



Chapter 1

Inventory

The inventory of existing conditions is the initial step in the preparation of the *Lea County Regional Airport Master Plan*. The inventory will serve as an overview of the airport’s physical and operational features, including facilities, users, and activity levels, as well as specific information related to the airspace, air traffic activity, and role of the airport. Finally, a summary of socioeconomic characteristics and a review of existing environmental conditions on and adjacent to the airport are thoroughly detailed, which will provide further input into the study process.

Information provided in this chapter serves as a baseline for the remainder of the master plan, which is compiled using a wide variety of resources, including applicable planning documents; on-site visits; interviews with airport staff, tenants, and users; aerial and ground photography; federal, state, and local publications; and project record drawings.

AIRPORT SETTING

Lea County Regional Airport (HOB) is located approximately five miles southwest of downtown Hobbs in southeast New Mexico. The airport serves the southeast New Mexico and west Texas region. The City of Hobbs is Lea County’s most populous city and is located in the east-central portion of the county. Lea County is the State of New Mexico’s southeasternmost county and is bounded on the north by Roosevelt County, on the west by Chaves and Eddy Counties, and on the south and east by several counties within the State of Texas, including Loving, Winkler, Andrews, Gaines, Yoakum, and Cochran Counties. The U.S. Census estimates the population of Hobbs, NM, was 38,962 in 2024 (a decline from 40,508 in 2020), while Lea County had an estimated population of 72,947 in 2024.



HOB encompasses approximately 898 acres and is situated at an elevation of 3,660.7 feet mean sea level (MSL). Roadway access to the airport is provided by Airport Entrance Road. U.S. Highway 62/180 is adjacent to the airport and State Highway 18 is available within five miles of the airport for intrastate and interstate travel. Other local features include recreational and entertainment venues, such as racetracks, golf courses, and casinos. Additionally, HOB serves as the headquarters of the Soaring Society of America, which attracts hobbyist and competitive flyers from all over the world. **Exhibit 1A** depicts HOB in its local and regional setting.

CLIMATE

Weather conditions are important to the planning and development of an airport. Temperature is an essential factor in determining runway length requirements, while wind direction and speed are used to determine the optimal runway orientation. The need for navigational aids and lighting is determined by the percentage of time visibility is impaired due to cloud coverage or other conditions.

