024.
[65] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Eastern West Virginia Regional/Shepherd Field. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/MRB-FINAL.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

on-airport Foreign Trade Zone.  MRB Aviation and MRB Foundation engage the community through various events, such as a recent pancake and planes event.

*The Airport spans 1,020 acres, with a 8,815 foot runway and 85 based aircraft.*
**https://www.flymrb.com**

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

In mid-2020, the Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport Authority finalized a nearly $4 million acquisition of additional property surrounding the airport. This expansion included five aircraft hangars, a fuel farm, and three aircraft. Subsequently, the airport enhanced its terminal building and installed a self-serve fueling station, allowing pilots to refuel their aircraft independently. Taking all this into consideration, the WV Aviation Economic Impact Study report for Eastern WV Regional Airport noted that "despite the pandemic, 2020 saw the Airport Authority welcome four new businesses and significant increases in aircraft takeoffs and landings, flight school  training hours, fuel gallons sold, and charter trips booked." They estimated the facility's total direct and indirect annual income sources as $91 million from payroll, $110 million in value added revenue, and $154 million via business revenues for a total of approximately $250 million per year.  The Airport has expressed interest in adding charging stations and accommodations for electric aircraft; however the aircraft have yet to be approved by the FAA for general use. Once that occurs, this addition would position the Airport to expand into new and rapidly growing aspects of aviation transportation and further enlarge its economic footprint in the area.

In 2024, The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration invested $5.3 million in West Virginia to support small business growth. While the primary recipients were institutions like Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, these investments indirectly benefit regional infrastructure, including airports.[66] This will substantially encourage air traffic and industry at the Airport.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES

For the Airport, many of its strengths present opportunities once the challenges are overcome and so are intertwined.

[66] US Economic Development Association. 2024. U.S. Department of Commerce Invests $5.3 Million to Support Small Business Development and Expansion in West Virginia. https://www.eda.gov/news/press-release/2024/09/17/us-department-commerce-invests-53-million-support-small-business?utm_source=chatgpt.com

**Strengths**

- Location.
- Lots of flat space, unlike most other airports
  - Industrial park land for sale
    - Non-aviation, in need of road paving
    - Shovel ready land
- Longest, widest, heaviest runway in the State
  - Cargo
- Largely self sufficient
  - Hanger rentals, tie-downs, fuel sales primary sources of revenue
- Collaboration with Winchester and other area airports
- Education
  - Shephard: BA, airport management
  - Marshall: flight training
  - Blueridge: aircraft maintenance

**Challenges**

- The runway was paid for by earmarks, so the FAA only funds 18% of runway paving.
- Incredibly insufficient state funding support

**Opportunities & Wish List**

- Predictable, consistent, sustainable state funding
- WV Department of Transportation funded support for all airports
  - Engineers of record as part of crew for all airports' maintenance
  - Marketing and advertising
  - Determine industry needs and help airports recruit companies
- Air cargo investment – private-public investment

# Elkins-Randolph County Regional Airport (EKN)

The Elkins-Randolph Regional Airport (aka Jennings-Randolph Field) is a public, general aviation facility and is owned by the Elkins-Randolph County Regional Airport Authority. Constructed in the 1930s, the Airport played a role in early airmail services, where mail was retrieved by aircraft using a hook-and-wire system. During World War II, it functioned as a training base for the U.S. Army Air Corps, with cadets housed at the Halliehurst mansion of Davis and Elkins College. The Airport was also used as an evacuation facility for east coast military bases during hurricanes.[67]

The Airport sits on 227 acres and features a single asphalt runway measuring 4,542 feet long and 100 feet wide. In 2024, it received an AIP grant of $116,500 for obstruction marking, lighting, and removal.

The facility accommodates various aviation activities, including business travel, flight instruction, military operations, medical transport, and aerial inspections for power and gas lines. The facility also supports the state's wood technology industry and hosts organizations such as the Elkins Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol and the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1530. [68]

Located near some of the State's most scenic landscape, in the middle of the Appalachian Mountains, the Airport is situated in a prime region for ski resorts and other outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, rafting, and kayaking. Elkins is also home to the headquarters of the famous Monongahela National Forest. Centrally located near several state parks, the airport serves as a gateway to a wide range of outdoor activities not found elsewhere in the state. This contributes substantially to its economic impact.

