Appendix L: Airports

Introduction

Airport transportation is an important part of the region’s intermodal transportation system. The vision for the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) is to provide a fully integrated, seamless transportation link between the people and products of southeastern Massachusetts. An efficient airport network is critical to our economic development success.

Of the Commonwealth’s 30 public use airports, 26 are municipally owned and 11 are privately owned. Boston’s Logan Airport, Bedford’s Hanscom Air Force Base, and Worcester Regional Airport are owned and operated by the Massachusetts Port Authority (MassPort). In the SMMPO’s geographic area, four public municipal airports service the region’s 27 communities (see Figure L-1), each with its own unique airport identification code and MassDOT Aeronautics defined role:

- New Bedford Regional Airport (E WB) (commercial service)
- Taunton Municipal Airport (TAN) (general aviation)
- Mansfield Municipal Airport (1B9) (general aviation)
- Plymouth Municipal Airport (PYM) (corporate/business)

![Figure L-1: Airports serving the SMMPO Region](image-url)
The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division (MassDOT Aeronautics) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) oversee federal and state compliance of airport operations at all municipally owned airports in the Commonwealth. All four airports in the SMMPO region are included in the FAA’s National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), thus making them eligible for federal funding through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). The New Bedford Regional Airport is classified as a primary service airport, while the others are classified as general aviation airports by the NPIAS.

MassDOT Aeronautics is the state agency that allocates funds to airports through the AIP. The AIP provides grants to public agencies for the planning and development of public-use airports, and funds 95% of eligible project costs. The remaining cost is typically split between MassDOT Aeronautics and the local airport at 2.5% each.

Airport capital improvement projects for safety improvements and maintenance that are not eligible through the AIP may be eligible for funding through MassDOT Aeronautics’ Airport Safety and Maintenance Program (ASMP). MassDOT Aeronautics will typically reimburse an airport sponsor for up to 80% of the total project cost as adjusted for federal reimbursement, if any. The local sponsor is responsible for funding the remaining 20% of the total project cost under the ASMP program. MassDOT Aeronautics also has the ability to fund up to 100% of the total project cost for security improvement projects.

Overall, MassDOT Aeronautics’ goal is to help facilitate the state’s vision of providing a fully integrated, safe, efficient, and seamless transportation link between the people and products of Massachusetts with national and international destinations through an efficient airport system that will help build upon economic development success and improve the quality of life in the Commonwealth. To this effort, MassDOT Aeronautics developed the Massachusetts Statewide Airport System Plan (MSASP) in 2010, which includes an extensive existing conditions assessment and a plan for meeting its current and future needs. The MSASP is not an explicit programming document, and inclusion of projects in the MSASP does not constitute a commitment of either state or federal funding. The MSASP can be found by viewing the technical report on the MSASP website.

Airport Master Plans

The Airport and Airways Development Act of 1970 provides funding for the development of airport master plans. Completed master plans are a requirement for airports seeking federal funding for any capital improvements under this act. In general, airport master plans are prepared every five to ten years, depending on the capital needs of the airport. Master Plans for Plymouth, Mansfield, Taunton, and New Bedford were last updated in 2017, 2014, 2014 and 2013 respectively. Mansfield’s Airport Master Plan is currently in the process of being updated.
Economic Development and Airports in the SRPEDD Region

According to the most recent update of the *Massachusetts Statewide Airport Economic Impact Study* completed by the MassDOT Aeronautics Division in 2013, the public airports (excluding Boston Logan Airport) contributed over $16.6 billion in economic activity and provided nearly 162,000 jobs, contributing over $6.1 billion in wages to employees. Table L-1 lists the relative impact of SRPEDD’s four regional airports to the State’s economy. When reporting economic impacts of an airport, the following definitions apply:

- **Direct Impacts** are defined as impacts associated with companies or businesses located directly at the airport and related to the aviation services,
- **Indirect Impacts** occur off the airport property with businesses dependent on the servicing of the airport visitor, and
- **Induced Impacts** are impacts created by the re-circulating of the direct and indirect economic benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Impact (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford</td>
<td>$32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton</td>
<td>$3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>$9.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth</td>
<td>$47.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Excerpt from the “Massachusetts Statewide Airport Economic Impact Study”, MassDOT Aeronautics Division, 2014 Update.)* The numbers do not reflect the impact of each airport on its local area.
Land Use and Environmental Protection

The land use surrounding the airports in the region varies from a state forest with large tracts of open space, extensive wetlands, and mixed-use areas of residential, industrial and commercial properties. Airports require large areas of land to be set aside for operations.