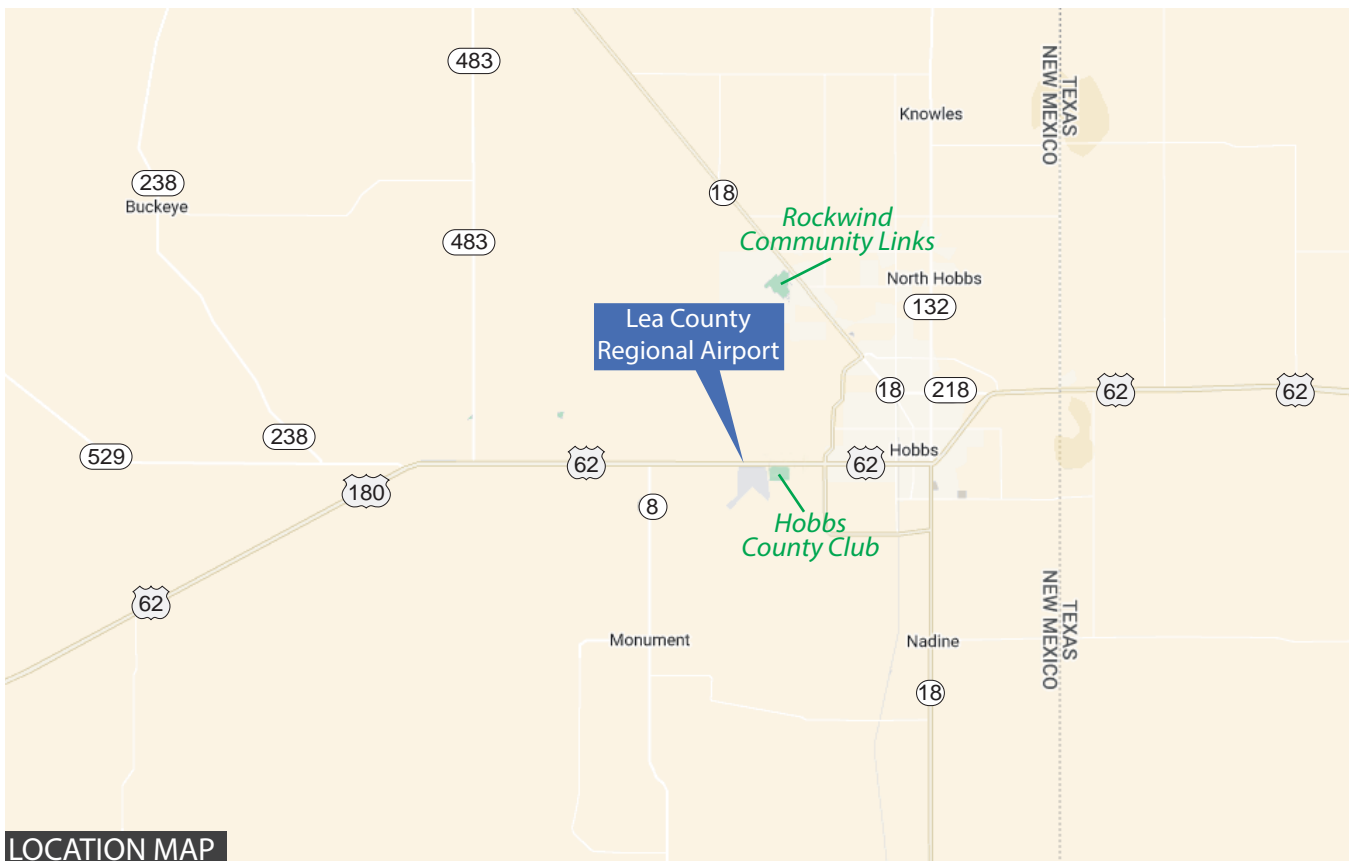
According to the Köppen climate classification system, Hobbs has a dry climate that is characterized by hot, dry summers, mild winters, and no significant seasonal precipitation changes. The summer months in Hobbs are hot, with an average high temperature in July of 94.1 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). Winters are generally mild and cool; January is the coldest month, with an average low temperature of 29.6°F. The airport receives a total of 13.8 inches of precipitation during an average year; September is the wettest month. **Exhibit 1B** summarizes the weather and wind data for the area.

AIRPORT HISTORY

As previously stated, Lea County Regional Airport is located approximately five miles southwest of the Hobbs central business district. HOB is one of three airports owned and operated by Lea County; the others are Zip Franklin Memorial Airport and Jal Airport, which cater to operators of small-to-mid size general aviation aircraft.

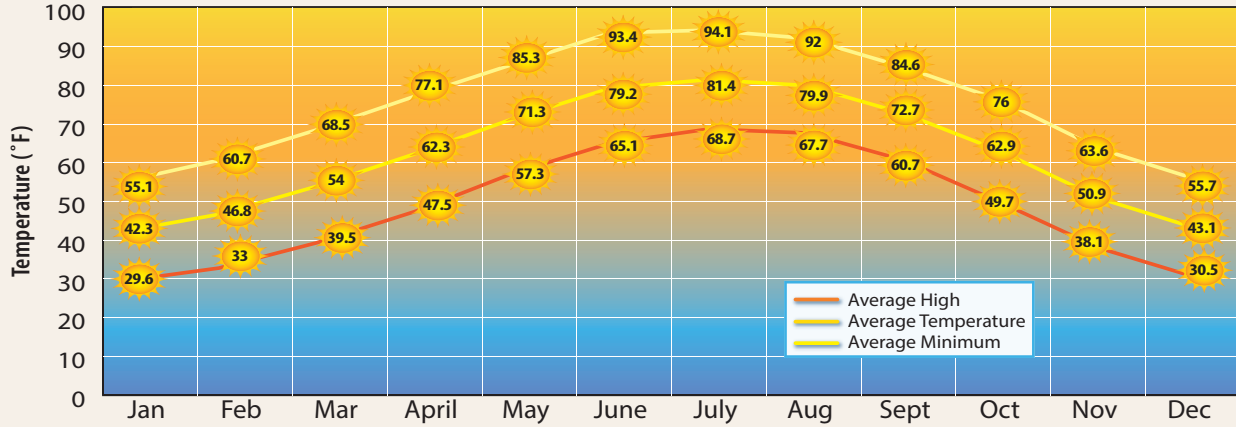
In 1942, the airport land was acquired by the United States Corps of Engineers for the U.S. Army Air Force. The airport was used as one of six satellite airfields for Hobbs Army Airfield (later Hobbs Industrial Airpark). Hobbs Municipal Aux #6 became Lea County Regional Airport once the military declared the airfield as surplus and turned it over to the county in January 1947.

