



ST. LOUIS REGIONAL FREIGHTWAY

# TAKE FLIGHT

FORUM

November 13, 2025



ST LOUIS REGIONAL  
AEROSPACE and AVIATION  
TaskForce



ST LOUIS REGIONAL  
FREIGHTWAY



BI-STATE  
DEVELOPMENT



Front cover photo: OBAP St. Louis student

# TAKE FLIGHT FORUM STEM to Sky!

November 13, 2025

**St. Louis Regional Freightway's fourth annual Take Flight Forum** reunites the directors of the five busiest bi-state airports who will join with leaders from regional STEM and flight training programs to discuss recent advancements and initiatives in the aviation industry. The conversation will delve into the continuing growth strengthening the region's aviation sector and highlight some of the focused efforts to engage students in the career opportunities that the region's aerospace and aviation ecosystem offers.

With a rich history deeply rooted in aviation innovation and production, the St. Louis region is home to more than 60 aerospace manufacturing businesses that combined account for more than 18,330 employees who make an average annual salary of \$133,456. Regional employment within Aerospace Manufacturing grew by approximately 1,200 new jobs, or 7 percent, over the last five years. This outpaced the national growth rate of only 4.1 percent during the same period.

More than 330,780 individuals are also employed in industries secondary, tertiary or supportive to aerospace manufacturing, further illustrating the vital role of this ecosystem. With a location quotient of 3.83, the concentration of aerospace manufacturing jobs is nearly four times the national average, a major competitive advantage. Plus, our productivity per aerospace manufacturing worker is 5.6% higher than the national average.

These factors are driving continued investments. We are in a period of tremendous expansion in the region's aerospace and aviation industry, as an estimated \$5 billion is being invested in recently completed projects and those to be delivered over the next five to 10 years. Those investments by the airports and their tenants — major aerospace manufacturing and service companies — create additional jobs in our region. Beyond the nearly 1,000 new jobs being added to help build aircraft and their components and handle maintenance and repairs, there will be demand for construction workers to deliver new facilities, airport operations personnel and the many positions in other industries impacted by the ripple effects of this growth.

We're pleased to have the opportunity to hear first-hand from some of those investing in our region and to provide insight into exciting initiatives helping to inspire the next generation of aerospace and aviation professionals.

# FEATURED PANELISTS



## **RHONDA HAMM-NIEBRUEGGE**

**Executive Director, St. Louis Lambert International Airport**

Rhonda has been the Executive Director of St. Louis Lambert International Airport (STL) since January 2010. The airport is the primary air carrier facility for the St. Louis region serving more than 15.9 million passengers annually. She is also Chairwoman of the 17-member St. Louis Airport Commission. Prior to STL, Rhonda logged more than 25 years in aviation management positions with American Airlines, Trans World Airlines (TWA) and Ozark Air Lines. A majority of her career has been based in St. Louis, Missouri.



## **SANDRA SHORE, A.A.E.**

**Director, St. Louis Downtown Airport**

Sandra became Airport Director for St. Louis Downtown Airport (CPS) in February 2022. She is responsible for the employees and operations of CPS and managing the real estate and economic development opportunities of the busiest airport in Illinois outside of Chicago. She previously served four years as Airport Director at Quincy Regional Airport in Quincy, Illinois, and before that was the airport manager at Floyd W. Jones Lebanon Airport in Lebanon, Missouri. Sandra's expertise ranges from general aviation and fixed-based operations to Part 139 certified air service airports.



## **DARREN JAMES**

**Director, MidAmerica St. Louis Airport**

At the helm of MidAmerica St. Louis Airport since August 2023, Darren is responsible for management, development, planning and community relations for the airport, which operates under a Joint Use Agreement with Scott Air Force Base. Darren directs projects related to air service expansion, business and land use development, strategic business planning and tenant relations. He has more than three decades of leadership experience in global aviation operations and National Security. A retired 1-star General, he completed a distinguished, 30-year career in the United States Air Force in 2020. His background also includes forming a business consulting LLC.



**DANIEL ADAMS, A.A.E.**  
**Director, St. Louis Regional Airport**

A St. Louis native, Daniel took over as Airport Director for St. Louis Regional Airport, located in East Alton, Illinois, in April 2022. In this capacity, Daniel oversees daily operations, planning, and leads future growth and development efforts at the general aviation airport, which is home to West Star Aviation's primary operations in the St. Louis region. He earned his Bachelor of

Science Degree in Flight Science and Aviation Management from Saint Louis University and is an Accredited Airport Executive through the American Association of Airport Executives.



**JOHN BALES**  
**Director, Spirit of St. Louis Airport**

John joined Spirit of St. Louis Airport in 1994 as Assistant Director of Aviation and ultimately advanced to his current position in 2007, when he became only the second Director of Aviation for St. Louis County. His primary responsibilities include the administration, marketing, development and operation of the Spirit of St. Louis Airport, the busiest business general aviation airport in

the FAA Central Region. John began his aviation career at St. Louis Lambert International Airport as an Airport Operations Specialist and currently serves as a commissioner on that airport's board.



**MARY LAMIE, Moderator**  
**Executive Vice President of Multimodal Enterprises, Bi-State Development**

As Executive Vice President of Multimodal Enterprises for Bi-State Development (BSD), Mary oversees the management and operations of several Bi-State Development enterprises: St. Louis Downtown Airport, Gateway Arch trams, Riverboats at the Gateway Arch and the St. Louis Regional Freightway. She is a professional engineer with

more than 25 years of experience in transportation, engineering and management, including 22 years with the Illinois Department of Transportation.