In 2021 the West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study determined that the Airport's direct and indirect contributions to the area's economic wellbeing include 122 jobs and annual contributions of approximately $5.5 million from payrolls, $8.2 million in value added activities, and $14.7 million in business revenues, for a total of $28.2 million.

https://elkinsairport.com

[67] Elkins-Randolph Co. Regional Airport. About. https://elkinsairport.com/about/.

[68] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Elkins-Randolph County- Jennings Randolph Field. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/EKN-FINAL.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

# Fairmont Municipal Airport – Frankman Field (4G7)

Fairmont Municipal Airport (aka Marion County Municipal Airport/Frankman Field) is a public-use, general aviation airport located between Morgantown and Clarksburg commercial airports. The facility is owned by the Fairmont-Marion County Regional Airport Authority. It occupies 20 acres, with a runway that is 2,965 feet long and 75 feet wide.[69]

The Airport offers self-service low-lead fuel, aircraft repair and maintenance services, tie-down spaces, and recently completed T-hangars available for rent. The facility hosts monthly Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 849 meetings and the Chapter's Young Eagles program which introduces school-aged children to careers in aviation. It is also the site of a popular annual event, *Aviation Day*, when the airport's gates are opened to the community to generate interest in and support of aviation by providing free plane rides, hosting pilots within a 50-mile radius, having the local Civil Air Patrol Squadron participate, and demonstrating medical helicopters. In 2020, the Fairmont Flying Club, a membership club for pilots, was established and based at the Airport.

The 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study noted that the Airport's annual direct and indirect contributions to the County and region include 13 jobs and payrolls totaling $549,999, as well as $924,000 in value added activities and $2.4 million in business revenues.

[69] Marion County West Virginia. 2025. Marion County Municipal Airport. https://marioncvb.com/company/fairmont-municipal-airport-frankman-field-4g7/?utm_source=chatgpt.com/
West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS). 2020. Fairmont Municipal Airport-Frankman Field. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf

# Grant County Airport (W99)

Grant County Airport, in Petersburg, West Virginia, is a general aviation airport owned by the Grant County Airport Authority. It occupies 188 acres and has one asphalt runway measuring 5,000 feet long and 75 feet wide.

"The airport's location being adjacent to Cave Mountain provides optimal 'lift' conditions that make it conducive to serve as one of the few glider flying and training operations in the state. Grant County Airport maintains the 'Fly and Tie' camping site, where private planes can park on the field and use the airport-maintained campgrounds that include restroom and shower amenities. The airport also serves as the site for periodic military training operations specializing in nighttime operations."[70]

The airport added new hangers five years ago that were filled as soon as they were completed. The demand continues; they need more! And in 2020, Grant County Airport received $93,530 in AIP funds for the restoration of 10,300 square yards of the Main Apron pavement.[71]

In 2020, according to the WV AEIS Report, the Airport's addition to the area's economic wellness includes 17 jobs and annual direct and indirect revenues of $435,000 in payrolls, and $667,000 from value added activities and $1.5 million from business revenues.[72] Pilgrims' Pride (wood products), is the largest employer in the area and uses the facility. Otherwise, the indirect economic drivers are not substantial. The facility has tenants in waiting that could immediately fill new hangers as built, which would enable the Airport to expand its economic footprint.

[70] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS). 2021. Grant County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf
[71] FAA. 2021. 2020 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants, Sept. 2021.
[72] WV AEIS. 2021

# Jackson County Airport (I18)

Jackson County Airport is located in Ravenswood, West Virginia, near the northwest border of the State and the Ohio River. It is a public-use, general aviation airport owned by the Jackson County Commission. It sits on 217 acres, with an asphalt runway 4,000 feet long by 75 feet wide. A new terminal, designed by Appalachian Log Structures, is open 24/7.

The airport supports general aviation, military, air taxi, and business and private multi- and single-engine and ultralight aircraft, and offers full-service and self-service fueling options. It has also flight training and maintenance facilities on the field. Business aircrafts use the airport to access the nearby industrial park and other businesses in the region.

The facility also offers instruction, complete with flight simulators (FAA and Non-FAA), and hosts multiple aviation groups, including the Mountain Aero Club, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1336, General Chuck Yeager Chapter, Women in Aviation International, 1st General Chuck Yeager Chapter, and the General Chuck Yeager Aviation Day every year.

The facility makes a sizable contribution to the area's economic wellbeing. According to the 2021WV Aviation Economic Impact Study,[73] as of 2020, direct and indirect impacts include 53 jobs and annual payrolls of $2.9 million, value added activities of $3.86 million, and business revenues of $7.7 million.