Today, the airport provides two daily round-trip flights to Denver International Airport (DEN) in Colorado and George Bush Intercontinental/Houston Airport (IAH) in Texas via United Airlines. A new fire station was recently completed at HOB, and a new, modernized commercial passenger terminal expansion has also been completed as part of a phased terminal expansion plan. The airport continues to grow and improve and will serve the southeast New Mexico/west Texas region for a long time to come.

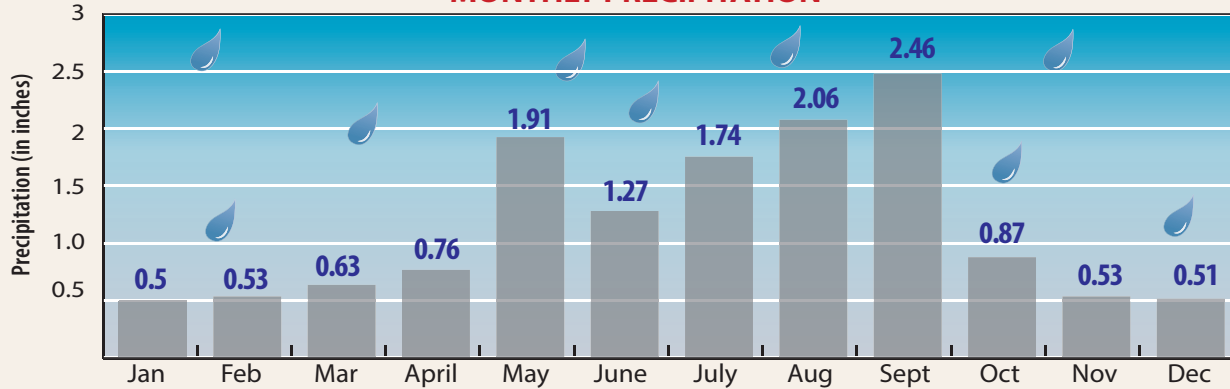




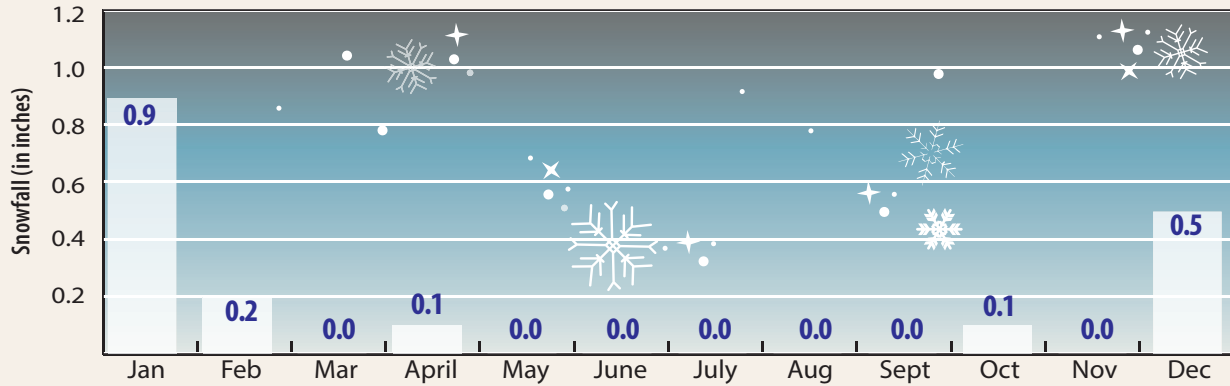
MONTHLY TEMPERATURES



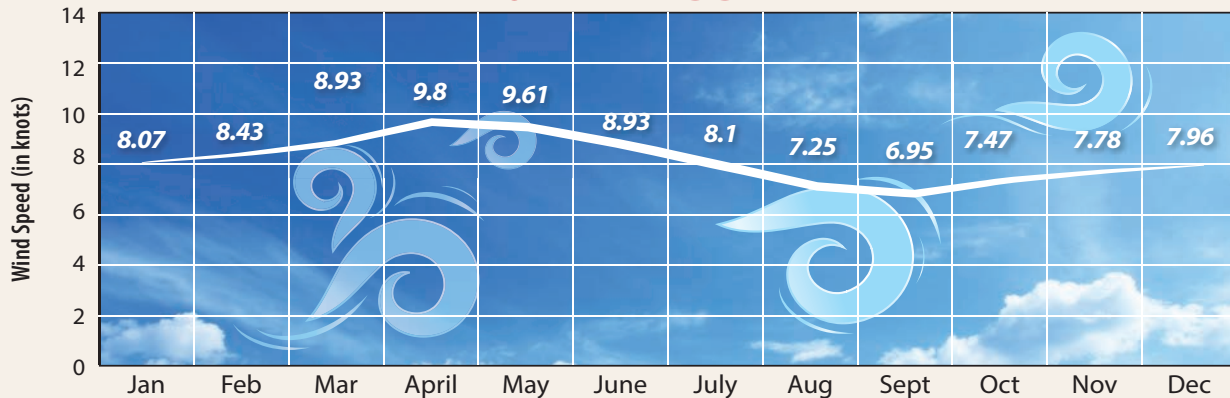
MONTHLY PRECIPITATION



SNOWFALL



MONTHLY WIND DATA



Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information Climate Normals, 1991-2020 - Station ID: USC00294026



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT HISTORY

To assist in ongoing capital improvements, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provides funding to HOB through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). HOB is also eligible to receive grant funding from the New Mexico Department of Transportation – Aviation Division (NMDOT) for assistance with capital projects.

Table 1A summarizes capital improvement projects undertaken at HOB since 2005 that received funding through the AIP. Many AIP projects may include NMDOT matching funds; this money is used in conjunction with federal grants to help fund a project in order to lessen the costs for the sponsor. Since 2005, HOB has received approximately \$26,141,958, which includes \$3,312,873 in COVID-19 relief money in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

TABLE 1A | Airport Capital Improvement Projects – AIP-Funded

