New Website Showcases Aviation Industry’s Economic Impact on Nebraska

November 5, 2020 (Lincoln, Neb.) — Results of Nebraska Aviation Counts!, a study of the aviation industry’s economic impact on Nebraska, are showcased on NDOT’s Aeronautics Division’s new website, available at https://www.nebraskaaviationcounts.com/. The study, funded by the Federal Aviation Administration and the State of Nebraska, at a cost of around $400,000, analyzes aviation’s overall role in the state’s economy to help inform state decision-making.

NDOT commissioned GBA, an engineering firm from Lenexa, Kansas, to do the study as a tool for determining how best to support aviation and grow Nebraska’s economy. GBA developed an updated economic impact analysis to provide, not just a snapshot in time, but a living document that can be updated as needed by individual airport operators.

“The impacts of this study will resonate for decades to come,” said NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis. “As we explore new opportunities to capitalize on our economic investment and expand into emerging areas of growth, this provides the compass to ensure we are headed in the right direction.”

While some of the study results were not surprising, others spotlighted areas that aren’t always thought of as economic drivers, including aerial firefighting, and use of airports by visiting doctors and medical clinics.

“From a broader perspective, the results confirm what we have known all along,” said NDOT Aeronautics Director Ann Richart. “Nebraska airports are a dynamic part of the state’s economy. This study digs deeper to identify direct and indirect impacts on Nebraska’s businesses and communities. We are excited to share this information with the public and showcase the benefits provided by the state’s airport system on our new website.”

Among the study findings:

- Aviation has an $8.6 billion impact on Nebraska’s economy annually.
- Contributors to this impact include: tenant/business activity - $2 billion, construction - $87 million, visitor spending - $4.5 billion, and military spending - $2.1 billion.
- Aviation creates 90,282 jobs with a $3.5 billion payroll.

Others who provided assistance to GBA in the study included Kimley-Horn, Olsson, Marr Arnold Planning, and Dr. Christopher Decker of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The study was the first of its kind since 2002 and augments information gleaned from an economic snapshot in 2014.

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