Due to its location, the Airport has great potential. Industry demand is increasing; Berkshire Hathaway and other big companies and consortiums have expressed interest and there are opportunities to add manufacturing companies. The catch is that the Airport needs approximately $33 million in financial support to make upgrades that will enable it to accommodate larger (G-6) aircraft. However, the Airport's FAA classification prevents it from being eligible for FAA grants, and State programs only provide funds to airports that airports that meet FFA eligibility criteria. This chicken & egg scenario makes it more challenging to fund maintenance and expansion needs necessary to meet expansion opportunities.

[73] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS). 2020. Jackson County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.

# Logan County Airport (6L4)

Logan County Airport, a public-use, general aviation airport owned by the Logan County Airport Authority, spans 200 acres and has one asphalt runway that measures 3,605 feet long and 75 feet wide. It is a busy airport. “In July 2023 the airport had 6,300 aircraft operations. On average there were 121 per week; 96% general aviation and 5% military.

The Airport serves the surrounding business community, the Air National Guard, and recreational flyers. *Linear Air* provides charter flights. The Air National Guard is located off-airport nearby, and uses the airport for a number of trainings including dark operations. The airport hosts an annual Veteran Reunion Fly-In, where members of the community and veterans travel from all over the region fly in for the event, particularly to see the UH-1B ‘Huey’ Helicopter, nicknamed ‘Miss Fit,’ that served in the Vietnam War. The veteran helicopter is owned by Marpat Aviation, a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-certified Part 145 Repair Station located at the airport, and is on display for airport visitors.[74] There is demand for additional hangers that includes a robust waiting list.

The airport does a robust business and contributes sizably to local and regional economic wellbeing. The WV Aviation Economic Impact Study indicates that in 2020, direct and indirect impacts included 29 jobs with an annual payroll of $1.2 million, $1.8 million annually from value added activities, and $3.65 million from business revenues each year,[75] for a total of $6.65 million per year. More hangers would enable the Airport to increase that footprint significantly.

[74] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS). 2020. Grant County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.
[75] Ibid.

# Marshall County Airport (MPG)

Marshall County Airport is a public-use general aviation airport located in Moundsville, in Marshall County, West Virginia, and owned by the Moundsville County Commission. The Airport occupies 96 acres, with one asphalt runway measuring 3,302 feel long by 60 feet wide. The facility is in the northern panhandle of the State, sitting on a removed mountaintop at an elevation of 1,214 feet (approximately 112 stories). The runway is in disrepair and was in need of approximately $6 million to repair erosion. In 2024, the Airport received $530,052 - of a total grant of $6.3 million - from the FAA's AIP to construct airport drainage and erosion control.[76]

The FAA has designated the Airport as "an 'uncontrolled' airfield,' meaning its airspace is less restrictive, and that simple radio or visual communication is all that is needed to take off or land. This makes Marshall County Airport an ideal location for helicopter operations and recreational aircraft operations. Because of the advantages its location offers, West Virginia's largest medical helicopter service established a base in 2018 that houses a helicopter and flight crew 24/7 to serve the surrounding communities. In recent years, the airport has proven an invaluable asset as a helicopter staging area for contractors in oil and gas development."[77]

The 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study noted that the Airport supported 51 jobs and an annual payroll of $3.3 million. Other annual direct and indirect contributions were $4.2 million in value added activities and $7.6 million in business revenues ($15.1 million annually). The facility has a part-time manager and the annual State stipend is applied to basic grounds maintenance such as mowing the grass. The Airport is approximately eight miles from Wheeling Ohio County Airport; the proximity calls into question the value of investing in runway repairs vs. consolidation; however; deactivation would have to take into consideration repayment to the FAA of $6 million for prior AIP funding.

[76] FAA. 2024. 2024 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants, Sept. 2024.
[77] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Marshall County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.

# Mercer County Airport (BLF)

Mercer County Airport is located in Bluefield, West Virginia, and owned by the Mercer County Airport Authority. The Airport occupies 511 acres at an elevation of 2,857 feet, and has one asphalt runway that measures 4,743 feel long and 100 feet wide. For decades it served both commercial and general aviation air traffic; however, when passenger traffic waned to just over 1,700 enplanements in 2007 the Airport shifted to solely general aviation activities. Similarly, it qualified for FAA's Essential Air Service program funding until 2006, when the FAA determined it was close enough to a large/medium hub to make it ineligible.