Coordination between airport planning and general planning, cross-jurisdictional concerns, and the lack of a state or federal policy to protect airports are some of the most significant barriers that typically exist in the determination of compatible land use for airports. In recent decades, growth surrounding airports has led to infringement on the operating ability of airports and decreased the potential for expansion. While certain commercial and industrial developments are assets to local airports, residential developments in close proximity to these facilities limit their ability to grow both physically and economically, as residents often oppose airport operations and expansions. In the past, airports have had limited capability to restrict development through the attendance of public meetings in opposition to these developments and attempts to impose height restrictions on surrounding developments. In order to take further steps to avoid encroaching land uses around them, each of the region’s airports have proposed several different strategies. The New Bedford Regional Airport Manager has proposed mandatory airport disclosure forms into purchase agreements when houses are sold near the airport. The Town of Plymouth has zoned the land “Airport” surrounding its facility, thus excluding residential development.

The Mansfield Municipal Airport, the New Bedford Regional Airport, and the Taunton Municipal Airport fall within Priority Development Areas (PDAs) as designated by their communities as part of the Regional Smart Growth Plan. PDAs are areas within a city or town that are capable of handling more development due to several factors including good access, available infrastructure, an absence of environmental constraints and local support. This designation is useful to the town in making land use and zoning decisions. These airports have been identified as a development area for potential increase and expansion for flight services including business and corporate flights, freight transport and other aviation related activities. Carver and Plymouth were not included in the Regional Smart Growth Plan; therefore, Plymouth Airport was not designated as part of this process.

The privately-owned King Airfield Hangar is located adjacent to the Taunton Municipal Airport within an area designated as a Priority Protection Area (PPA). PPAs are areas within a city or town that deserve special protection due to the presence of significant environmental factors or historical significance. The hanger and airfield played a significant role in the development of the first flight school training pilots following World War I.

Airports face increasing concerns related to environmental issues and considerations. Specific environmental issues outlined in the MSASP include air, wetlands, water quality, rare species
management, noise impacts, and environmental sustainability. These issues increasingly place airports under pressure to meet new and changing environmental regulatory requirements.

Addressing these regulatory issues can have significant effects at certain airports for maintenance and future planned projects which affect costs, design constraints, and ultimate feasibility. Whether they are public or privately owned, airports are subject to local, state and federal environmental regulations. In order to meet the demands of environmental regulations, airports in the region have undertaken some or all of the following measures:

- Environmental Assessment (EA)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);
- Vegetation Management Plan (VMP);
- Grassland Management;
- Comprehensive Solid Waste Management;
- Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program;
- Wetland Delineation;
- Spill Prevention, Spill Control, Spill Countermeasures (SPCC) Compliance;
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Compliance;
- Alternative Fuel Vehicles; and
- Recycling Programs.

According to the MSASP, the concept of sustainability has historically been used in reference to environmental concerns but has more recently taken on a larger definition in relation to airport development and maintenance. Sustainability in terms of airports has been defined by the concept of what is in place that is sustainable and worth sustaining. Sustainability also applies to how airports could be sustainable long term and be more cost-effective and balanced in terms of actual cost and environmental impact. The process of sustainability typically requires spending more up-front on projects to create longer sustaining infrastructure which is challenging in an environment of cost-cutting and increased costs for airport improvements.

While many airports can justify the long-term cost savings that may be realized, the higher up-front costs mean that fewer projects will be funded, leading to more delay in airport development. In both public and private airport environments, there is a need for some level of regulation and oversight to ensure that airport operational safety and efficiency are maintained. This is often accomplished through defined airport standards, procedures, performance criteria, and recommended guidelines found within specific airport plans adopted by an airport. Many of these plans come as a result of federally funded projects such as Airport Master Plans and Airport Layout Plans; however, many of the other various airport plans used to maintain operational safety and efficiency at general aviation airports are adopted by publicly and privately-owned airports alike. Such plans include but are not limited to: Airport Emergency Plans, Snow and Ice Control Plans, Wildlife Management Plans, and established Noise Abatement Procedures.
Most public airports must maintain a Vegetation Management Plan (VMP), as mandated by the FAA, for the purpose of clearing flight paths and runways of any impeding vegetation. The FAA also requires that a 7460 form be completed for any proposed construction or alteration with a total height above ground level over 200 feet and for other projects that could affect airport activity. Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) procedures are also in effect at each regional airport.