Award Year	Grant Sequence Number	Project Description	AIP Amount	COVID-19 Relief	Total
2005	14	Install Weather Reporting Equipment	\$168,479	–	\$168,479
2006	15	Improve/Modify/Rehabilitate Terminal Building	\$319,676	–	\$319,676
2007	16	Improve/Modify/Rehabilitate Terminal Building	\$1,128,908	–	\$1,128,908
2008	17	Rehabilitate Runway Lighting	\$591,431	–	\$591,431
2009	18	Rehabilitate Runway Lighting	\$618,495	–	\$618,495
2011	19	Conduct or Update Miscellaneous Study	\$66,635	–	\$66,635
2011	20	Update Airport Master Plan or Study	\$278,350	–	\$278,350
2013	21	Conduct or Update Miscellaneous Study	\$215,418	–	\$215,418
2014	22	Acquire Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting Vehicle	\$217,808	–	\$217,808
2014	23	Rehabilitate Runway	\$66,125	–	\$66,125
2015	24	Rehabilitate Runway	\$237,693	–	\$237,693
2016	25	Install Perimeter Fencing	\$830,681	–	\$830,681
2016	26	Rehabilitate Runway	\$5,550,254	–	\$5,550,254
2017	27	Construct/Extend/Improve Safety Area	\$146,232	–	\$146,232
2017	28	Rehabilitate Apron	\$646,559	–	\$646,559
2019	29	Construct/Extend/Improve Safety Area	\$1,709,535	–	\$1,709,535
2019	30	Reconstruct Apron	\$1,219,211	–	\$1,219,211
2020	31	CARES Act Funds	–	\$1,096,589	\$1,096,589
2021	32	CRRSA Act Concessions	–	\$5,948	\$5,948
2021	33	CRRSA Act Funds	–	\$1,009,475	\$1,009,475
2021	34	Extend Runway	\$602,689	\$40,178	\$642,867
2022	35	Construct/Extend/Improve Safety Area	\$1,000,000	–	\$1,000,000
2022	36	Extend Runway	\$6,369,726	–	\$6,369,726
2022	37	General ARPA	–	\$1,136,889	\$1,136,889
2022	38	Large Concessions	–	\$4,759	\$4,759
2022	39	Small Concessions	–	\$19,035	\$19,035
2023	40	Update Airport Master Plan or Study	\$845,180	–	\$845,180
2005-2023 Total AIP Grants:			\$22,829,085	\$3,312,873	\$26,141,958