Situated in the New River-Greenbrier Valley areas, the Airport is less than a mile from the Hatfield/McCoy tourist area. Its primary activities include corporate and business air transportation, medical transport and evacuation, and policy and law enforcement travel. The facility includes an airport-managed FBO, and users and tenants include Helicopter Powerline Services, a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-certified Part 133 operation. The airport also attracts visitors to recreational activities and tourism sites, including "the ATV Hatfield & McCoy Trail System." An annual coal show brings in international crowds and the Airport also hosts its own Annual Airshow…an educational and entertainment event that is a six-year tradition. Airport staff are also active in educating students, visiting local schools across the county by helicopter.[78]

The Airport has a vibrant engagement with private, corporate and community aviation users, and a robust vision and plan for its future. Its location near the Hatfield/McCoy Trail and New River Gorge encourage collaborative ventures with the Greenbrier Airport and New River Gorge county development and tourism authorities. The airport has 50 acres of developable land that is ideal for aviation industry tenants, and 16 names on the current waiting list for new hanger space when (if) funding is obtained for construction. In 2024 the Airport was awarded $126,288 in AIP funds to conduct an aeronautical survey for an area navigation instrument (RNAV) approach for its runway.[79]

The WV Aviation Economic Impact Study reported that in 2020 the Airport supported 74 jobs for an annual payroll of $2.5 million, and direct and indirect value added activities and business revenues of $3.9 million and $7.6 million, respectively, for a total of $14 million.

www.mercercountyairport.com

[78] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Mercer County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.
[79] FAA. 2024. 2024 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants, Sept. 2024.

## Mason County Airport (3I2)

Mason County Airport is a public-use, general aviation airport located in Point Pleasant, West Virginia and owned by the Mason County Commission. The Airport covers 124 acres, with one asphalt runway measuring 4,000 feet long and 75 feet wide. The airport is classified by the FAA as a Nonprimary – Basic airport and is eligible for federal aviation funding through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

The Airport does not appear to be particularly active. The WV Aviation Economic Impact Study notes that in 2020 the Airport supported 6 jobs that created annual direct and indirect payroll of $274,000, and annual direct and indirect value added benefits of $420,000 and business revenues of $711,000. More current or detailed information is unavailable.

# Southern West Virginia Regional Airport (EBD)

Located in Williamson, in Mingo County, West Virginia, the Southern West Virginia Regional Airport – formerly known as the Appalachian Regional Airport - is a public use, general aviation airport. It is one of the newest facilities within the State's aviation system and originally built to replace the former Mingo County Airport. The facility was built on a reclaimed mine, and because of its remote location and low ambient light from the surrounding area, it is often used for nighttime training operations. The airport sits on approximately 400 acres, at an elevation of 1,883 feet and with an asphalt runway that is particularly long for a general aviation facility, measuring 5,001 feet long and 75 feet wide.

The Airport's location and long runway make it an attractive airport for student pilots, particularly those practicing nighttime flight operations. The airport began selling jet fuel around the turn of the century, and its next planned improvement is to construct a pilot and flight planning area to provide a comfortable place for pilots to rest and plan their next flight. In 2024, the facility received $153,598 from the AIP for reconstruction of 522 feet of perimeter fencing and one gate. The Airport supports corporate and business activities, aerial inspections and aircraft flight testing.[80] It also has an active flying club that volunteers time to assist with airport maintenance and operations.

[80] WV AEIS. 2021. Economic Impact Of Aviation In West Virginia's Senate District 6. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/Pages/WV%20AEIS%20Complete%20Technical%20Report_.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

Without some type of collaborative endeavors, the Airport's sustainability is suspect. The 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study[81] reported that its direct and indirect economic impact in 2020 included just 2 jobs and $37,000 in payroll, $52,000 in value added activities, and $168,000 in business revenues.

## Mingo County Airport

Mingo County Airport in Williamson, West Virginia, is a former public-use, general aviation airport owned by the Mingo County Airport Authority. *It was replaced in 2012 by the Appalachian Regional Airport, now known as* ***the Southern West Virginia Regional Airport.*** The former airport was smaller than the one that replaced it; it covered just 150 acres and had a much shorter runway that measured 3,515 feet long by 60 feet wide. It served general aviation aircraft and a minor percentage of military flights

## Summersville Airport (SXL)

Summersville Airport is a small, public-use general aviation facility in Summersville, Nicholas County, West Virginia. It is a gateway to some of the more popular outdoor recreational opportunities in the state, particularly for summer recreation along the Gauley River and Summersville Lake. It supports kayakers from all over the country and tourists who come for Bridge Day, the annual festival at the New River Gorge. The facility serves private and business aircraft, including ultralights and helicopters. It offers hanger space and AvGas, and supports military aviation vehicles as well.