### Safety and Security

Due to the rising concern for airport security following the events on September 11, 2001, general aviation airport security has recently become a top priority to daily operations. As a result, all airports in the region have a MassDOT Aeronautics approved security plan, have control measures in place for accessing the Air Operations Area, which is defined as “any area of an airport used or intended to be used for landing, takeoff, or surface maneuvering of aircraft,” and restrict access to the public with use of electronic ID/Card Readers. The New Bedford Regional Airport and the Mansfield Municipal Airport use closed circuit television (CCTV) as additional security measures.

Recent security upgrades (since 2015) at the region’s airports include installation of external and internal security cameras and upgrading lighting at the Mansfield Municipal Airport and TSA federalization at the New Bedford Airport. Since September 11, 2001, specific security issues and needs at any given airport are not divulged to the public in order to protect the security of that airport.

According to the MSASP, with respect to national aviation industry issues, overall airport safety plays an increasingly critical role. The core focus of the FAA is its mission to provide the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world, and it continually strives to improve the safety and efficiency of flight in this country. Under the broad umbrella of safety and efficiency, the FAA has several major roles:

- Regulating civil aviation to promote safety;
- Encouraging and developing civil aeronautics, including new aviation technology;
- Developing and operating a system of air traffic control and navigation for both civil and military aircraft;
- Researching and developing the National Airspace System and civil aeronautics; and
- Developing and carrying out programs to control aircraft noise and other environmental effects of civil aviation.

Specific safety issues related to the region’s airports can be affected by land use, specifically the New Bedford Regional Airport’s attempts at expanding a runway to meet standard runway safety specifications. Due to the proximity of wetlands and residential neighborhoods, the
runway expansion was limited to meet the minimum safety requirements, instead of an expansion from 5,000 feet to 6,800 feet; the project included an expansion to 5,400 feet and the addition of runway safety areas.

10-Year Growth Analysis of SRPEDD Region’s Four Municipal Airports

Since 2008, operations at the Taunton, Mansfield and Plymouth Airports have decreased and have only recently begun to stabilize. The New Bedford Airport has experienced a growth in operations due to a runway expansion project completed in 2015 that allowed for an increase in Business/Corporate jet traffic. General Aviation trends nationwide decreased significantly during the Great Recession and have not recovered to pre-recession numbers. Regional decreases can be attributed regionally due to the declining pilot population/pilot shortages and the increase in costs associated with flying, specifically the price of fuel. In the past few years, operations have begun to stabilize at many of the airports, and could increase if investments are made wisely. Total operations at the region’s airports are forecasted to increase by over 36% by 2030, with the largest projected increase at the New Bedford Regional Airport at 70%.

Figure L-2 displays total operations since 2008 for each of the four airports in the SRPEDD region. Operations represent takeoffs and landings at an airport. Takeoffs and landings are counted individually.
Table L-2 shows the operations forecasted by the 2010 Massachusetts Statewide Airport System Plan for 2015, 2020, and 2030. A systematic method was used to calculate future aircraft operations through drawing a correlation between based aircraft and aircraft operations. The term “based aircraft” refers to aircraft considered operational and air worthy for the majority of the year and “aircraft operations” refers to the airborne movement of an aircraft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport Name</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2030</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield Municipal Airport</td>
<td>57,500</td>
<td>76,785</td>
<td>80,303</td>
<td>87,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford Regional Airport</td>
<td>57,496</td>
<td>85,266</td>
<td>89,173</td>
<td>97,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth Municipal Airport</td>
<td>65,500</td>
<td>63,937</td>
<td>64,579</td>
<td>65,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton Municipal Airport</td>
<td>31,390</td>
<td>33,124</td>
<td>34,641</td>
<td>37,888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total operations at the region’s airports are forecasted to increase by over 36% by 2030, with the largest projected increase at the New Bedford Regional Airport at 70%.

National and regional aviation trends that could impact operations at the airports include:

**Positive Trends**

- As a result of a MassDOT Aeronautics program to construct Administration / Terminal Buildings at Massachusetts Airports, new terminals have been constructed at the Taunton Municipal Airport and the Mansfield Municipal Airport and one is planned for construction at the Plymouth Municipal Airport. Improvements are expected to have a positive influence on pilot experience and potentially attract pilots to these airports.
- An increase in corporate jet activity at all four airports is expected, most notably at the New Bedford Regional and Plymouth Municipal Airports due to recent improvements. Business and corporate aviation are the fastest growing sectors of general aviation nationwide. Large corporate businesses to small businesses and universities utilize smaller regional airports to make connections where there is reduced or eliminated airline service.
- The New Bedford Regional Airport has experienced the highest increase in operations of the region’s airports since the economic recession due to the opening of the Bridgewater State College Aviation Training Center and an expansion of Runway 5-32 that allows for increased commercial use.
- Operations at all four airports have begun to stabilize and/or increase from recession numbers.
Negative Trends

- There is a significant pilot shortage in recent years due to the increasing age of pilots, the overall cost of general aviation, and additional requirements for general aviation aircraft, which is impacting not only general aviation but also makes it difficult to find pilots to run smaller charters such as Cape Air out of New Bedford.