Source: FAA, AIP Grant Histories

Table 1B presents the NMDOT funds the airport has received since 2013 (\$5,496,761.78 total).



TABLE 1B | Airport Capital Improvement Projects – NMDOT-Funded

Award Year	Grant Number	Project Description	NMDOT Amount
2013	HOB-13-01	Maintenance Items	\$10,000.00
2014	HOB-14-01	Maintenance Grant	\$10,000.00
2014	HOB-14-02	Drainage Master Plan	\$7,181.00
2014	HOB-14-03	Runway 3-21 Design and Environmental – Runway Safety Area Improvements	\$173,817.00
2014	HOB-14-04	ASAP Grant	\$75,000.00
2015	HOB-15-01	Purchase Class A ARFF Vehicle	\$7,344.00
2015	HOB-15-02	Runway 12-30 Rehabilitation Design and High Game Fence Design	\$3,488.00
2016	HOB-16-01	Airport Maintenance Grant	\$10,000.00
2016	HOB-16-02	Runway 13-31 – Pavement Rehabilitation	\$8,973.00
2016	HOB-16-03	Runway 12-30 and Taxiway Pavement Markings	\$72,500.00
2017	HOB-17-01	Wildlife Fencing – Construction	\$27,269.00
2017	HOB-17-02	Maintenance Items	\$10,000.00
2017	HOB-17-03	ASAP Grant	\$200,000.00
2017	HOB-17-04	Runway 12-30 Reconstruction	\$203,125.00
2017	HOB-17-05	AWOS Replacement	\$194,400.00
2017	HOB-17-06	Airfield Pavement Rehabilitation	\$24,458.00
2017	HOB-17-07	Runway 3-21 Improvement Design	\$5,008.00
2018	HOB-18-01	Airport Maintenance Items	\$10,000.00
2018	HOB-18-02	ASAP Grant	\$100,000.00
2019	HOB-19-01	Airfield Maintenance and Consumable Items	\$20,000.00
2019	HOB-19-02	Terminal Expansion – Phase 1 Parking Area	\$220,979.00
2019	HOB-19-03	Runway 3-21 Environmental Assessment for Runway Extension	\$165,000.00
2019	HOB-19-04	Terminal Expansion – Phase 2 Construction	\$300,000.00
2020	HOB-20-01	Runway 3-21 RSA Improvements – Construction	\$56,985.00
2020	HOB-20-02	Primary Commercial Service Apron Reconstruction	\$36,250.00
2021	HOB-21-01	ASAP Grant	\$200,000.00
2021	HOB-21-02	Airfield Maintenance Items and Supplies	\$20,000.00
2021	HOB-21-03	Airfield Lighting Generator	\$99,000.00
2021	HOB-21-04	Runway Camera System	\$27,000.00
2021	HOB-21-05	Airfield Mower	\$53,000.00
2022	HOB-23-01	Runway 3-21 Extension and Localizer Relocation	\$1,000,000.00
2023	HOB-23-02	Airfield Maintenance and Consumable Items	\$20,000.00
2023	HOB-24-01	New ARFF Vehicle	\$1,300,000.00
2023	HOB-24-02	Airport Entry, Terminal Area Signage, and Wayfinding	\$500,000.00
2024	HOB-24-03	Airport Master Plan Update	\$50,710.78
2024	HOB-24-04	ASAP Grant	\$200,000.00
2024	HOB-24-05	Runway 12-30 MIRL Design and Construction	\$33,780.00
2024	HOB-25-01	Drainage Improvement – Design	\$9,738.00
2024	HOB-25-02	Taxiway A, B, and E Reconstruction – Design	\$14,920.00
2024	HOB-25-03	Terminal Apron Design	\$16,836.00
2013-2025 Total NMDOT Grants:			\$5,496,761.78