The Airport's economic footprint is marginal. According to the 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study,[82] the Airport supports no jobs and generates just $7,000 in indirect payroll from things like visitor spending and income re-spending. Annual value added activities and business revenues bring in just $19,000 and $43,000, respectively.

Mercer, Wyoming, Logan, and Mingo County Airports are situated in close proximity and in a high-tourism area of the State. Collaborations, partnerships and or consolidations to recruit industry tenants, share education facilities and training opportunities, offer connections to other airports throughout the state, and create expansive tourism-corporate opportunities could support economic growth for all.

[81] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Mercer County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.
[82] Ibid.

# Upshur County Regional Airport

Upshur County Regional Airport (KW22) is a public-use general aviation facility near Buckhannon, West Virginia. It is owned by the Upshur County Regional Airport Authority and serves Upshur and Lewis counties. The original landing strip was used by nearby West Virginia Wesleyan College as a pilot pre-flight training facility during World War II. The current facility was moved in 1998 to the top of the adjunct hill and sits just above the original landing strip.

The facility includes a new terminal with a passenger lounge, aircraft maintenance and hangar leasing services, and a courtesy car for visiting pilots, and also offers both full-service and self-service fueling options. The Airport accommodates various aviation activities such as emergency medical operations, business and recreational flights, mail and cargo transportation, and aerial inspections. It also serves as a base of operations for aerial sawing and regional wildlife and rabies population control. In mid-2024 the Airport received an AIP award of $91,393 to install an airport rotating beacon and construct 10,000 square-foot box hangers.

HealthNet Aeromedical Services supports the Airport's designation as a regional hub for daily medical flights. They maintains a 24/7 emergency response team at the facility to quickly transport patients to nearby medical facilities, reducing transportation time to a quarter of ground transport. Two other tenants are KCI Aviation, which services aircraft and small jets, and Dingess Lumber, which maintains a small hanger. Infrastructure-prepared development property is available for industry and aviation-related businesses.

The Airport Authority engages the community by sponsoring youth aviation activities. The Young Eagles Program encourages youth to experience flight and learn more about aviation. Young Eagles Flights are hosted periodically by the Airport.

*The Airport sits at an elevation of 1,635 feet. With 4,201 by 75 feet a runway.*
*There are no based aircraft.*

**https://www.flyw22.com**

## Economic Impact

The Airport supports regional economic development directly through on-airport activities and visitor spending, and indirectly through multiplier activities such as supplier sales,

tenant support business, and income re-spending. In 2021, the West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study[83] estimated total contributions, before terminal upgrades, as 48 jobs and annual payroll of $2.8 million, value added activities of $3.9 million and business revenues of $8 million. That totals $14.7 million per year.

## Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities

### Strengths

- **Location**. Central location within the state, networking
- New terminal, includes meeting space
- Other facilities are well maintained shape
- Completely fenced property
- No fog

### Challenges

- **Hanger development**. Need funds for at least 1 T-hanger
- **Longer runway** to bring in larger aircraft
- Maintenance support for painting runway lines, edging, mowing, fire & safety, equipment sharing
- Maintaining self-sufficiency and sustainability while also meeting match requirements for AIPs.
- Training. Airport management, grant opportunities and management
    - *Develop a listserve for managers to use to share ideas and challenges*
- Marketing funds and business recruitment support

## Opportunities

- There is room to grow through business recruiting. The hangar waiting list is so long potential clients *pay* to be on it.
    - Aerial photography, surveying, pipelines
    - EV charging and aircraft
    - Helicopter training
    - Sightseeing flights
    - Tourism and recreation
    - Education
    - Flight club
    - Aircraft rental
- Terminal and facility space – 255 acres ready for development
    - Restaurant
    - Distribution center
    - More hangers
- Opportunities to collaborate with other airports.

[83] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Mercer County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.

# Wheeling-Ohio County Airport (HLG)

Wheeling Ohio County Airport is a public-use general aviation facility located in Wheeling and serving Wheeling and Ohio County, West Virginia. It is owned by the Ohio County Commission. Being situated on the Ohio River enables the Airport to serve the states that border it: Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The Airport contains a well-known local aviation history museum that highlights the region's contributions during World War II when the airport provided commercial service, and the famous political figures who have visited the Airport in the past. The presence of an air traffic control tower is ideal for student pilots from aviation programs at Ohio University. The Airport serves as a reliever airport for medical evacuation operations due to its proximity to Wheeling Hospital.