Future Trends

- Investments in infrastructure improvements at all four airports could increase operations.
- Diversification of operations beyond a single identity airport, for example, expanding from general aviation to include training, corporate, and specialized services, specifically at New Bedford Regional Airport, could lead to increases in operations and overall success of the airport.
- Changes to existing legislation and tax laws, environmental regulations, and policies for airports on the federal, state and local level can have an effect on the ability of airports to meet the demands of their facility. Any changes can favorably or unfavorably affect airports to foster programs (capital or economic) for their airport.
- The use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) or “drones” has risen significantly in recent years, both for personal and professional use. The long-term impacts to the regional airports from the increased use of this technology remains to be seen, however; short-term impacts include the addition of pilot licensing program at Plymouth Municipal Airport, decrease in the need for traditional aircraft for services such as aerial photography, and mitigation of potential interaction between UAS and other aircraft.
SRPEDD Region Airport Details

New Bedford Regional Airport

The New Bedford Regional Airport (EWB) serves as the aviation hub for southeastern Massachusetts. Located at the intersection of I-195 and Route 140, it serves the geographic area midway between Boston and Providence. It is 50 miles from Logan Airport in Boston and 43 miles from T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, R.I. It is served by two separate interchanges off Route 140 as shown in Figure L-3. Exit 3 connects with Hathaway Road and offers access to the Shawmut Avenue (Airport Road) passenger and corporate facilities on the southwest side of the airfield, while exit 4 accesses the designated Foreign Trade Zone/Industrial Air Park on the east side of the field.

Figure L-3: New Bedford Regional Airport Access
Owned and operated by the city of New Bedford, a full-time airport manager and a nine-member airport commission manage daily operations. An FAA contract air-traffic control tower operates between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. with pilot controlled lighting available during the hours the control tower is not in operation.

**Airport Facilities** - The New Bedford Regional Airport is home base for 78 single engine aircraft, 16 multi-engine aircraft, 4 jets, 1 helicopter and 1 ultralight aircraft. Situated on an 823-acre parcel of land, it is the largest airport (in total area and operations) in the region. The facilities available include two paved runways as shown in Figure L-4. Runway 5-23 is the primary instrument runway and is served by a precision instrument approach (ILS). It was rebuilt in 2015 to increase the length from 4,997 feet to 5,400 and to add runway safety areas. Runway 5 is equipped with an Instrument Landing System (ILS) and an Approach Lighting System (ALS), while Runway 23 is equipped for Localizer (Back Course) Instrument Approach and ALS. The crosswind runway, 14-32, is 5,000 feet in length and 150 feet wide and was rebuilt in 2018 to include runway safety areas. The airport also has six lettered taxiways, each 50 feet wide. There is a bistro-style restaurant, the Airport Grille, located on the premises.

![Figure L-4: New Bedford Regional Airport Diagram](image.png)
The airport offers an Automated Surface Observation System (ASOS), owned by the FAA and maintained by the National Weather Service (NWS), which provides on-site weather data collection and reporting capabilities. The ASOS collects and transmits weather data to pilots via radio and is available by telephone. Paved parking, aircraft storage and maintenance hangars are located at the airport as well. The airport has installed an aircraft surveillance system that captures the images of aircraft as they take-off or land, automatically records their identification numbers and supports the airports operations, billing and security efforts.

General aviation services are provided, such as charter flights, cargo service and flight instruction. Corporate aviation services are also available and have increased since 2002 due to improvements at the airport. Bridgewater State University’s aviation program is also headquartered at the airport. Regularly scheduled direct flights are provided to the Islands of Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket via Cape Air. The airport also has access to a variety of intermodal services such as on-site car rentals, taxi and limousine services, as well as small engine planes. Commercial passenger service to Florida was briefly introduced in 2017 but was discontinued due to a shortage of pilots.

**Economic Development** - The airport has a designated Foreign Trade Zone that allows companies within a 60-mile radius to import goods duty free. This designation is very useful to the seaport but has never been utilized at the airport. The airport’s proximity to regional highways and waterways maximizes the value of public investment in both the airport and the highway system, greatly benefiting the regional economy. Close proximity to the New Bedford Harbor, a deep-water harbor with available ferry service makes the New Bedford Regional Airport strategically desirable for businesses requiring an integrated transportation system. Rail freight service and international shipping services are also available by CSX in the area, although not directly at the airport.