# FEATURED PANELIST



**DR. JENNIFER KEPHART**  
**Superintendent, School District of**  
**Washington, Missouri**

With more than 25 years in education, Dr. Kephart leads the School District of Washington with a focus on innovation, collaboration, and student success. She brings deep experience in aligning systems to support student achievement and real-world learning. Dr. Kephart has been instrumental in launching “Connect Washington”

and the “Soar Into STEM” aviation initiative, providing students with hands-on career exploration and partnerships with local industries, including aviation. Her leadership emphasizes building community connections, expanding opportunities for students, and ensuring every graduate is prepared for the future. In addition to her work in education, Dr. Kephart is the author of the “Captain Jay’s Flying Adventures” children’s book series, which follows a blue jay pilot on exciting journeys while learning important life lessons.



## Washington SOAR Into STEM

The School District of Washington’s **SOAR Into STEM** program is a hands-on, aviation-focused learning experience designed to inspire high school students to explore careers in STEM and aviation. The free six-session program is open to students from several high schools in Franklin County and the surrounding region, providing project-based learning opportunities that connect classroom instruction to real-world applications.

Students engage with flight simulators, build and test model airplanes, plan flight routes, simulate air traffic communication, and operate drones used to deliver supplies. These experiences give students practical exposure to aviation careers while strengthening critical 21st-century skills, including teamwork, problem-solving, professional communication, and technology integration.

The program also includes a College and Career Fair hosted at the Washington Regional Airport where students also have the opportunity to take Discovery flights. The fair features local businesses and colleges with aviation-related programs, enabling students to directly connect with potential educational and career pathways.

The program is supported by a dedicated team of educators, aviation mentors, and community volunteers, including past SOAR participants, who provide guidance, mentorship, and insight into the aviation industry. Community



partners, including the City of Washington, Washington Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Washington, Inc., and Wings of Hope, provide essential resources, volunteers, and mentorship opportunities to ensure the program's success.

Complementing SOAR Into STEM, the Connect Washington initiative links students with local businesses, offering internships, client-connected projects, and career exploration opportunities.

Together, these programs prepare students to pursue future careers in aviation, STEM, and related fields while fostering personal growth, professional skills, and meaningful community connections.

[washington.k12.mo.us/49232\\_3](http://washington.k12.mo.us/49232_3)



# FEATURED PANELIST



## **MAJOR (RETIRED) YOLANDEA M. WOOD**

**President, Hugh J. White Tuskegee  
Airmen Chapter**

**Director for OBAP's St. Louis Aerospace Career  
Excellence (ACE) Academy**

Yolanda has served as the president of the Hugh J. White Tuskegee Airmen Chapter since July 2016. As part of Tuskegee Airmen Inc., the chapter works to preserve the legacy of the primarily African American military pilot group while inspiring youth through aviation education and community outreach. Additionally, Yolanda is Director for the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals ACE Academy, a program that introduces students to careers in aviation and aerospace through hands-on learning, mentorship and exposure to industry professionals. Before retiring in 2006, she served 20 years in the United States Air Force, receiving the Meritorious Service Medal among others. Outside of aviation, Yolanda is deeply engaged in her community through educational initiatives, youth mentorship, and service organizations.



**Students with the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals (OBAP) ACE Academy with Major Yolanda M. Wood and members of the U.S. Air Force.**



# Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals (OBAP) and the Hugh J. White Tuskegee Airmen Chapter

Two organizations helping youth across the St. Louis region reach new heights in aviation and aerospace are OBAP and the Hugh J. White Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. Both share a mission to honor aviation pioneers while opening doors for the next generation to explore careers in flight.

OBAP is a nonprofit organization that works to inspire and empower underrepresented youth to pursue careers in aviation and aerospace. Through mentorship, education, and hands-on learning, OBAP helps create pathways to professional success and promotes diversity within the industry. Each summer, OBAP hosts the St. Louis Aerospace Career Excellence (ACE) Academy, a nationally recognized program co-sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees. The ACE Academy gives middle and high school students a hands-on introduction to aviation through flight simulations, industry tours, and opportunities to pilot aircraft with guidance from experienced professionals. Students learn about the science and technology of flight and discover many exciting careers. Beyond the ACE Academy, OBAP offers several other initiatives that support aspiring aerospace and aviation professionals.

The Hugh J. White Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., honors Captain Hugh James White, a St. Louis native, World War II fighter pilot, attorney, and Missouri legislator. Captain White flew 35 combat missions with the 99th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group and later helped establish the St. Louis Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, serving as its first president. Founded in 1974, the chapter continues to preserve the historic legacy of African-American pilots, aircrew, and support staff in World War 2, while promoting education, leadership, and opportunity in aviation and aerospace.

[obap.org/ace/stlouis](http://obap.org/ace/stlouis)  
[tuskegeeairmenstl.com](http://tuskegeeairmenstl.com)



## BOEING AEROSPACE COMPANY

Boeing St. Louis is Missouri's largest manufacturer and sixth largest employer, with a staff of more than 16,000. Employees work at three facilities in the St. Louis region: St. Louis, St. Charles, Mo. and Mascoutah, Ill. Serving as the headquarters of Boeing's Air Dominance division, Boeing produces a number of military aircraft and weapons systems locally including the F/A-18 Super Hornet, EA-18G Growler, F-15 Eagle, eT-7A Red Hawk, MQ-25 Stingray, Joint Direct Attack Munition, Harpoon missile and Small Diameter Bomb. Additionally, the St. Louis Composite Center of Excellence manufactures composite parts for the Boeing 777X commercial aircraft. Boeing Air Dominance encompasses a portfolio of strike-fighters, advanced flight trainers, unmanned aerial refueling aircraft, and is also responsible for the modernization and modification of several U.S. Department of Defense and international aircraft programs.

Boeing Global Services delivers complete, cost-competitive service solutions for commercial, defense and space customers, regardless of their equipment's original manufacturer. With engineering, digital analytics, supply chain and training support spanning across both the government and commercial service offerings, Boeing Global Services is uniquely positioned to keep passengers flying and nations safe.