The Airport occupies 1,000 acres and has two asphalt runways: one is 5,002 feel long and 150 feet wide, and the second is 4,499 feet long by 150 feet wide. As of 2022 the facility hosted 33 based aircraft that included multi- and single-engine aircraft, 1 jet and 5 helicopters, as well as 12 military aircraft. Air traffic was approximately 90% general aviation and 9% air taxi. Corporate and business aviation operations and emergency medical transport and evacuation operations, as well as flight training are found at the Airport. In addition, it hosts the Civil Air Patrol and the annual Wings over Wheeling Air Show.

The 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study[84] notes that in 2020 the Airport directly and indirectly supports 74 jobs with annual payrolls of $2.9 million. Value added activities contribute $4.2 million and business revenues bring in $8.3 million in direct and indirect methods each year as well.

There are a variety of opportunities for the Airport to expand its economic imprint in the area. Its proximity to tourism attractions in the three states and potential to develop connecting flights within the State and among destinations in Ohio and Pennsylvania offer prospects for collaborative partnerships. Property development within the facility boundaries could encourage additional FBO amenities, recruitment of industry support tenants and the ability to expand the number of corporate and private based aircraft, and also provide space to expand education and training capacity to add students and degree programs, such as maintenance and management.

[84] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Mercer County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.

# Wyoming County Airport/ Key Field (I16)

Kee Field is located in Pineville, Wyoming County, West Virginia and is a public-use, general aviation facility. It is owned by the Wyoming County Commission and situated in the New River Gorge-Greenbrier Valley tourism region and in proximity to the Hatfield-McCoy trail. The Airport could easily be marketed to the Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee corporate and private tourism markets.

The Airport occupies an estimated of 6.9 acres, with a runway measuring 4,000 feet in length and 75 feet in width. There are three hangered aircraft in one hanger made of corrugated sheet metal.

As it is, Key Field presents a number of challenges to pilots:

- The black top is broken up in places.
- The facility is surrounded by rising terrain, adding challenge approaches and departures.
- A landfill is located  on the south side and midpoint of the runway, attracting birds and bird strikes.
- Wildlife have made the airport and vicinity their homes.
- The runway has an east to west, 2% downward slope.

According to the 2021 WV Aviation Economic Impact Study,[85] Key Field does not offer a substantive economic contribution to area. In 2020 it supported only two jobs and $64,000 in direct and indirect payroll. Direct and indirect annual value added and business revenue were just $85,000 and 141,000, respectively.[86] The cost to decommission the facility would be $1 million, as repayment to the FAA for past funding making it more cost-effective to find alternatives for re-use.

One such alternative could be to combine it or find collaborative partnerships with Southern WV Regional Airport (formerly the Appalachian Regional Airport, and before that, Mingo County Airport), which just completed upgrades, or another airport in the vicinity. Mercer, Wyoming, Logan, and County Airports are also situated in a high-tourism areas of the State. Collaborations and partnerships to recruit industry tenants, expand education and training programs (degree programs in maintenance, management), create corporate tourism adventures, and develop collaborative marketing promotions could promote economic growth for all. That said, Key Field needs considerable attention before being able to be a partner.

[85] WV Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Mercer County Airport. https://www.wvaeis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Appendix-D_Airport-Reports_FINAL.pdf.
[86] West Virginia Aviation Economic Impact Study. 2021. Key Field. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/I16-FINAL.pdf

# INACTIVE AIRPORTS

Of the State's three inactive airports, two have been inactive for quite some time. PW Johnson Memorial Airport and Welch Municipal Airport have been removed from the FAA's list of active airports within the State. Philippi-Barbour County Regional Airport has recently ceased operations but remains a viable opportunity for development.

**PW Johnson Memorial Airport** in New Martinsville was a small city-owned public airport with a runway of just 2,100 feet in length. It was removed from the FAA's list of active airfields in May, 2016. Other aviation options are just 14-15 miles away: Monroe County Airport, with a runway of 3,804 feet, and Marshall County Airport, with a 3,302 foot runway.

| INACTIVE AIRPORTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location** | **Airport Name** | **FAA ID** |
| Philippi | Philippi-Barbour County Regional Airport | 79D |
| Welch | Welch Municipal Airport | I25 |
| New Martinsville | PW Johnson Memorial Airport | 75D |

**Welch Municipal Airport** was also city owned, with a 2,695 foot asphalt runway. The facility was closed in 2006 and by 2013 was no longer operational. The 65-acre airport, built in 1947, was the only airport in McDowell County. Currently, the closest aviation alternative is Southern Regional WV Airport (formerly Appalachian Regional Airport, and before that, Mingo County Airport) approximately 38 miles from Welch.