Planned commuter rail stations will also spur economic development and offer better access to the city from the Boston Metro Region.

**Environmental Management** - The airport is surrounded by forested and emergent wetland areas with pockets of residential and commercial land uses along the eastern boundary. The Acushnet Cedar Swamp, located to the north, is a designated natural area landmark property that is owned and managed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (DEM). The Apponagansett Swamp, situated west and south, is an extensive wetland and riverine system that includes portions of the Paskamanset River and its associated drainage basin. An ongoing Vegetation Management Plan ensures both airport safety and habitat protection.
The airport has a stormwater pollution prevention program, as does the airport’s maintenance garage. Fixed base operators are required to provide prevention plans, as well, in case of a fuel spill. The City of New Bedford Fire Department responds to all releases of hazardous materials at the airport.

The airport is compliant with the Spill Prevention, Spill Control and Spill Countermeasures (SPCC) and the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) as regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In addition, the airport has a number of alternately fueled equipment and a recycling program.

**Taunton Municipal Airport**

The Taunton Municipal Airport (TAN) is a general aviation airport owned by the City of Taunton. Daily operations are managed by the Taunton Municipal Airport Commission and an airport manager. Advisory services of a professional aviation-consulting firm are also used. It serves as a navigational hub with access to Logan Airport in Boston, T.F. Green Airport in Rhode Island, Bradley Airport in Connecticut and Albany International Airport in New York. It is located approximately 2 miles from Route 44, 3 miles from the Route 24 & Route 44 interchange and approximately 6 miles from Interstate 495, as shown in Figure L-5.
The airport commission has adopted the “Taunton Municipal Airport Vision Statement”, which reads as follows:

“The Taunton Municipal Airport Commission envisions the Taunton Municipal Airport to be a center of general aviation activity well into the twenty-first century, serving aviation enthusiasts in the southeast region of Massachusetts. Focus will be on the private pilot, aircraft owner and aviation enthusiast by providing quality services and educational activities and events. Our goal is to make Taunton Municipal Airport a community-based aviation center and a good neighbor, while enhancing all facets of the general aviation experience.”

**Airport Facilities** - The Taunton Municipal Airport is home base for 115 single-engine planes and 4 helicopters. Situated on 256 acres, it provides a full range of aviation services. The airfield contains two strategically aligned runways that facilitate landings in variable weather conditions. The primary runway, 12-30, is 3,500 feet long and 75 feet wide. Runway 30 has a full parallel taxiway (taxiway “A”), with two exit stub taxiways. This configuration minimizes runway occupancy time and provides adequate peak hour capacity. Runway 30 also contains non-precision instrument approach pavement markings. The secondary runway, 4-22, is a
gravel strip that is used sparingly due to its length, surface type, tree height obstructions and lack of markings. The airport provides radio-activated pilot controlled lighting on a 24-hour basis. Equipment includes a non-directional beacon plus Runway End Identifier Lights (REIL) and Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) systems.

There are six conventional hangars used for aircraft maintenance and storage along with 76 T-hangars. T-hangars are a type of enclosed metal structure designed to hold aircraft in protective storage. There is also a main tie-down apron located in front of the airport terminal building. There is a single 10,000-gallon underground 100LL avgas fuel storage tank that was installed in 1996. It is in full compliance with current U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state regulations regarding Underground Storage Tanks (UST).

The airport offers an Automated Surface Observation System (ASOS), owned by the FAA and maintained by the National Weather Service (NWS), which provides on-site weather data collection and reporting capabilities. The ASOS collects and transmits weather data to pilots via radio and is available by telephone.

The terminal building is located on the premises at the end of Westcoat Drive. The Bristol Aviation Flight School and the Pilots Lounge Center share use of the 70-foot by 25-foot facility. The airport is also home to various aviation clubs such as the Brockton Flying Club and the Taunton Airport Association. The general public can use the airport’s flight instruction, training, sales, rentals, charters and scenic flights. Local taxi and rental car services provide transportation to area destinations for passengers and pilots. The Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) provides a flag system bus service along Middleboro Avenue which can be accessed by walking the 0.3-mile driveway Monday through Friday during bus operating hours.

The privately owned King Airfield Hangar (Figure L-6) is located adjacent to the Taunton Municipal Airport and within an area designated as a Priority Protection Area (PPA). The airfield was established in 1919 and known locally as King’s Field. The hangar and airfield played a significant role in the development of the first flight school training pilots following World War I.