Additionally, Boeing St. Louis is the home of Phantom Works, the division that addresses emerging market opportunities to capture vital new business that will enhance BDS' core and extend the company's presence in new and untraditional frontiers. By partnering with Boeing Research and Technology, Phantom Works leverages enterprise-wide innovation and concept development to rapidly prototype and apply these new technologies to affordably meet customers' needs.





## GULFSTREAM AEROSPACE CORP.

Inspired by the belief that aviation could fuel business growth, Gulfstream Aerospace Corp. invented the first purpose-built business aircraft, the Gulfstream I, which first flew in 1958. Today, more than 3,400 aircraft are in service around the world. Together with parent company General Dynamics, Gulfstream consistently invests in the future, dedicating resources to researching and developing innovative new aircraft, technologies and services. Gulfstream's next-generation family of aircraft, including the super-midsize Gulfstream G300, the category-leading Gulfstream G400, the award-winning Gulfstream G500 and Gulfstream G600, the ultralarge-cabin Gulfstream G700 and the ultralong-range Gulfstream G800, offers an aircraft for every mission. All are backed by Gulfstream's Customer Support network and its worldwide team.



The Gulfstream St. Louis Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul facility, at the St. Louis Downtown Airport, has been owned and operated since 2017. This site offers a dedicated hangar and service team to support the entire line of in-production and legacy mid-cabin aircraft.

In May 2025, Gulfstream celebrated the finalization of its expanded aircraft completions operations at St. Louis Downtown Airport. With this latest expansion, Gulfstream has increased completions operations at the site while modernizing its existing spaces by adding new, state-of-the-art equipment and tooling, representing an investment of more than \$30 million. This expansion provides the necessary resources to support full aircraft interior outfitting at the facility and brings Gulfstream's total St. Louis footprint to 645,013 square feet/59,993 square meters.

Today, Gulfstream employs nearly 750 team members on-site in St. Louis.







## AVMATs

AVMATs is a trusted provider of parts and services for Challenger, Falcon, Hawker, Gulfstream, Learjet, and Sabreliner aircraft. The company's capabilities include parts sales, maintenance, interiors, avionics, components, accessories, structures, engines, auxiliary power units, and aircraft sales.

Today, the AVMATs family of companies occupies more than ten acres spread over four physical locations in the greater St. Louis area. Between Spirit of St. Louis Airport and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, the company operates 91,000 square feet of hangar and attached shops. Three locations in O'Fallon, Missouri, combine to make up more than 100,000 square feet of warehouse facilities, 20,000 square feet of dedicated component and accessory overhaul space, and 42,000 square feet of engine, APU, and machine shop space. The company employs just over 200 people with a wide variety of abilities. AVMATs highly



skilled staff specializes in flight structure repair, airframe maintenance, interior refurbishment, avionics modification, component servicing, as well as turbine engine or APU repair and overhaul. Parts specialists are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing customers with round-the-clock support.

With an emphasis on quality, technical accuracy, and competitive prices, AVMATs has created a loyal customer base spanning decades. After more than 45 years, they remain a St. Louis-based, family-owned and operated business dedicated to providing the best value and top-notch service to their clients. In addition, by adopting a no-frills approach, they have been able to explore new avenues to serve customers and expand their “Total Aircraft Support” concept. This philosophy has created a company sure to continue its success well into the future.



## **WEST STAR AVIATION – ALN**

WestStar Aviation-ALN is a full-service, fixed-base operator (FBO) conveniently located at St. Louis Regional Airport in East Alton, Illinois. It is at this location that West Star specializes in the maintenance, repair and refurbishment of multiple aircraft, including the Cessna Citation, Dassault Falcon, Bombardier Challenger and Global Express models, and aircraft manufactured by Gulfstream and Embraer.



In August 2024, West Star Aviation celebrated the completion of its new hangar at the East Alton facility. The new hangar, officially named Hangar 67, adds 75,700 square feet of space, including 40,000 square feet of dedicated hangar space and 35,700 square feet of support space for the company's advanced modification capabilities. That brings the company's total footprint to more than 450,000 square feet at ALN, where West Star also maintains more than 200,000 square feet of ramp space. The company also recently launched the West Star Aviation Academy, a dedicated in-house learning center for West Star's innovative apprenticeship program.