## Philippi-Barbour County Regional Airport

Philippi/Barbour County Regional Airport is a public general aviation airport located near Philippi, West Virginia. Situated atop a hill at an elevation of 1,755 and overlooking the Tygart Valley River, the airport served the aviation needs of Barbour County and the surrounding region. It is owned and managed by the Philippi/Barbour County Regional Airport Authority, and classified by the FAA as Nonprimary-Basic airport, making it eligible for FAA AIP funds.

The single asphalt runway is 3,000 feel long and just 60 feet wide, limiting the type and weight of aircraft and aviation activities that the Airport can accommodate. Alderson-Broaddus University actively used the facilities; however, Rotor Blade, an aerial vegetation management company was the Airport's sole tenant.

With the closing of the University in 2023 due to financial difficulties and declining enrollments and with the loss of its tenant, the Airport shifted to inactive status. However, the Airport was awarded an FAA AIP grant in mid-2024 of $282,923 for runway improvements including surface, apron and runway resealing - perhaps in hope of future use.

Meanwhile, the University was sold for $5 million and renamed Battlers Knob LLC. The new owner is collaborating with West Virginia Wesleyan College to offer health care classes and has planned to locate other business entities within the campus. They also host a variety of events throughout the year that are open to the public, which could all be promising for the Airport.

When active, the Airport was a solid contributor to the area's economic vitality, adding $1.8 million in direct and indirect revenues.[87] The potential to revitalize the Airport remains strong, particularly if Battlers Knob's development plans move forward.

That said, despite having sunk $1 million into terminal improvements, the airport has no signage or marketing and no efforts are currently being made to promote or maintain the site. There are no revenues, no fuel sales, no flight demand from the College, no waiting list for more hangers, and no infrastructure to support development. Airport management consists of just one part-time staff.

Decommissioning the Airport would cost $16 million in repayments to the FAA for prior grants. Given that, and the potential of Battlers Knob, it makes more sense to recruit development or design methods for reuse that require little preparation.

[87] WV AEIS. 2021. Philippi-Barbour County Regional Airport. https://transportation.wv.gov/aeronautics/AirportBrochures/79D-FINAL.pdf

# STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

This section summarizes the primary challenges and opportunities of the commercial and general aviation airports in West Virginia. They represent a synthesis of those listed in the profiles contained in the report, insights and ideas gleaned from interviews with commercial and general aviation airport managers and aviation industry association leaders and experts, and archival and document research. Opportunities are categorized into short- and long-term to for ease in prioritization.

### Strengths

- Location, location, location.
- Strong demand for more aviation support, including private, corporate and charter accommodations (hangers), maintenance, terminal amenities, education (flight, maintenance, management), and aircraft to rental and purchase.
- Plenty of developable land within airport boundaries to meet demands for creation of manufacturing and industrial parks.
- Increased demand from industry businesses in the US and abroad for infrastructure-ready developable rental space,
- Increased demand for flight & maintenance training and education programs

### Challenges

- **Lack of funding**
- Limited lawmaker/administrative support, particularly with help with matching funds.
    - There is a constant concern over availability of general revenue funds for general aviation.
    - There is no discernable criteria for subsidy allocations.
- **Need for hangers!** Commercial and General Aviation Airports have waiting lists. Need state-wide plan to provide matching funds.
- Lack of a state-wide comprehensive plan and consistent, equitable support
- Weak enplanement numbers
- Weak state economy and anticipated budget shortfalls; insufficient tax revenues to support resource needs such as healthy, educated workforce,
- Weak state support for existing small businesses and potential incoming businesses and tourism.
- Poor statewide infrastructure (roads!) and support for infrastructure preparation for developable land
- Shortage of engineers and pilots
- Need for complete updating of fuel farms and systems.

- Aging airport management and no plans for management succession to prevent service disruptions.
- Emergency protocols for health, climate, utility or other catastrophic events.

