



WILLIAM H. MORSE AIRPORT, BENNINGTON

1. Airport Background and Location

Bennington State Airport is located near Bennington, Vermont in the southwest corner of the State. The airport is located west of the city, not far from the Bennington Battle Monument. The monument was built to commemorate the Revolutionary War Battle of Bennington in which British forces were defeated by colonial volunteers from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

Access from Bennington to Bennington State Airport is via Route 9. The airport is located equidistance from Bennington, east of the airport, and North Bennington, north of the airport. The market area for the Bennington State Airport extends from Pownal to the south, to the year-round resort areas Bromley and Stratton Mountain Village to the north, and stretches into New York as far west as Hoosick Falls and Eagle Bridge. Interviews with the airport manager indicate that area companies utilize Morse State Airport to facilitate executive travel and ship time-critical products via a chartered airplane.

The City of Bennington is located at the intersection of Route 7 and Route 9. Route 7 is the major State highway in western Vermont, extending from the Canadian border to the north, to Vermont's southern border with Massachusetts. Route 9 is the major State highway in southern Vermont, connecting Brattleboro, on the eastern border of Vermont, to Bennington, and then continuing into the State of New York. While Bennington's location at this intersection facilitates travel into the City, it also allows the citizens of Bennington to leave the area in order to begin aviation travel from other airports.

2. Facilities and Activity

The airport has a single paved runway. 13/31 is 3,704 feet in length. Management reports approximately 3,000 commercial operations annually by charter freight carrier AirNow. Morse is also a regional center of general aviation activity, with 14,000 local operations and 9,000 itinerant operations reported last year. Forty-five aircraft are currently based at the facility.

The airport has one tenant on-site, AirNow; an air freight charter company that supplies lift capacity to some of the biggest names in American industry. AirNow also provides information management services to the two largest shipping companies in North America as well as the nation's leading transportation intermediaries.

3. Airport Related Economic Benefits

Review of this airport indicates that it is of significant importance to the manufacturing business community. Specifically, NASTECH, a local employer that manufactures products for the automotive industry highly depends upon this airport to ship and receive time sensitive products. This airport's tenant, AirNow, employs 30 full time positions locally, and pumps 2.5 million dollars annually into the local economy in wages, goods, services and supplies.

Airport employees estimate that at least 75 percent of the airport's annual operations are business-related. This high percentage of business usage illustrates the dependency of local businesses on the airport.

The airport also supports local economic activity in the area in other ways. The Bennington State Airport is used occasionally to bring visitors to the southern ski areas of Vermont, or to other recreational destinations in the area. The airport is regularly used by groups that are holding business conferences in the area. The Equinox Hotel in Manchester, Vermont is a world-class hotel that is often used by large corporations or other groups to host business related conferences. The access that Route 7 provides to the Manchester area makes the Bennington State Airport, as well as Rutland State Airport, a common destination for business aircraft shuttling executives into the area for such conferences.

4. Other Airport Benefits

Because it must remain obstruction-free, the airfield itself acts to preserve open space and a meadow ecosystem in a rapidly-developing part of the state. Aerial application operators use Morse as a local base of operations. The airport also supports access to emergency services of all types: search and rescue, medical evacuation, and law enforcement are users of the airfield when the need arises.

Another important way in which the airport has woven itself into the fabric of the community is through the educational programs that it sponsors. It has partnered with the Bennington Career Development Center to establish a co-op program. Mount Anthony Union High School students frequently come to Morse as part of the school's Job Shadowing and Community Service programs. Finally, tours are given to classes of students at any age to whose curriculum an airport visit might be relevant.

In the past, the airport was used as a staging ground for community events. At the present time, the airport manager often leads school tours through the airport's facilities in an effort to educate the community about the importance of aviation and the positive economic impact that aviation related businesses have on the community.