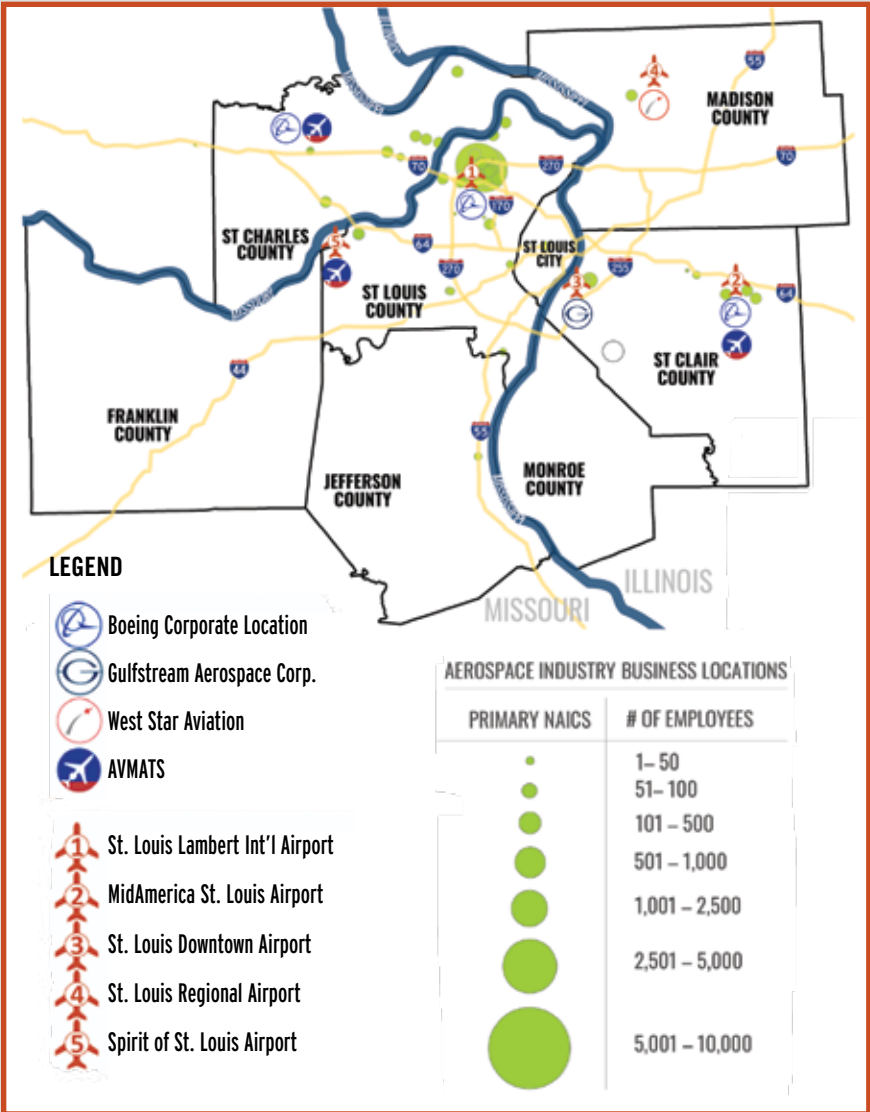
The company, originally named Walston Aviation, was established in 1947 at its current East Alton location and changed its name to Premier Air Center in 1986. In late 2004, Premier Air Center acquired West Star Aviation and operated under a dual name before renaming to West Star Aviation in 2007. The East Alton facility, which is an FAA-certified Repair Station, had held European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) approval since October 2004 and was approved to work on Brazilian registered aircraft by the Agência Nacional de Aviação Civil (ANAC) in July 2018.

West Star Aviation - ALN currently employs more than 600 individuals and has been awarded the AMT Diamond Award of Excellence for its East Alton facility.



# AEROSPACE MANUFACTURING

## PRIMARY AEROSPACE MANUFACTURING — BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE





# PRIMARY AEROSPACE MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE

- 62 Aerospace Manufacturing Businesses\*
- 18,330 primary Aerospace Manufacturing employees\* (NAICS 3364: Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing)
- Regional employment within Aerospace Manufacturing grew by approximately 1,200 new jobs, or 7.0 percent, over the last five years.
  - This growth rate outpaced the national growth rate of only 4.1 percent during the same time period.
- The average annual wages for those employed in the Aerospace Manufacturing sector in the St. Louis region is \$133,456. This is nearly 2x higher than the average wage across all industries in the region (\$67,353).

**Compare the number of aerospace manufacturing jobs in the St. Louis region to job numbers in peer cities in the Midwest.**

- Omaha: 6
- Louisville: 24
- Memphis: 213
- Des Moines: 339
- NW Arkansas (Fayetteville/ Bentonville): 439
- Nashville: 458
- Kansas City: 1,074
- Cleveland: 3,706
- Indianapolis: 4,037
- **St. Louis: 18,330**

## EXPANSION IMPACTS



**Boeing**, Missouri's largest employer, has announced plans to invest \$2 billion at its facilities in St. Louis County, Missouri, and St. Clair County, Illinois, creating an additional 650 jobs in the region.

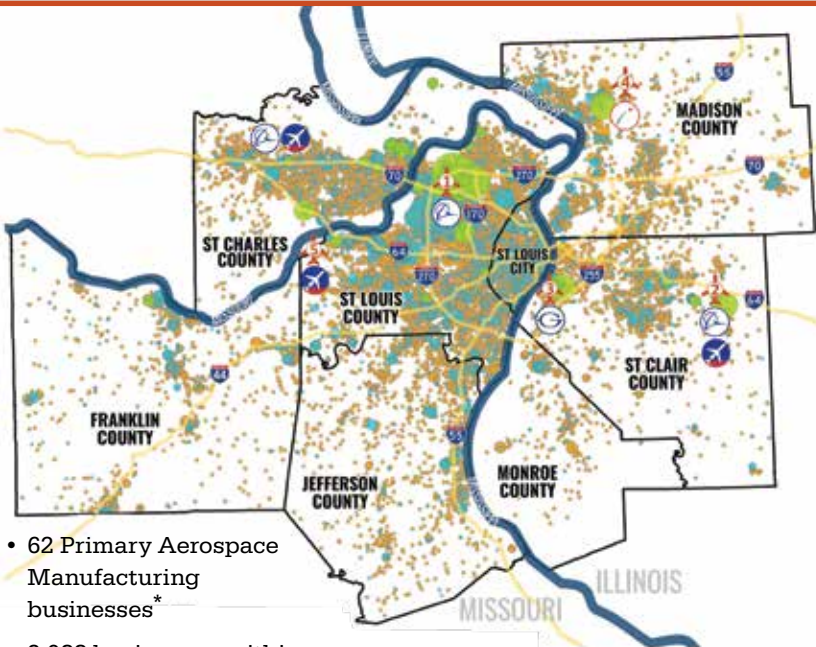


In May 2025, Gulfstream celebrated completion of a \$30 million expansion at its facility at St. Louis Downtown Airport in St. Clair County, where it is adding 200 new jobs.

