



Airport Director's Letter

Greetings,

As we expand distribution of this newsletter to reach more people, I wanted to kick this issue off with a little background. The goal of this publication is to help build awareness about St. Louis Downtown Airport, the exceptional tenants here and the tremendous impact the airport has as an economic engine and job creator for the bi-state St. Louis region. Given your leadership role and the influence you have at the regional and national levels, we want to make sure you are familiar with our entire operation so that, when the opportunity arises, you can help to spread the word about all the great things going on here.

St. Louis Downtown Airport has a unique niche among the five airports that serve the bi-state region. Our location, only minutes from the Gateway Arch Riverfront with convenient access to all points in the St. Louis region, makes St. Louis Downtown Airport the region's front door for business aviation. It serves corporations such as Union Pacific Railroad, Peabody Energy, Monsanto Chemical and AB InBev. The airport is also home to the nation's oldest flight school, St. Louis University's Parks College, and serves as a major transfer point for patients and transplant organs in transit to and from the region's many medical centers. With all this activity, our airport ranks as the second busiest general aviation airport in the St. Louis area behind St. Louis Lambert International Airport, and it is the busiest general aviation airport in Illinois outside of Chicago.

The airport has an economic impact exceeding \$580 million per year according to the most recent State of Illinois Aviation Economic Impact Study. More than 25 aviation businesses—ranging from general aviation, personal use and training schools to maintenance, manufacturing, helicopter operations and more—are located at the St. Louis Downtown Airport. These businesses have created employment opportunities for more than 650 positions and support 3,200 direct and indirect jobs. Among these employment opportunities are 450 jobs specifically in aerospace manufacturing, which support the region's aerospace industry cluster. Airport manufacturing jobs create a career pipeline for the region, including the two underserved communities that surround the Airport—the Village of Sauget and the City of Cahokia.

As the number of COVID-19 cases in the region continues to fall and demand for air travel continues to slowly ramp back up, St. Louis Downtown Airport is well positioned for future growth. We'll continue to detail our evolving story in future issues of our newsletter, but if you ever have questions or would like to learn more, you can reach out directly to me and I'd be happy to connect. I also encourage you to check out www.stlouisdowntownairport.com for more information about our facility, services and more.

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Traffic Control Tower Hours Impacted by COVID-19



As COVID-19 significantly impacted air traffic across the nation, St. Louis Downtown Airport saw a reduction in the daily control tower operation hours. The tower which is typically open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily, operated from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. the first few months. Although the adjustment is standard for airports this size, reduced hours meant that pilots who were using the airport after hours had to rely on alternate communication forms.

Ideal Aviation occupies two hangars totaling more than 25,000 square feet at St. Louis Downtown Airport and provides fuel, maintenance, flight training, aircraft rental and storage to resident and transient pilots. Bill Macon, managing partner for Ideal Aviation, said when the tower is closed, an automated message goes out, and each aircraft has to self-report. Pilots send messages to a shared frequency, communicating their location and intentions.

Macon said the reduced schedule wasn't noticeable at first because both the coronavirus and the weather reduced air traffic.

"From the period of mid-March until the beginning of May, even though technically we could have continued flight training full tilt because flight training is considered an essential service, we elected on our own to scale down operations significantly—not because of the tower but because of our inability to ensure the safety of students and pilots in a small confined space during COVID-19," said Macon.

By mid-May, as the weather improved and some restrictions were lifted, flight training and travel began to resume at St. Louis Downtown Airport, which features three runways.

The team at Ideal Aviation said pilots utilizing the runways simultaneously with no control tower resulted in some challenges.

"There are small airports all over the U.S. that don't require a control tower," said Colin Foppe, Director of Operations for Ideal Aviation. "But when there's jet traffic coming in, helicopters for news and EMS coming in and out, and a couple of different training schools here, it can be quite busy. That's why there has always been a control tower here."

Foppe added that this experience has made for a great learning environment. "Students are flying when the tower is open and when it's closed, but oftentimes they have an instructor with them," he said. "All the instructors here are focused on making sure everybody is capable of getting in and out of the air space whether the control tower is open or closed."