Airport Report:		William H. Morse State Airport	
Code:	DDH		
City/Town:	Bennington		
County:	Bennington		
Aircraft Operations (take-offs and landings)		Airport Passengers	
Commercial	3,000	Commercial	0
Itinerant General Aviation	9,000	General Aviation	17,100
Military	120		
Total:	12,120	Total:	17,100
			Total Output: Business Sales and Public Sector Expenditure
Economic Impact Category	Employment	Payroll (Wages)	
On-Airport Primary Impact (1*)			
Airport Management and Airlines	1	\$27,535	\$50,000
On-Airport Passenger Service	0	\$0	\$0
On-Airport Freight Service	48	\$1,450,575	\$6,076,643
Other Aviation Services	7	\$161,175	\$675,182
<i>Subtotal:</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>\$1,639,285</i>	<i>\$6,801,825</i>
Off Airport Primary Impact			
Off-Airport Visitor Spending (2*)	21	\$267,303	\$698,090
Off-Airport Aviation-Dependent Business Activity (3*)	5	\$87,500	\$130,335
<i>Subtotal:</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>\$354,803</i>	<i>\$828,425</i>
Spin-Off Effects (4*) of Airports:			
<i>On Local Economy</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>\$738,131</i>	<i>\$2,764,446</i>
<i>On Statewide Economy</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>\$942,577</i>	<i>\$3,747,050</i>
Vermont Airports Total Economic Impact			
On Own Local Economies Only	126	\$2,732,219	\$10,394,696
On Statewide Economy	130	\$2,936,665	\$11,377,300

* Numbers refer to steps detailed in Section 5: Methodology and Findings

In the table above, the estimated number of itinerant general aviation aircraft operations is presented because these operations estimates drove calculations of out-of-state visitors and visitor spending in Vermont. Local general aviation operations (taking off and landing at the same airport, such as touch-and-go activity), in contrast, were not used to calculate visitors to the State and so are not shown in the table.

Economic Impacts

Public-use airports in Vermont, along with tenant businesses on airport property, contribute measurable benefits to their local areas and to the State economy through business activity that occurs on airport property. This activity is termed the **on-airport primary impact**, and was determined in this Study through visits and interviews with airport managers and tenant business owners.

Airports also provide direct benefits for businesses located off airport property. The **off-airport primary impact** has two components: expenditures by visitors to the State arriving by way of its airports, and off-airport businesses that depend partially or wholly on use of aviation services for transport.

Spending by out-of-state visitors to Vermont adds sales and jobs among off-airport businesses such as hotels, restaurants and retail establishments. Visitor expenditure impact was determined through a calculation of airport visitors and average expenditures as determined in surveys during airport visits.

The airport-dependent business impact was assessed through a mail survey to local businesses. The response rate to this survey varied widely around the State. Among those businesses that responded, the economic importance of airports to their activity is captured by the Study. However, because many businesses did not respond, it should be noted that the numbers are still a conservative estimate of the public-use airports' economic impact; further, directly comparing airport total impacts may yield counter-intuitive results due to the differing response rates of local businesses across the State. For a more relevant comparison of airport economic impacts by individual airport, which separates out this effect, please see Exhibit 12A.

Each dollar that an airport adds directly into an economy (the primary impact, described in the paragraphs above) continues to circulate through that economy. The re-spending of these dollars in consecutive rounds magnifies the total impact of the single dollar. This additional economic activity is

termed the **spin-off impact**. The Study employed IMPLAN to build a model of each local economy, as well as the statewide economy, in order to calculate spin-off impacts.

The total economic impact of each airport is the sum of the primary on-airport impact, the primary off-airport impact and the spin-off impact.

The airport report above presents both the local economic impact in the airport's own community, and its statewide economic impact. The difference lies in the spin-off impact, which is different for a local economy than for the State as a whole.

The local spin-off impact is somewhat smaller than the statewide spin-off impact, because the State economy is larger than local economies and captures a greater percentage of each round of respending. Both impact measures are relevant in different contexts, for example, a State policy maker may find the statewide impact of the airport most relevant for his or her purposes, while a local development official may be most concerned with the total local impact.