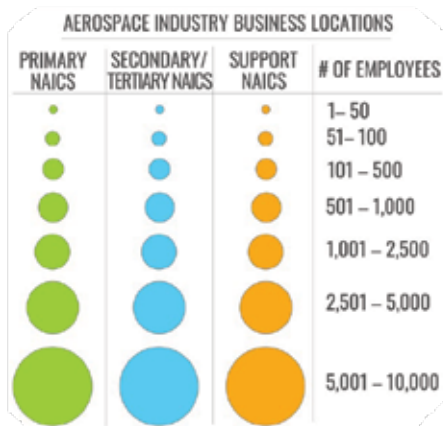
\* Sources: Number of businesses is from Database USA (2025). All other data is sourced to JobsEQ, Q1 2025.

# AEROSPACE MANUFACTURING

## SECONDARY, TERTIARY, SUPPORTING SECTORS: BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE



- 62 Primary Aerospace Manufacturing businesses\*
- 2,088 businesses within the Secondary and Tertiary industry classifications
- 15,127 businesses within the Supportive classifications
- 17,264 total businesses within the Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, and Supportive sectors to Aerospace Manufacturing
- 330,780 Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Supportive employees\*\*



\* Business totals are from Database USA (2023).

\*\* Employee numbers are from JobsEQ, Q1 2025.



PHOTO CREDIT: AVMATs



PHOTO CREDIT: BOEING

# AEROSPACE MANUFACTURING

## NAICS CODE CLASSIFICATIONS

### AEROSPACE CORE: JOBS 18,330

AEROSPACE PRODUCT AND PARTS

MANUFACTURING — NAICS CODE 3364

### SECONDARY AND TERTIARY CODES: JOBS 47,703

Code	Description
3255	Paint, Coating, and Adhesive Mfg.
3261	Plastics Product Mfg.
3314	Nonferrous Metal (except Aluminum) Prod. and Processing
3321	Forging and Stamping
3323	Architectural and Structural Metals Mfg.
3326	Spring and Wire Product Manufacturing
3327	Machine Shops; Turned Product; Screw, Nut, and Bolt Mfg.
3328	Coating, Engraving, Heat Treating, and Allied Activities
3329	Other Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.
3332	Industrial Machinery Mfg.
3335	Metalworking Machinery Mfg.
3344	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Mfg.
3345	Navigational, Measuring, Electromedical, and Control Instruments Mfg.
3369	Other Transportation Equipment Manufacturing
4235	Metal and Mineral (except Petroleum) Merchant Wholesalers
4236	Household Appliances and Electrical/Electronic Goods Wholesalers
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services
5417	Scientific Research and Development Services

PHOTO CREDIT: AVMATS



# SUPPORTING NAICS CODES : JOBS 264,747

Code	Description
2211	Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Dist.
2212	Natural Gas Dist.
2213	Water, Sewage and Other Systems
2361	Residential Building Constr.
2362	Nonresidential Building Constr.
2371	Utility System Constr.
2372	L and Subdivision
2373	Highway, Street, and Bridge Constr.
2379	Other Heavy and Civil Engineering Constr.
2381	Foundation, Structure, and Bldg Exterior Contractors
2382	Building Equipment Contractors
2383	Building Finishing Contractors
2389	Other Specialty Trade Contractors
3141	Textile Furnishings Mills
3149	Other Textile Product Mills
3151	Apparel Knitting Mills
3152	Cut and Sew Apparel Mfg.
3159	Apparel Accessories and Other Apparel Mfg.
3161	Leather and Hide Tanning and Finishing
3162	Footwear Manufacturing
3169	Other Leather and Allied Product Mfg.
3231	Printing and Related Support Activities
3251	Basic Chemical Manufacturing
3252	Resin, Synthetic Rubber, and Artf./Syn. Fibers and Filaments Mfg
3253	Pesticide, Fertilizer, and Other Agricultural Chemical Mfg.
3254	Pharmaceutical and Medicine Mfg.
3255	Paint, Coating, and Adhesive Mfg.
3256	Soap, Cleaning Compound, and Toilet Prep. Mfg.
3259	Other Chemical Product and Preparation Mfg.
3329	Other Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.
3333	Commercial and Service Industry Machinery Mfg.
3336	Engine, Turbine, and Power Transmission Eq. Mfg.
3341	Computer and Peripheral Equipment Mfg.
3353	Electrical Equipment Mfg.

Code	Description
3366	Ship and Boat Building
4231	Motor Vehicle and Parts and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers
4237	Hardware/Plumbing/Heating Eq. and Supplies Wholesalers
4238	Machinery, Equipment, and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers
4245	Farm Product Raw Material Merchant Wholesalers
4247	Petroleum and Petroleum Products Merchant Wholesalers
4441	Building Material and Supplies Dealers
4881	Support Activities for Air Transportation
4884	Support Activities for Road Transportation
4931	Warehousing and Storage
5413	Architectural, Engineering, and Related Serv.
5414	Specialized Design Services
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Serv.
5611	Office Administrative Services
5612	Facilities Support Services
5613	Employment Services
5614	Business Support Services
5615	Travel Arrangement and Reservation Serv.
5616	Investigation and Security Services
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings
5619	Other Support Services
8113	Comm. and Ind. Machinery and Eq. Repair and Maint.

• **330,780 total jobs**, which is higher than the total population of St. Louis City in 2024, according to St. Louis FRED (279,695)

• **Competitive Advantage:** Aerospace Manufacturing has a Location Quotient of 3.83, one of the highest across all industry sectors in the St. Louis region. This metric indicates that St. Louis has a concentration of aerospace manufacturing jobs nearly 4 times the national average<sup>†</sup>

