

# St. Louis Downtown Airport Sees Growth In 2023; Momentum Expected To Continue Into 2024

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ST. LOUIS - 2023 marked continued growth at St. Louis Downtown Airport. The airport, located in St. Clair County, Illinois, is credited with helping generate more than \$422 million in economic impact for the bi-state region. This is due, in large part, to the completion of new infrastructure, increased flight operations and continued expansion by largest tenant. Momentum is expected to continue into 2024 as business aviation steadily rebounds and tenants expand their employee rosters, adding to the more than 1,500 full-time and part-time jobs already supported by St. Louis Downtown Airport tenants and operations.

The airport is the third busiest general aviation airport in Illinois and features a variety of long-term existing tenants who are contributing to the growth and are committed to expanding their operations. In August 2023, St. Louis Downtown Airport completed construction of a new \$5.4 million ground engine run-up and compass calibration pad to help support its tenants' continued growth. The project – which received \$5 million in state funding – benefits aircraft maintenance and manufacturing providers operating at the airport, and it will support high-tech aerospace maintenance and trade skill jobs at the airport as well.

The largest tenant at St. Louis Downtown Airport --Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation-- announced in June, it is investing \$28.5 million to expand its completions and outfitting operations at the airport. The expansion augments the company's existing maintenance repair and overall (MRO) facility, which has been operating at St. Louis Downtown Airport since 2017. It will result in the creation of 200 new jobs and the retention of nearly 500 jobs at that site.

Beyond key infrastructure and expansion projects completed or announced in 2023, St. Louis Downtown Airport also saw flight operations and fuel sales continue to rebound from significant air travel impacts felt during the coronavirus pandemic. Flight operations at St. Louis Downtown Airport increased to a total of 104,156 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. This data represents a 2.4% increase over numbers reported in Fiscal Year 2022 and a 7% increase over pre-pandemic totals reported in Fiscal Year 2019, marking the second consecutive year of growth. Data collected also shows that 1,606,416 gallons of fuel were sold during Fiscal Year 2023, an increase of 9.8% over Fiscal Year 2022.

“Our tenants tell us business is back in St. Louis, which is an incredibly good thing to hear,” said Sandra Shore, Director of St. Louis Downtown Airport. “We're looking forward to continuing to support tenant growth, while working to grow fuel sales and operations as we move into 2024.”

Shore said St. Louis Downtown Airport is committed to helping build a pipeline of future skilled workers, with the region's aviation and aerospace industry projected to grow significantly in the coming years, and the airport's efforts in this space will continue this year. In coordination with a variety of airport partners, St. Louis Downtown Airport continues to be the site for summer youth camps and an educators' day where middle and high school teachers are brought in and learn about the aviation industry and what it has to offer their students. The airport also hosts Young Eagles flights, which provide area young people with their first free ride in an airplane, and a Girls in Aviation Day each year with Saint Louis University, where 150 young women from all across the region learn about careers in aviation.

The airport recently announced that five properties are available for companies interested in the locational advantages offered at St. Louis Downtown Airport for industrial or hangar storage use. The properties, which include both aeronautical and non-aeronautical, are available for lease, sale and development for businesses looking to move or expand operations near the airport. Proposals are being accepted through Jan. 15, 2024.

“2023 was a good year for St. Louis Downtown Airport and for our tenants, and as the St. Louis region’s robust aerospace manufacturing and aviation ecosystem continues to show exponential growth, we are excited to see that momentum continue in 2024,” said Mary Lamie, Executive Vice President of Multi Modal Enterprises at Bi-State Development, which owns and operates the airport as one of its enterprises.

To learn more about St. Louis Downtown Airport, visit [www.stlouisdowntownairport.com](http://www.stlouisdowntownairport.com).

## **About Bi-State Development**

Bi-State Development (BSD) owns and operates St. Louis Downtown Airport and the Gateway Arch Riverboats, and operates the Gateway Arch Revenue Collections Center and Gateway Arch trams. BSD is the operator of the main public transportation system in eastern Missouri and southwestern Illinois, which includes the 87 vehicle, 46-mile MetroLink light rail system; a MetroBus fleet of approximately 400 vehicles including battery electric buses and clean-burning diesel buses that operate on 59 MetroBus routes; and Metro Call-A-Ride, a paratransit fleet of 123 vans. BSD also operates the St. Louis Regional Freightway, the region’s freight district. To learn more about St. Louis Downtown Airport, visit [www.stlouisdowntownairport.com](http://www.stlouisdowntownairport.com).