

Executive Summary

**Economic Impact of the County of Los Angeles General Aviation Airports**

Prepared for

**County of Los Angeles**

Submitted by

**AECOM**

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# Section 1: Executive Summary

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

The County of Los Angeles (County) owns five airports in the region, each of which contributes to the local and regional economy. The County Department of Public Works (Public Works) retained AECOM to determine the economic impact of general aviation (GA) airports owned by the County. The five County-owned airports analyzed in this study (also referred to as the System of Airports) are the Brackett Field Airport (POC) in La Verne, Compton/Woodley Airport (CPM) in Compton, El Monte Airport (EMT) in El Monte, General William J. Fox Airfield (WJF) in Lancaster, and Whiteman Airport (WHP) in the Pacoima community of the city of Los Angeles. As with most airports, there are a variety of constituents, including pilots, aeronautical service providers, and other airport-related businesses.

The purpose of this report is the following:

1. Collectively estimate the current direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of the System of Airports on the County.
2. Independently estimate the current direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of each GA airport on the County.
3. Identify other qualitative and community benefits of the airports.

This analysis estimates ongoing economic impacts of each airport's operations and the associated economic activities that occur within each airport. A discussion of community benefits is also included.

## SCOPE OF WORK

AECOM performed the following tasks:

- Met with staff within the Public Works' Aviation Division to ascertain model inputs.
- Conducted an online survey of airport businesses.
- Solicited and received responses through email and phone.
- Performed in-person interviews with GA airport managers.
- Performed select phone interviews with GA airport businesses.
- Developed an economic impact model specific to the County-owned GA airports.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The System of Airports directly supports approximately 756 jobs in the County. Accounting for the multiplier effect, the System of Airports creates almost 1,200 total jobs, with associated labor income of more than \$52.4 million annually. The total spending associated with annual operations is estimated at \$140.1 million. In addition, AECOM estimates that the System of Airports generates just over \$400,000 in possessory interest tax within the County on an annual basis. Figure 1 presents the total impact by airport.

**Figure 1: Total Annual Impact by General Aviation Airport to the County of Los Angeles**

Total	Brackett	Compton	El Monte	Fox	Whiteman	Total
Output	\$35,400,000	\$14,700,000	\$21,500,000	\$14,000,000	\$54,500,000	\$140,100,000
Labor Income	\$12,600,000	\$6,200,000	\$7,800,000	\$6,800,000	\$19,000,000	\$52,400,000
Employment	317	110	185	158	412	1,184
Possessory Interest Tax	\$103,000	\$67,000	\$102,000	\$30,000	\$104,000	\$406,000

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding (cumulative total of System of Airports)

Source: IMPLAN and AECOM

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

GA airports perform and facilitate many functions that benefit the wider community. They offer public restaurants, recreation and aircraft viewing areas, aviation-related services such as aerial sightseeing tours, aircraft charters, and opportunities to learn how to fly. Public safety functions include emergency response services such as law enforcement, fire, medical, search and rescue, and disaster relief aircraft. Specific community benefits to the County include the following:

- **Enforcement:** GA airports facilitate the activities of the various local municipal and County police and sheriff air units, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, the U.S. Marshals, the Department of Homeland Security, and various other law enforcement agencies.
- **Firefighting:** GA airports serve as a base of operations for local firefighting efforts by the U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and other agencies. The U.S. Forest Service has a permanent year-round base of operations at Fox Field.
- **Medical Services:** GA airports are frequently used for air ambulance and medevac activities involving the transport of persons, medical equipment, blood, organs, and other urgent medically related materials and supplies.
- **Emergency Operations:** GA airports are used to accommodate transportation and facility needs during an emergency or disaster.
- **News, Weather, and Traffic Reporting:** GA airports are home bases to numerous helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft flying and reporting daily for television and radio.
- **Youth Programs:** GA airports are home to numerous youth programs providing free orientation flights, low-cost flight training, educational and community service opportunities, field trips, and many other aviation-oriented activities such as the Air Explorer Program, Civil Air Patrol, Experimental Aircraft Association Young Eagles Program, and the Milestones of Flight Museum and Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum.
- **Community Events and Activities:** GA airports host various events throughout the year that are open to the general public. Events include static airport displays, fly-ins, air races, air shows, and others. In addition, there are numerous monthly meetings and annual fairs held at the airports.

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