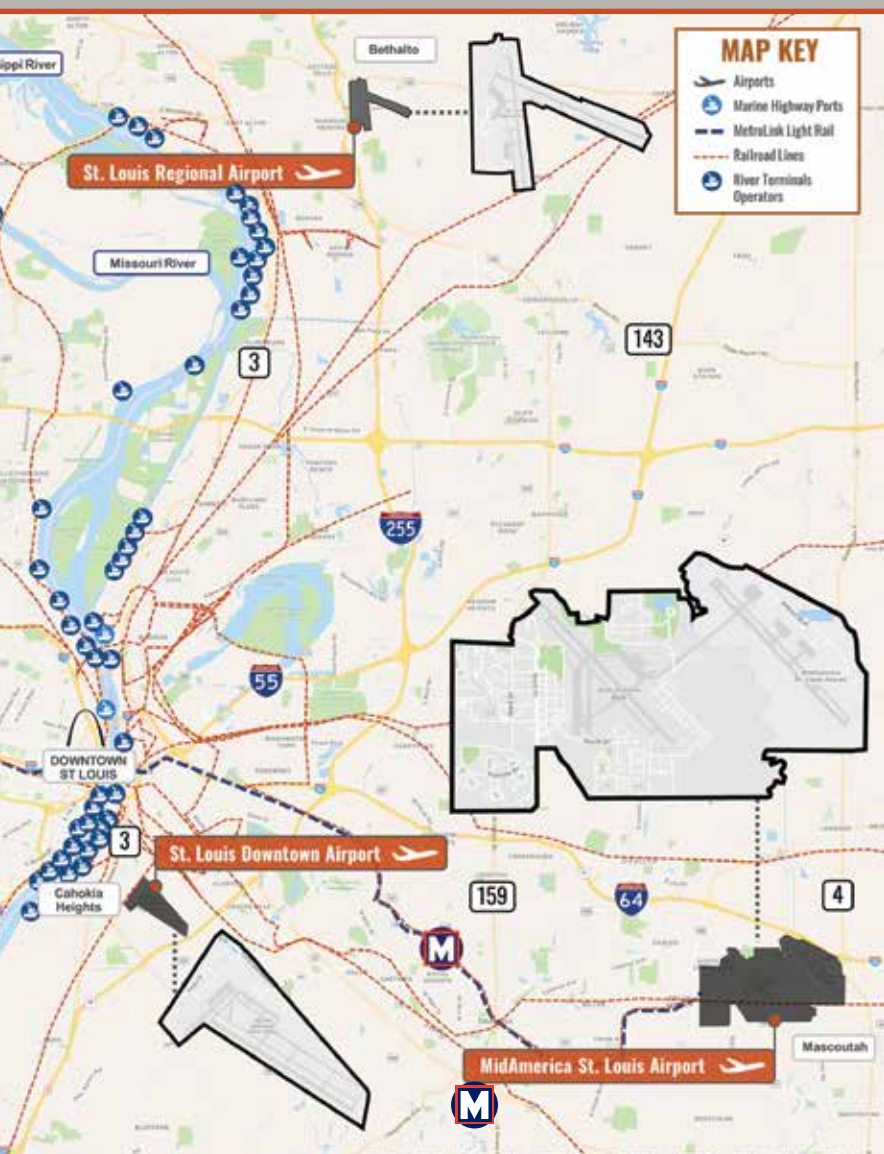
\* Codes Source: North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)  
<sup>†</sup> Source: JobsEQ Q1 2025; St. Louis FRED





## Productivity

- Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33)
  - Productivity per worker in U.S.: \$695,800
  - Productivity per worker in St. Louis MSA: \$823,149
  - **St. Louis's Manufacturing productivity per worker is 18.3% higher than the national average.**
    - i.e. St. Louis's skilled/talented manufacturing workforce is more productive/produces higher-value goods than the national average.



### Aerospace Manufacturing (NAICS 3364)

- ❑ Productivity per worker in U.S.: \$475,906
- ❑ Productivity per worker in St. Louis MSA: \$502,390
- ❑ **St. Louis's Aerospace Manufacturing productivity per worker is 5.6% higher than the national average.**

Source: Chmura JobsEQ Q1 2025 dataset



## ST. LOUIS LAMBERT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (STL)

The primary commercial airport providing scheduled air service for the bi-state St. Louis region, St. Louis Lambert International Airport (STL) is the largest and busiest airport in Missouri. Hosting operations of 12 airlines with Southwest Airlines offering the most daily flights, it served just under 16 million passengers in calendar year (CY) 2024 and was ranked as the 33rd busiest airport nationwide in terms of total passengers by the Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA). The airport also handled 160 million pounds of air cargo in 2023 – including livestock. With all this activity, the airport generates significant business revenues, jobs, and incomes as an economic hub.

In October 2025, STL announced British Airways will begin offering direct flights from STL to London's Heathrow Airport, starting in April of 2026. This is in addition to the direct international service to Frankfurt, Germany, which launched in June





of 2022 and will be expanding from three flights per week to five next summer. Many St. Louis businesses have an international reach, so these direct connections to Europe are a crucial step in growing the region and making it easier to do business here.

In May of 2023, St. Louis Lambert International Airport received initial federal approval for an estimated \$3 billion plan to consolidate its two terminals into one new, single passenger concourse and replace the parking garage with a larger one. In August 2024, \$650M was authorized for engineering work and, soon after, the Federal Aviation Administration ruled that there was no significant environmental impact expected from the project. In January 2025, HOK was selected as the design team. If all goes as planned, the project could break ground in early 2027 with completion anticipated in 2032.



[flystl.com](https://flystl.com)

## ST. LOUIS DOWNTOWN AIRPORT (KCPS)

Located just minutes from downtown St. Louis and the Gateway Arch in Cahokia Heights and Sauget, Illinois, St. Louis Downtown Airport (CPS) is positioned as the St. Louis region's downtown front door for business aviation. An FAA-designated National General Aviation Reliever Airport, CPS consistently ranks among the top five busiest airports in Illinois due to its strategic location and bustling flight training programs. CPS contributes more than \$422 million in annual economic impact for the region, according to the latest study released in 2021 by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

The airport supports significant activity from recreational and business flying to flight instruction from Saint Louis University's Oliver L. Park Department of Aviation Science, the nation's oldest flight school, along with Ideal Aviation and St. Louis Flight Training. In addition to several aircraft and helicopter maintenance organizations, CPS is home to Gulfstream Aerospace Corp.'s second largest footprint in the world, both delivering and maintaining Gulfstream aircraft. Gulfstream is just one of 25 aerospace businesses at CPS, which also hosts more than 160 based aircraft.