Source: NMDOT Aviation Division, Project List Report

Airports that apply for and accept AIP grants must adhere to various grant assurances. These assurances include maintaining the airport facility safely and efficiently in accordance with specific conditions. The duration of the assurances depends on the type of airport, the useful life of the facility being developed, and other factors. The useful life for an airport development project is typically a minimum of 20 years; thus, when an airport accepts AIP grants, it is obligated to maintain the facility in accordance with FAA standards for at least that long.

AIRPORT ADMINISTRATION

The airport is owned by Lea County and operated by the Lea County Board of Commissioners, which is comprised of five members. Each board member represents a district within the county and is elected to a four-year term. The airport is under the direct control of the Airports Supervisor, who is appointed by the Lea County Board of County Commissioners. There is also an Airports Advisory Board, which consists of an appointed member from each district within the county. Each member of the Lea County Airports Advisory Board also serves a four-year term. **Figure 1A** shows the organizational structure for HOB. The daily operations of the airport are the responsibility of the airport director and a team of operations, administrative, and emergency staff.



Figure 1A: Airport Organizational Chart

SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Socioeconomic characteristics are collected and examined to derive an understanding of the dynamics of growth near the airport. This information is essential in determining aviation demand level requirements, as most general aviation demand is related to the socioeconomic condition of the surrounding region. Statistical analyses of population, employment, income, and gross regional product trends provide an overview of the economic strength of the region, as well as the area’s ability to sustain a strong economic base into the future. Additional socioeconomic data will be used in the forecast chapter; however, the information provided in this section introduces the socioeconomic trends in the study area.

HOB is located approximately 10 miles from the New Mexico/Texas border and serves Lea County and its population centers of Hobbs and Lovington, New Mexico. **Exhibit 1C** details the socioeconomic profile of Lea County, New Mexico and includes future projections.



The data show that the area population has increased over the past 20 years at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 1.12 percent, with a total population of 72,947 in 2024. Projections indicate that the area population will grow at a slower pace than previously, with an estimated 88,810 people living in the area by 2044 (0.99% CAGR). Employment has grown slightly faster than population over the same period (1.46% CAGR) and is expected to outpace future population growth. Through the next 20 years, employment is projected to increase from 42,209 in 2024 to 58,269 in 2044 (1.63% CAGR). The top occupational groups in Lea County include construction and extraction, administration, sales, management, transportation, production, food and serving, education and library, material moving, installation, and maintenance and repair. A selection of the top employers in the area is also listed on **Exhibit 1C**.

The total value of goods and services produced by a region is its gross regional product (GRP). Lea County, New Mexico, has experienced a 4.68 percent CAGR over the past 20 years; its 2024 GRP is valued at \$9.3 billion. This value is also expected to grow, albeit more slowly than it has previously, with an estimated GRP value of \$15.4 billion by 2044 (2.52% CAGR). Individual incomes – measured as per capita personal income (PCPI) – in the area totaled \$46,634 in 2024, representing a CAGR of 1.89 percent over the past two decades. This level is expected to increase through 2044, with PCPI anticipated to be \$62,689 by 2044 (1.49% CAGR).

It is important to understand the current and historical economic conditions of the region, as these socioeconomic indicators will provide a valuable base for the forecasting process in the next chapter.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