## Opportunities

Short-term – could be accomplished within a year

- Partnerships with communities, state and federal agencies
    - Airport & aviation industry advertising/marketing
    - Tourism, commerce, and education collaborations
    - Across state marketing promotions
- Internships with Marshall Aviation Management School as a source of future airport managers.
- Expansion/recruitment of on-site manufacturing, service, and other aviation-related businesses.
- Strategic reorganization and expansion of private training and educational programs.
- Coordination and negotiation of additional routes, collaboration between airports to maximize route enplanements.
- Initiate statewide strategic aviation visioning/planning within the WV Department of Transportation. Then expand to include FAA, aviation member organization and airport manager representation participation.

Long-term – may take more than 12 months to develop

- Partnerships with corporate and industry interests/ privatization of inactive airports.
- Development of drone, EV aircraft and changing stations, and AAM flight training and facilities, manufacturing and maintenance training.
- Explore creation of distribution hubs within airport property; recruit drone & unmanned helicopter delivery for the hubs
- Plan and promote state-subsidized economic growth: fuel farms, bonds for infrastructure, loan guarantees, private partnerships.
- Work with state legislatures during session and interim sessions to promote reorganizations (where necessary) and funding to promote "aviation economics," review/revise language in proposed bills and project development to ensure effectiveness, include lawmakers in visioning.

In the 2025 legislative session*

**Proposed State Legislation for Hangar Construction.** West Virginia House Bill 2183 proposes a statutory program to provide financial assistance to local, primarily general aviation airports for airplane hangar construction.

This bill establishes a new state-level financial assistance program specifically designed to help local airports in West Virginia construct airplane hangars. Under the proposed legislation, the state division responsible for airports would be able to

provide loans to counties, municipalities, and regional airport authorities specifically for planning, acquiring, constructing, improving, maintaining, or operating the various types of aviation hangars. The bill creates a pilot project program with specific eligibility standards that will consider factors such as site readiness, aviation education advancement, economic impact, and market demand for hangar space. The division will have discretion to limit the number of participating airports based on available funding and must cooperate with state economic development agencies to explore funding opportunities.

The bill was referred to the House Finance Committee on February 12, 2025. More information can be found at BillTrack50.

# SUMMARY & FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The State of West Virginia has identified the aircraft and aerospace industry as a *"focal point"* for business growth opportunities and job growth.[88] It is an extraordinary way to expand economic growth in local communities, regions and states simultaneously by recruiting new and existing out-of-state and out-of-country business, creating jobs and job training, enhancing manufacturing and strengthening property and sales tax revenue.

Real commitment and invesment in the State's airports by the Department of Transportation and state executives and legislators is absolutely essential. There are opportunities for the Departments of Transportation, Highways, Commerce and Education independently and collaboratively to support aviation-fueld econmic advancement. The extraordinary return on investment would stimulate further exponential growth and a better quality of life for all.

## AVENUES FOR INNOVATIVE POLICY DEVELOMENT

- Drones, Advanced Air Mobility (AAMs), Regional Advanced Mobility (RAMs), and electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, manned & unmanned helicopter services, charging stations, package delivery hubs.
- Personal aviation-private planes & pilot training; public/private innovation.
- Sources of revenue: private/public partnerships to support drone manufacture, repair, delivery services; partnerships to support additional hangers (i.e., larger initial payment with reduced annual rental fees/rent-to-own/volume discounts), bonds issuance and collaborative developer/agency/airport bond issues.
- Collaborative arrangements between airports in proximity to expand access to federal funds and support additional, innovative services.
- Collaborative cost saving arrangements for hanger and runway maintenance, striping, aircraft maintenance, advertising and marketing.
- Collaborative arrangements between manufacturers, refurbishment and repair facilities, and airports.
- Permanent line item in General Fund budget for to provide annual stipends that support matching fund requirements for infrastructure and equipment needs and growth projects
- Distribution of airline subsidies across all WV airports – reconsider equity and return on investment to reduce competition and increase collaboration between and other facilities.

[88] Brent Dunlap. 2024. Wood County Airport Authority looks at growth. The Parkersburg News & Sentinel, Dec 14. https://www.newsandsentinel.com/news/business/2024/12/wood-county-airport-authority-looks-at-growth/.

## EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGES

The 2025 calendar year ushered in new layers of fiscal instability from all sides. Steep reductions in federal transfers will dramatically, negatively impact state coffers; 51% of annual state spending (Medicaid, Transportation, Education, Agriculture,…) is funded by federal transfers. That will exacerbate State budget shortfalls, which, when; combined with income tax and employee reductions, imply added difficulties in obtaining the matching funds required for FFA grants. Now, more than ever, collaboration between agencies and airports may be the way to do more with less.