The airport is a major employer, contributing to more than 1,500 full-time and part-time jobs in the region. A recent expansion completed by Gulfstream in May 2025 is boosting that number by an estimated 200 positions.

Significant infrastructure projects supporting the evolving needs of tenants and customers include a new \$27 million taxiway that is under construction, and new terminal, which recently secured \$3.6 million in funding.

Owned and operated by Bi-State Development, CPS is a premier option for safe, convenient, and private air service in the St. Louis region offering easy landside and airside access, great passenger and crew amenities and a robust variety of world-class Fixed Base Operator (FBO) services through Jet Aviation.



## **ST. LOUIS DOWNTOWN AIRPORT**

**[StLouisDowntownAirport.com](http://StLouisDowntownAirport.com)**



## MIDAMERICA ST. LOUIS AIRPORT (BLV)

MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, a commercial service airport in St. Clair County, Illinois, is a \$3.1 billion economic engine for the bi-state St. Louis region. The airport is a joint-use military/civilian facility including MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in partnership with Scott Air Force Base (SAFB) and is governed by the St. Clair County Public Building Commission. In addition to significant air carrier activity, BLV sees regular usage for corporate/business, military, air cargo operations, aerospace manufacturing, and aerospace technology research. The facility accounts for approximately 23,500 jobs between the operations at the airport, SAFB and various tenants.

BLV is located in Mascoutah, Illinois, in the eastern portion of the St. Louis metropolitan area, with easy access to five interstate highways via I-64. Low-cost passenger service to a dozen destinations is offered by Allegiant. The airport has an annual capacity of 200,000 operations. Significant tenants include Boeing, North American Helicopter and North Bay Produce.

Boeing announced in 2021 it would be investing \$200 million in a new, 300,000 square-foot manufacturing facility at BLV. Scheduled to be operational in 2025,





it initially will employ approximately 150 mechanics, engineers and support staff who will build the MQ-25 Stingray, the Navy's first operational, carrier-based unmanned aircraft.

Airport leadership shared in October 2025 that BLV has welcomed record passenger enplanements in six of the last seven months. In anticipation of this and future growth, the airport opened its new \$34 million terminal expansion in summer of 2023 and completed a \$37 million Taxiway Lima project to serve the Boeing expansion and other future tenants. Construction is underway to add a new General Aviation Facility and Federal Inspection Station for U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

The new MetroLink extension from Scott Air Force Base to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport is expected to open in summer 2026 to serve both passengers and tenants.



[flymidamerica.com](http://flymidamerica.com)



## ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT (ALN)

At the crossroads of major interstate and Illinois highways, St. Louis Regional Airport is centered on 2,300 acres in flourishing southwestern Illinois only 30 minutes from downtown St. Louis. This general aviation airport accounts for more than 1,500 jobs and an annual economic impact of \$479.5 million, serving a diverse clientele from private aviators to Fortune 500 companies, the U.S. military, and regional aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul customers.

Its role as an economic engine for the region is largely driven by tenant West Star Aviation, which has more than 600 employees on site and counting. West Star Aviation has ranked as the top maintenance, repair and overhaul services provider for 10 consecutive years in *Professional Pilot* magazine's annual survey.

With West Star serving as the airport's Fixed Base Operator (FBO), pilots can expect prompt fueling, quality maintenance, aircraft rental and a full-service pilot's lounge. Pilots also appreciate the fast, tower-guided approach to St. Louis Regional with wide, long runways able to accommodate aircraft as large as a C-5A or Boeing 747. Around the clock security, firefighting and rescue capabilities rank St. Louis Regional Airport with large hub airports in readiness.





The airport has several sites totaling more than 600 acres available for future development and various facility improvements have been completed at the airport in recent years. This includes a \$5.5 million runway rehabilitation project completed in September 2023 and a \$20 million expansion by West Star Aviation completed in August 2024. A proposed taxiway rehabilitation project, fuel facility improvements, and apron construction projects will also enhance the experience at ALN.

St. Louis Regional Airport hosts numerous community focused events to include the annual Fly-in and Car Show for families, featuring an assortment of modern aircraft, a number of ultra-lights, several helicopters, and, occasionally, even historic planes, in addition will be the host for the 2026 Air Race Classic Start.



[stlouisregional.com](https://stlouisregional.com)



## **SPRIT OF ST. LOUIS AIRPORT (SUS)**

Spirit of St. Louis Airport celebrated its 60th anniversary on November 5, 2024! Spirit is the busiest business aviation airport in the FAA Central Region and is consistently second or third busiest of all airports in the region and one of the highest rated when it comes to FAA Annual 139 Air Carrier Certification Inspections.

Spirit is the Business Aviation Center of the Midwest and, as one of five Ports of Entry in Missouri, clears more than 330 international arrivals per year. As one of busiest airports in the region, only behind STL, Spirit has nearly 155,000 operations per year.

A significant number of capital improvement projects are planned at the airport in the next five years, including a complete rebuild of the main runway.



A self-supporting Enterprise Fund of St. Louis County Government, Spirit has strong reserves and receives no taxpayer dollars from the General Revenue Fund. It also gives back to community through the Spirit of St. Louis Air Show, supporting STEM education and our veterans. The airport also is proud to be a partner in the Red Tail Cadet Program, which offers young people from Ferguson, Missouri, the opportunity to learn to fly and gain other valuable life experiences at Spirit.