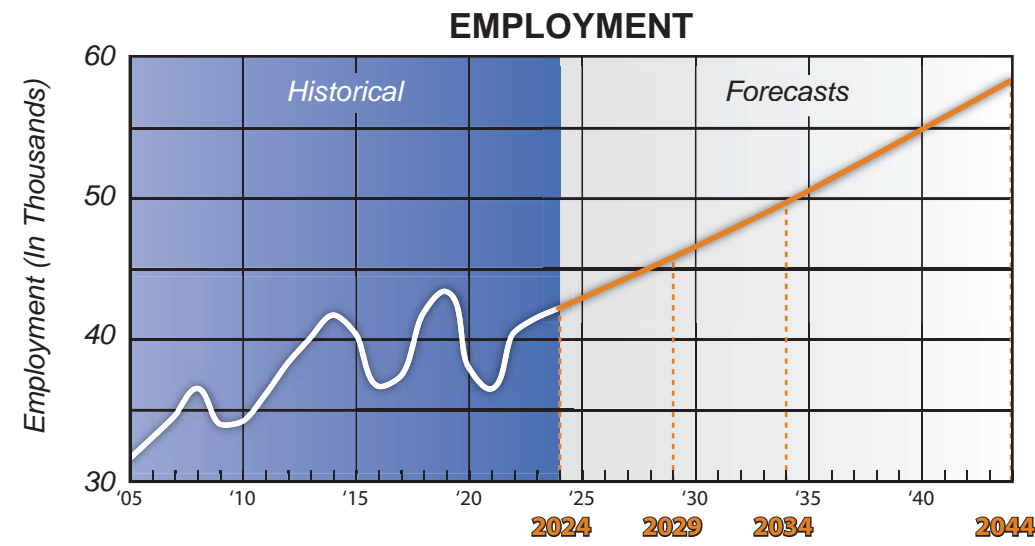
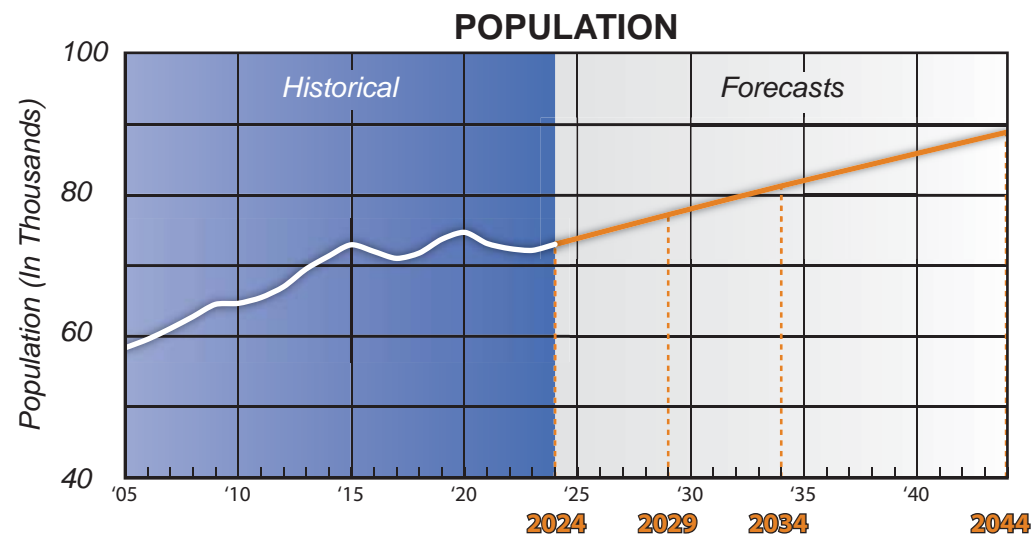
The NMDOT completed a review of HOB’s relationship with and impact on the local and state economies as part of the update to the *New Mexico Airport System Plan Update* (NMAASP) that was completed in 2017. The economic benefits provided by HOB are derived from on-airport business activities, as well as capital spending at the airport and the benefits associated with spending by visitors passing through the airport. The direct impacts that are measured – jobs, payroll, and economic output – become the inputs to a formula used to estimate the total economic impact an airport has on the State of New Mexico. These include multiplier impacts of activity of local businesses at or near the airport that host visitors, as well as the recirculation of the payroll of those businesses.

Based on the NMAASP, the direct economic impacts of HOB include supporting 90 jobs with a total payroll of \$4.1 million and a total annual economic output of \$12.4 million. The total statewide impact of HOB includes a total of 120 jobs, \$5.3 million in payroll, and \$16.4 million in total output. **Table 1C** and **Figure 1B** summarize the economic impacts of HOB, as well as all airports in the NMAASP.