The FAA extended the control tower hours on June 4, so it is now open again until 8 p.m. Having four more hours back in the operating schedule to cover the popular evening flying time is a sign that things are getting closer to being back to normal.

Airport Secures \$69K in CARES Act Funds

With air travel dropping sharply in recent months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, one ripple effect at St. Louis Downtown Airport and airports across the country is a sharp decline in fuel sales.

St. Louis Downtown Airport is pleased to share that we were able to secure \$69,000 in funding through the CARES Act to help offset operational costs, including some of the COVID-19 related loss of fuel sales. That was a big win for the airport!

There also is an opportunity for the airport to secure additional funding through the CARES Act to help to cover the match typically paid by the airport for infrastructure projects, helping to ensure they can move forward as planned. We have submitted a project for consideration and look forward to announcing more details and the amount of funding secured later this year.



As tenants grow and air travel continues to pick back up, we encourage those flying to and from St. Louis Downtown Airport to fill up while you are on-site. The dollars you spend help to support the various infrastructure projects and other improvements at the airport that benefit all of our tenants and customers.

TENANT NEWS: CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

While air traffic may have been slower in recent months, it's been full speed ahead on a variety of projects to enhance the airport's infrastructure and appearance. The work to improve the Curtis Steinburg Drive and Sauget Business Boulevard intersection is on track for completion by this fall, and this, along with the already completed improvements to the roadway leading into the airport will help to reduce travel times for employees at both Gulfstream and FedEx, and improve first-mile, last-mile delays. Both projects were supported by more than \$1.5 million in federal and state infrastructure grants jointly secured by the Village of Sauget and the St. Louis Downtown Airport.

As part of the ongoing beautification efforts, the unsightly fence at Curtis Steinberg Drive and Falling Springs Road has been removed and the airport has been working to remove debris, eroded ground and weeds on the Curtis Steinberg overpass. Additional equipment is being purchased to help maintain the area.

We also are working with Gulfstream to make improvements to storm water management on the east side of the airport with plans calling for cutting deeper and wider ditches and mowing ditches more frequently.

The Village of Sauget also is a partner in the ongoing beautification efforts, and has secured grant funding for new street lighting to create a safer, more welcoming atmosphere. The enhanced lighting program is funded through a Surface Transportation Block Grant for safety improvements along Sauget Business Boulevard, which includes new lighting and some guardrails. The project starts at the intersection of Curtis Steinburg Drive and goes to Goose Lake Drive. A second grant through this program will cover similar safety improvements from Route 3 to Curtis Steinburg Drive, along Queeny Avenue, and then over Curtis Steinburg "bridge" to Sauget Business Boulevard. The total cost of both projects is just over \$1.7 million and the Village of Sauget participation will be 20% of the project. Design work is also underway for additional improvements at the intersection of Route 3 and Queeny Avenue.

"This airport is the region's front door for business aviation, and the potential for additional growth in and around the airport is enhanced when we provide a welcoming environment for existing and prospective tenants, employees and guests," said Rich Sauget Jr., Mayor of the Village of Sauget. "We continue to value the working relationship between the airport and business park as we jointly collaborate to put our best foot forward."

Tenant Spotlight: Helicopters Inc. is Flying High at KCPS



Helicopters Inc. is a growing aviation company based at St. Louis Downtown Airport (KCPS) that specializes in turn-key Electronic News Gathering (ENG) solutions for TV news outlets across the country. With about 70 helicopters on their fleet, Helicopters Inc. provides “eye in the sky” customized packages to over 40 news stations in 31 cities coast-to-coast. These packages include the helicopter, pilots, and all the equipment required to capture high-quality aerial imagery to feed straight into the newsroom. Helicopters Inc. will even staff and train the photographers manipulating the cameras in flight.



In addition to ENG solutions for news stations, Helicopters Inc. provides aircraft for utility companies and the United States government. The company also recently expanded its Part 135 charter operations to St. Louis, New York, and Los Angeles. This on-demand, unscheduled air service is a great option for those who need a helicopter to travel.