![Figure L-6: Historical King Airfield Hangar](image)
**Economic Development** - The Taunton Municipal Airport lies within a sub-zone of New Bedford’s Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ). Location within a foreign trade zone offers tax advantages for airport-dependent businesses with duty free location for storing, manufacturing, assembling and distributing goods from international markets and exporting finished goods. Commercial and industrial development surrounding the airport can also accommodate aviation-dependent businesses.

The airport is located within a Priority Development Area (PDA) as designated by the city of Taunton and as part of the Regional Smart Growth Plan. The property has been identified as a development area for potential increase and expansion for flight services including business and corporate flights, freight transport and other aviation related activities.

**Environmental Management** - The airport’s management protects over 65 acres of natural habitat. An ongoing Vegetation Management Plan, established in 1997, ensures both airport safety and habitat protection. Airport management has implemented programs to protect the surrounding environment, including fuel tank upgrades and a comprehensive Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program. This program was first established in 1996 and updated in 2005.

In addition, landscape buffers provide natural screening and noise reduction along residential areas in close proximity to the airport. The following noise abatement advisories are suggested by the airport:

- Aircrafts departing Runway 30 should avoid flying over the elementary school at the end of the runway.
- Helicopters should avoid flying over densely populated areas west and south of the airport.

The airport is compliant with the Spill Prevention, Spill Control, and Spill Countermeasures (SPCC) and the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) as regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**Capital Improvement Projects** - A comprehensive master plan was developed in 2014. Construction of a new terminal is also currently proposed as part of a MassDOT Aeronautics program to construct Administration/Terminal Buildings at Massachusetts Airports. The program provides 95% state funding and is only applicable for terminal construction. The airport has been designated to receive a 5,500 square foot building that will be constructed in 2020.

Potential construction of a gambling casino in Taunton could have positive economic impacts to the airport but would most likely require upgrades of existing runways to accommodate larger corporate style aircraft.
Plymouth Municipal Airport

In 1952 the Plymouth Board of Selectmen purchased the Plymouth Airport from the U.S. Military for the amount of one dollar. The Plymouth Municipal Airport is an important part of the southeastern Massachusetts transportation system. The airport operates as a general aviation airport with increasing corporate use. It has been maintained, developed, and operated by the airport manager and the Plymouth Airport Commission and continues to be a necessary component and support function of the local economy.

Access to the airport is provided via South Meadow Road, which runs northeast from Route 58 to Route 44. As shown in Figure L-7, the airport is situated within 9 miles of Interstate 495, 4 miles of Route 3, and 6 miles of Route 44, the airport allows convenient access to Boston, Cape Cod, and the Islands.

Airport Facilities - The airport is home base for approximately 155 single and multi-engine aircrafts, jets and helicopters. The airfield contains two paved runways that provide pilots with

Figure L-7: Plymouth Municipal Airport Access
safe approach during variable weather conditions. Located on a 755-acre parcel of land, approximately 50 acres are available for airport expansion and an additional 100 acres are available for non-aviation commercial uses. The main runway, 6/24, is 4,350 feet in length and 75 feet wide and is equipped with Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI). Runway 15/33 is 3,450 feet in length and 75 feet wide. The runways include Medium-Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights (MASLR).

Airport management works with fixed based operators to provide a variety of aviation services. Hangars, parking, tie-downs, and navigational aids are available 24 hours a day. The airport contains a total of 139 hangars, 22 of which are conventional hangars and 98 are T-hangers. 120 paved tie-downs are located on the premises. Maintenance, repairs, and avionics installation are available during regular business hours.

The airport offers an Automated Surface Observation System (ASOS), owned by the FAA and maintained by the National Weather Service (NWS), which provides on-site weather data collection and reporting capabilities. The ASOS collects and transmits weather data to pilots via radio and is available by telephone.

The airport is well known for its flight instruction for fixed wing aircrafts, gliders, and helicopters. Aircraft sales, charter flights, and scenic flights can be scheduled. Major commuter carriers and larger airports regularly recruit pilots from Plymouth Airport’s training schools. The Plymouth Airport is the headquarters for three major operations that enhance the safety of the region, Medflight, Massachusetts State Police Air Wing, and Plymouth County Fire Plane. Medflight offers emergency helicopter transport for the region to local hospitals and Boston hospitals. The Massachusetts State Police Air Wing is active in search and rescue, anti-terrorism efforts and law enforcement assistance (see Figure L-8). Plymouth County Fire Plane assists southeastern Massachusetts fire departments during periods of high fire danger.