[spiritairport.com](http://spiritairport.com)

## COMPLETED IMPROVEMENTS TO I-270 IN NORTH ST. LOUIS COUNTY



### EVENT HOST ST. LOUIS REGIONAL FREIGHTWAY

**A** Bi-State Development enterprise, the St. Louis Regional Freightway is a regional freight district and comprehensive authority for freight operations and opportunities within eight counties in southwestern Illinois and eastern Missouri which comprise the St. Louis metropolitan area. Public sector and private industry businesses are partnering with the St. Louis Regional Freightway to establish the bi-state region as one of the premier multimodal freight hubs and distribution centers in the United States through marketing and advocacy for infrastructure development that supports the movement of freight.

The St. Louis Regional Freightway hosts the annual FreightWeekSTL each spring to spotlight the latest freight industry trends and innovations while highlighting the global access available from the St. Louis bi-state region. The organization also compiles an annual list of priority projects that represent the infrastructure needs of the manufacturing and logistics industries in the eastern Missouri and southwestern Illinois area.





### **ST. LOUIS LAMBERT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT INCREASED CARGO LOADING CAPACITY**

The St. Louis Regional Freightway's 2026 Priority Projects List includes 29 projects totaling nearly \$8.9 billion, including \$3B for the new airport terminal at St. Louis Lambert International Airport. Several other projects on the list also benefit the various airports in the bi-state area. These airports are a key component of the region's freight network, helping to move diverse types of cargo and/or providing commercial and private aviation flight options for the business needs of manufacturers and other corporations in the region.

The Freightway also launched the St. Louis Regional Aerospace and Aviation Taskforce in fall of 2024 to help build the talent pipeline to meet future needs as the region's vibrant ecosystem continues to welcome new investment and create new jobs.

**For more information, contact:**

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**[TheFreightway.com](http://TheFreightway.com)**

**[AeroSTL.org](http://AeroSTL.org)**

# Why STL Region?

The St. Louis region stands out:

- **18% More Productive Manufacturing Workforce than National Average**
- **4x More Aerospace Manufacturing Employees than Similar-Sized Markets**
- **#1 Most Efficient U.S. Inland Port District**
- **6 Class 1 Railroads for Global Connectivity**
- **\$8B+ in Infrastructure Improvements**
- **Low Cost of Living (13.7% Below National Average) with Diverse Economic Opportunities**

Located in the heart of America, the St. Louis region is well suited to accommodate all aspects of a company's logistics and talent supply chain. In doing so, it profitably supports various operations, ranging from the front office, to the research and development center, to the manufacturing plant, to the warehouse/distribution facility. Via its five major airports, major interstate hub, six Class I rail lines, efficient port system, and varied transportation modes and service providers, the region offers easy access to all domestic and international destinations. The St. Louis region is the largest freight hub among comparatively sized Midwestern cities, totaling more than 389 million tons of inbound and outbound freight annually.

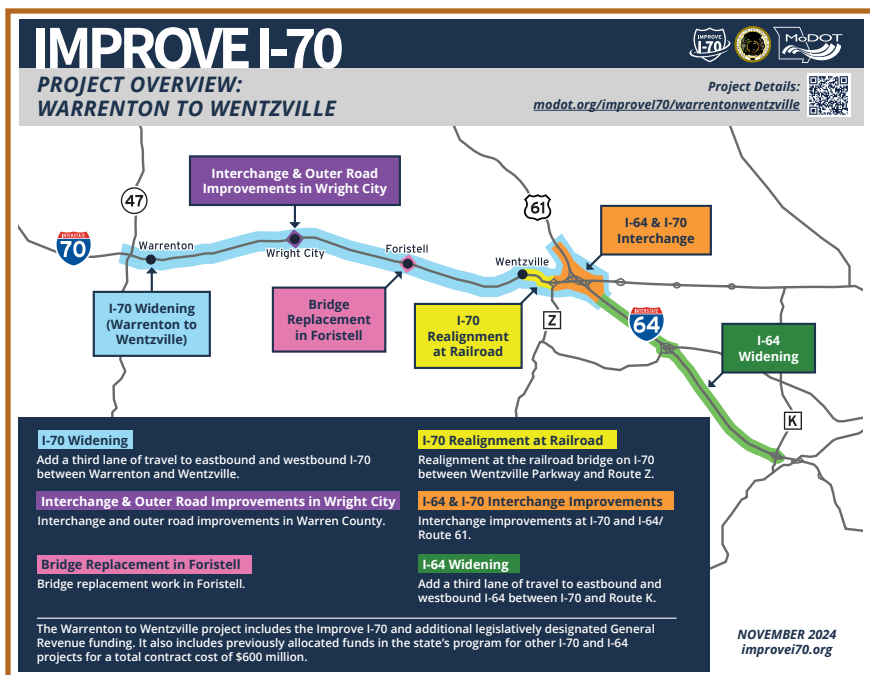
These logistics capabilities position the St. Louis region as one of the most robust and accessible logistics centers in the Midwest, making it a great location for companies doing business internationally. With significant changes in global freight flows due to an expanded Panama Canal, the growth of e-commerce, and an expected 45 percent increase in freight volume by 2045 (U.S. DOT 2015), the St. Louis region has emerged as a global logistics hub at the heart of the nation's freight network. The effective utilization of its position in the international freight network and its domestic shipping advantages, along with its deep workforce offering skills from the shop floor to the C-Suite, will continue to make the St. Louis region a great place for industrial site selection.



*\$67.3 million is  
being invested in I-64  
improvements from Green  
Mount Rd. to IL Rte. 158  
(Air Mobility Dr.) (IL).*



The St. Louis Regional Aerospace and Aviation Task Force launched a new Careers Roadmaps initiative in August 2025 to help build the talent pipeline for the future.



MoDOT's multi-faceted \$600 million Warrenton to Wentzville improvement project to benefit transportation in the St. Louis region.



[AeroSTL.org](http://AeroSTL.org)



**BI·STATE  
DEVELOPMENT**

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**ST LOUIS REGIONAL  
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