For all their operations, the company provides maintenance operations, and since their headquarters and largest facility is at St. Louis Downtown Airport, all the major overhaul work or reconditioning of an aircraft is done at that location.

“We have all the capability here in St. Louis to rebuild an aircraft from its many pieces,” said Parker Condie, President and CEO of Helicopters Inc. “Cahokia is also our key location for all ENG installs.” As part of that process, the interior of the aircraft has to be disassembled, wired for ENG and then reassembled, all with the proper documentation and approval of the FAA.

Helicopters Inc. technicians and senior mechanics from the St. Louis office also travel to the other offices to provide

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Location Matters

St. Louis Downtown Airport has proven to be an ideal location for Helicopters Inc. for a variety of reasons, chief among them being access to talent.

“We can find and retain employees with key industry skills from almost any direction,” said Parker Condie, President and CEO of Helicopters Inc. “We have employees who live in Missouri, from West County to South County, and in Illinois, from O’Fallon to Columbia and of course Cahokia.”

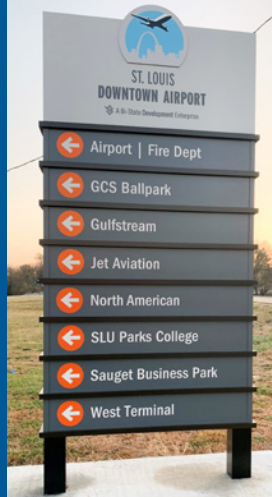
St. Louis Downtown Airport’s central location in the U.S. is crucial for their company, too, as they are constantly moving parts and personnel to various locations around the country.

“From a supply-chain management stand-point, it would be difficult to efficiently maintain aircraft the way we need to if we were not headquartered in the Midwest,” Condie added.

The airport’s proximity to St. Louis is especially advantageous for Helicopters Inc.’s Electronic News Gathering (ENG) business, allowing for aircraft to takeoff from the airport and be over the downtown St. Louis or major highways in minutes.

Condie also notes that the management team at St. Louis Downtown airport, together with the local Air Traffic Control, have been phenomenal to work with over the years. “We value our relationship with the airport and are appreciative of everything that the airport administrators, security personnel and maintenance crews do to keep us safe and allow our operations to run smoothly.”

Helicopters Inc is one of more than a dozen aviation-related businesses that are a part of the thriving aircraft manufacturing and maintenance ecosystem at St. Louis Downtown Airport, and the property contains an abundance of land ready and available for development by others interested in being a part of it. To learn more, visit www.stldowntownairport.com.



support and training. While Helicopters Inc. employs approximately 300 individuals nationwide, an effective team of 40 works out of St. Louis Downtown Airport. Many of their team members, especially those in the St. Louis, have been with the company for years. After being sold in 2016, the company became an employee owned company, which Condie notes makes finding the right candidates even more important when recruiting. As a result, they rely heavily on referrals and also use special helicopter related internet job sites to fill open positions.

“Aviation is one large family,” said Condie. “Many of our employees have worked in the industry for generations, and everyone knows each other. It is important to maintain and build on the rich history this region has had in aviation.”

While there are currently no open positions at the St. Louis headquarters, Helicopters Inc. is always looking for highly qualified pilots and mechanics to fill full and part-time roles in their various other locations. To learn more, please contact Debbie “Dee” Duncan at (314) 351-1400.

TENANT NEWS (continued)

Call for Information for Tenant Profiles

Several months ago, I asked for information from tenants so that we could showcase all tenants on the airport's website, in social media and through this newsletter. This newsletter goes to all airport tenants making this a great way to learn about your neighboring airport businesses. It is also shared with the public and private sector who are engaged with Bi-State Development and its other enterprises.

In this latest issue, we're pleased to include a short profile on Big River Aviation, which was among the first tenants to respond to my request. If you haven't gotten around to responding yet, please email me your company's information at eadahl@stldowntownairport.com.