**Figure L-8: Massachusetts State Police Air Wing Helicopter in Action**
Local taxis and rental car agencies provide transportation services to the area. Air shuttle service is available for connection to international flights at both Logan Airport in Boston and T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, R.I. Commuter rail service is located within four miles at the Kingston commuter rail station for access to Boston.

**Economic Development** - Corporate use of the airport is increasing and is expected to increase in the future. There are several corporations that are regular users of the airport including Entergy, Ocean Spray and others. Corporate use of the airport benefits from commercial and industrial development in Plymouth and the surrounding region.

**Environmental Management** - One of the goals of airport management is to preserve the natural habitat at the Plymouth Airport. Oil/water separators, fuel storage tank upgrades, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials) procedures have been implemented to protect air, water, and soils from contamination. Mowing practices have also been adjusted to avoid disruption during nesting seasons. Noise abatement procedures are taken seriously by the airport, with a number of specific procedures in place. In addition, the sewage treatment plant constructed in 2001 is used to service the waste needs of the airport’s businesses and future needs of a potential airport industrial park.

An ongoing Vegetation Management Plan, established in 1997, ensures both airport safety and habitat protection. The airport is compliant with the Spill Prevention, Spill Control and Spill Countermeasures (SPCC) and the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) as regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**Mansfield Municipal Airport**

The Mansfield Municipal Airport (1B9) is a general aviation airport owned by the Town of Mansfield and operated by King Aviation Mansfield, Inc. The airport serves the tri-town area of Mansfield, Foxboro, and Norton. It supports corporate and business flight activities, law enforcement, emergency medical services, charter flights, flight schools, and recreational flying. Located in the southeast portion of Mansfield, located approximately 1.5 miles from Interstate I-495 and approximately 1 mile from Route 140, as shown in Figure L-9.
**Airport Facilities** - The airport is situated on 235 acres of land, with 112 acres designated for open space. The facility can accommodate a full range of aircraft, from single and multi-engine planes to smaller jets, helicopters, blimps and balloons. The main paved runway, 14-32, is 3,500 feet in length and 75-feet wide. The secondary grass runway, 04-22, is 2,300-feet in length and 100-feet wide. Both runways can facilitate landings and takeoffs in variable weather conditions. The airport has a paved parallel taxiway to Runway 14-32 (Taxiway A), a paved terminal area taxiway, (Taxiway B), and two paved taxiways leading to a Quadrant IV (Taxiways C and D). All taxiways have medium intensity edge lights.

The airport is home base for 120 aircraft and pilots are provided a combination of facilities including parking, hangars, tie-downs, navigational aids, maintenance, avionics, parts, and repairs. It contains eight hangars and parking for 130 aircraft. There is parking available for 72 automobiles. Mansfield Airport maintains a terminal building that includes a pilot lounge and office space. Fuel is available for the various types of aircraft that utilize the airport. The airport has a snow removal and equipment building which is used to store airport owned maintenance
equipment. There is also a training room used for training, meetings and other aviation and non-aviation events in the equipment building.

Most services are available seven days per week except during the winter months, when they are available during regular business hours. Flight instruction, training, aircraft sales, rentals, charters, and scenic flights are also available for aviation enthusiasts. Local taxi and car rental agencies provide transportation service for passengers and pilots. Commuter rail to Boston is located within three miles of the airport and the Bonanza Bus Company offers daily service to Logan Airport in Boston at its terminal located within four miles of the airport, in Foxborough.

**Economic Development** - Mansfield’s community leaders consider the Mansfield Municipal Airport to be a direct and indirect contributor to the area’s economy. Companies that regularly utilize the airport include Midas Mufflers, TPC – Boston, Gillette Stadium, The Comcast Center, Chadwick’s, Toyota Motor Company, Staples, and Covidien. The PGA Golf Course on Route 140 in Norton, Patriot Place at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro and Mansfield Crossing may provide opportunities for the airport to increase corporate operations.

The airport is located within a Priority Development Area (PDA) as designated by the town of Mansfield and as part of the Regional Smart Growth Plan. The property has been identified as a development area due to a strong capital plan and recent major upgrades to the facility. The airport continues to be a great asset for the Town of Mansfield.

**Environmental Management** - Airport management has reserved 122 acres of land for open space. In addition, management works to protect its surrounding environment. Air, soil, and groundwater contamination protection includes HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials) procedures for safe handling of fuels and maintenance materials. Outdated fuel storage tanks have been replaced with a state-of-the-art, double-walled, aboveground fuel storage tanks. The airport maintains a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. De-icing materials and salt are not used on the airfield or aircraft. Also in place is a “Good Neighbor” policy to reduce noise pollution through noise reduction practices that include specialized flight patterns and landscaped vegetation buffers.

