
NEWS RELEASE

Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority

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McGHEE TYSON AIRPORT CONTRIBUTES \$616 MILLION IN ECONOMIC VALUE TO REGION ANNUALLY

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.— McGhee Tyson and Downtown Island Airports in Knoxville, Tenn., contribute \$616 million annually to the region's economy according to an economic impact study released today by the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority (MKAA). The study, conducted by the University of Tennessee's Center for Transportation Research, examined the employment, business and tax impacts of both airports.

"Airports and air travel play a critical and necessary role in economic successes," said Howard Vogel, Chairman of the MKAA Board of Commissioners. "It is through a strong air transportation system that area businesses can compete in the global marketplace. And with immediate access to the world, businesses will continue to prosper, tourism flourishes and our region grows."

Conducted as a look at the airport's influence on East Tennessee, the economic impact study was a thorough investigation into the regional contributions by airport tenants including airline and rental car agencies; food and novelty concessionaires; federal agencies such as the Transportation Security Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration; as well as businesses directly supporting the airport's daily operations.

The study highlights the benefits of having McGhee Tyson Airport in the region. In particular, the study showcases the direct impact the airport has on dollars spent at local lodging and food service establishments by visitors who arrive by air. Additionally, multiple counties in East Tennessee benefit from the dollars spent by those travelers.

"According to the study, expenditures made by visitors who arrived in our region by air constituted \$150.5 million for 2010," said Vogel. "That number is sure to grow as the nation's economy rebounds and more people look to visit the beautiful landscapes and family-based entertainment options we offer in East Tennessee."

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Not only does tourism flourish because of the access to air transportation provided by McGhee Tyson Airport, so do the airport tenants who employ an estimated 4,630 people.

“When you think of McGhee Tyson Airport typically you think of the airlines that serve our market but there are several other businesses that contribute daily to the successful operation of our airport,” said Vogel. “From the regional jet maintenance facilities to general aviation activities to the military base, McGhee Tyson Airport supports thousands of employees and their families, making an important impact on the livelihood of many in our region.”

The study was commissioned by the MKAA in an effort to benchmark the immediate value of both McGhee Tyson and Downtown Island Airports on the region during a significant time in the history of aviation in East Tennessee.

“In 2012, we will be celebrating a momentous milestone in the history of McGhee Tyson Airport – our 75th Anniversary,” said Vogel. “And while this economic impact study is a reflection of the current impact of both airports, it is also a reflection of how far the airport has come since its official opening in its current location in October 1937. We plan to continue to honor the memory and legacy of those who invested in our air transportation system by providing East Tennessee passengers with access to affordable, safe and convenient air service. It has been and will continue to be the hallmark of our efforts.”

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The Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority (MKAA) is celebrating the 75 years of aviation excellence at McGhee Tyson Airport in 2012. For more information, visit www.flyknoxville.com.