Tenant Profile: Big River Aviation, LLC.

At a Glance

Big River Aviation provides aircraft maintenance, aircraft rental, flight training and various other services to the aviation community.

Business Type

Aircraft inspections, maintenance, acquisition consulting and avionic installations

A Closer Look

Big River Aviation LLC is located at the west terminal at St. Louis Downtown Airport. The company caters to single and light twin engine piston aircraft. The experienced team provides excellent service at a fair price. They can handle annual inspections, unscheduled maintenance, pre-purchase evaluations, and avionic installations. The dedicated staff can

cover the unexpected needs of transient aircraft from bad tires, to bad magnetos.

The company strives to assist those in need, even if it is after hours or on a holiday. If there is any way it can be done, Big River Aviation will get it done. Company owner Paul Voorhees lives just 15 minutes away and can quickly be at the airport, when needed.

Learn More

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Southwestern Illinois College Preps Students for Aerospace Careers

While the aviation industry has sustained a huge decrease in the demand for air travel due to the impact of COVID-19, it will rebound in time. Eventually the focus will shift back to the challenges the industry was facing before the pandemic—specifically a serious shortage of skilled professionals to fill a myriad of openings in the aviation field. Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) remains committed to addressing that shortage by offering FAA-certified degrees and certificate programs.

Keith Mueller, Coordinator of Aviation Pilot Training/Aviation Management at SWIC, has been associated with SWIC's aviation program since 1975, and he believes it has helped launch thousands of careers since debuting 51 years ago.

Today, SWIC's aviation degree programs prepare students for fast-paced, in-demand, well-paying careers as pilots or in the fields of aviation maintenance and aviation management. An Aircraft Dispatcher Program was added in 2016 when it earned FAA Certification, and is now one of the few existing programs in the Midwest and among the lowest cost programs in the country. Plans are in the works for an Avionics Certificate Program to be added, along with an Unmanned Aeronautical Vehicle (Drone) Certificate program.

As SWIC's programs continued to grow in recent years, an agreement was established with Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) to provide a pathway for SWIC students to transfer 100% of credit earned in any of the SWIC aviation programs to continue on to obtain a bachelor's degree in the Aviation Degree Program at SIUC's campus. By 2015, the relationship had evolved to include the SIUC Extended Campus program at SWIC, through which the Bachelor of Science in Aviation can be completed in a weekend format at the Belleville SWIC campus.

"It's a combination through which students can earn their BS in Aviation at a substantially reduced cost and it works great for folks who may already be working in some capacity in the industry," said Mueller.



In recognition of its substantial contribution to aviation in the State of Illinois, SWIC has been selected by the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame to receive the 2020 Spirit of Flight Award. SWIC is one of only three colleges in the history of the award to earn this recognition and is the first ever two-year college to receive the award.

SWIC also partners with various major employers in the aviation sector to help provide internship and apprenticeship opportunities, so students have ample opportunities to gain hands-on experience. West Star Aviation, for example, provides transportation for small groups of high school students to visit its facilities to learn about operations. Before COVID-19, West Star was putting together a new program so that college students would spend four hours a day at one of its facilities learning about safety around aircraft and engaging in technical work to sharpen their skills. The other four hours, they would spend in class at SWIC. Upon graduation, they would be prepared to begin their careers as an airframe power plant technician. Mueller is confident the program will launch soon, and other programs are also in the works, including one being spearheaded by Gulfstream at its St. Louis Downtown Airport facility.

With the St. Louis region being home to five airports and one of the nation's largest aerospace manufacturing clusters, the demand for individuals with these skills and experience is strong in the bi-state region. Despite COVID-19, there are indications that demand is growing. Mueller points to Flying Colors, a global aviation company in Chesterfield, Mo., as an example, noting the company currently has 200 employees and expects to be at 700 employees in the next five years.

"Growing the labor force is key to attracting more aerospace and aviation companies to the region," Mueller said.



ST. LOUIS DOWNTOWN AIRPORT

 A Bi-State Development Enterprise



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