The airport is compliant with Spill Prevention, Spill Control and Spill Countermeasures (SPCC) and the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) as regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**Capital Improvement projects (through 2025)** - A comprehensive master plan was completed in 2014 to address current and future airport operations. The plan includes an updated Capital Improvement Program (CIP), a revised Airport Layout Plan and a Long-Term Facilities Plan.
A new terminal for the airport was constructed in 2016 as a result of a MassDOT Aeronautics program to construct Administration / Terminal Buildings at Massachusetts Airports.

The towns of Norton and Mansfield are currently working to extend the Mansfield World War II trail separate use path (SUP) from its current terminus on Fruit Street along the sewer right-of-way adjacent to the airport through Norton to the Taunton City Line. The SUP would offer alternative modes of transportation access to the airport.

Table L-3 displays basic information and statistics regarding the region’s four public airports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification Type</th>
<th>New Bedford</th>
<th>Taunton</th>
<th>Mansfield</th>
<th>Plymouth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General aviation, passenger, air cargo, military</td>
<td>General aviation, military</td>
<td>General aviation, blimp</td>
<td>General aviation, passenger, military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Trade Zone</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (subzone of N.B.)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operations*</td>
<td>53,182</td>
<td>33,550</td>
<td>47,815</td>
<td>55,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Runways</td>
<td>2 (paved)</td>
<td>2 (1 paved; 1 gravel)</td>
<td>2 (1 paved; 1 turf)</td>
<td>2 (paved)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runway Width x Length</td>
<td>150' x 4997', 150' x 5000'</td>
<td>75' x 3500', 60' x 1900'</td>
<td>75' x 3500', 100' x 2300'</td>
<td>75' x 4350', 75' x 3450'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Taxiways</td>
<td>6 (each 50' wide)</td>
<td>1 (40' x 3500')</td>
<td>2 (each 30' wide)</td>
<td>Multiple (40' wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Acres</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Tower</td>
<td>Yes (FAA contracted)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Landing System (ILS)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based Aircrafts</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Hangars</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft Parking</td>
<td>67 (leased)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table L-3: Comparison Table of the Region’s Four Municipal Airports 2015
### Recommendations for Airports in Southeastern Massachusetts

**L-1** Implementation of capital improvements as outlined by the Taunton, Mansfield, Plymouth, and New Bedford Airport’s Master Plans, Master Plan Updates and this report.

**L-2** Road infrastructure improvements that service the region’s airports as outlined under the individual airports’ capital improvement sections.

**L-3** The SMMPO supports development at the New Bedford Airport, the Mansfield Airport, and the Taunton Municipal Airport in designated Priority Development Areas consistent with the South Coast Rail Smart Growth Plan.

**L-4** The SMMPO supports protection at the Taunton Municipal Airport in designated Priority Protection Areas consistent with the South Coast Rail Smart Growth Plan.

**L-5** Prioritization of improvements to safety and security (specifically regarding counter-terrorism and emergency response) at all of the region’s airports. Measures to carry out these improvements must be included in all Airport Security Plans.

**L-6** Research into the feasibility of using alternative fuel and energy sources would be beneficial due to the increase in fuel costs and the continuing decrease in the availability of fossil fuels.

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### Table: Airports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auto Parking</th>
<th>Paid Parking – 475</th>
<th>Total Parking – 645</th>
<th>135</th>
<th>72</th>
<th>200</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flight School</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway Access</td>
<td>Interstate 195 and Routes 6 and 140</td>
<td>Interstate 495 and Routes 24, 44 and 140</td>
<td>Interstate 495 and 95</td>
<td>Interstate 495 and Routes 44 and 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Facilities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (4)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal/Passenger Bldg.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/Cafeteria Facilities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Master Plan/Updates</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Operation: Operations represent takeoffs and landings at an airport. Takeoffs and landings are counted individually. Figures are estimates attained from the FAA for 2012.*
Finally, the SMMPO recommends that each airport work with its municipality to minimize the impacts from land use encroachments on current and future airport operations and infrastructure expansions. Possible tactics to accomplish this could include airport disclosure forms in residential sales purchase agreements, zoning restrictions, rezoning of land around airports, and additional easements for airport use. Airport Commissions and municipalities should ensure that surrounding land uses do not conflict with existing and future airport activity.