TABLE 1C | Airport Economic Impact

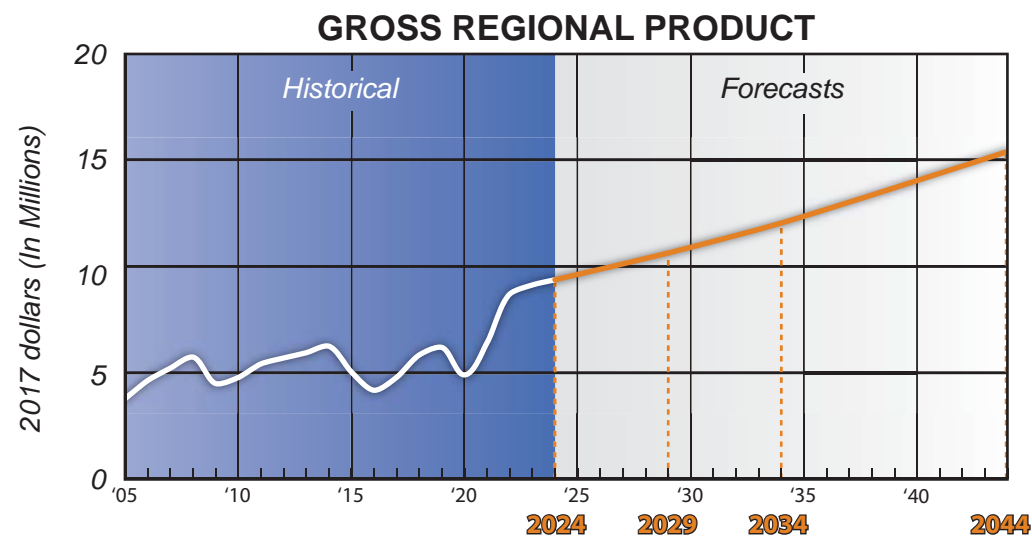
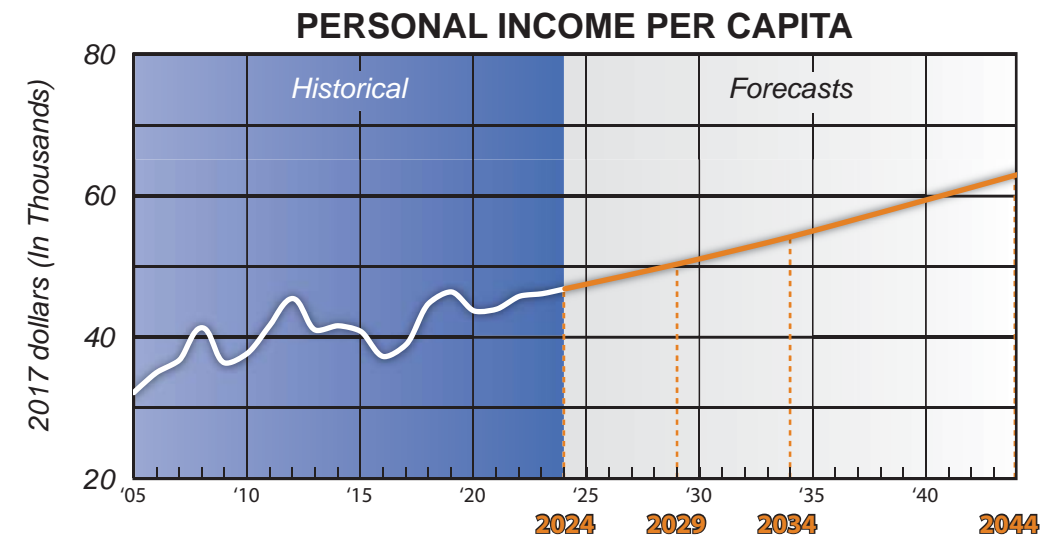
	HOB Direct Impacts	HOB Total Impacts	All NM Airports
Employment	90	120	18,573
Annual Payroll	\$4,093,000	\$5,318,000	\$723,356,000
Economic Output	\$12,416,000	\$16,352,000	\$2,308,251,000

Source: New Mexico Airport System Plan Update, 2017

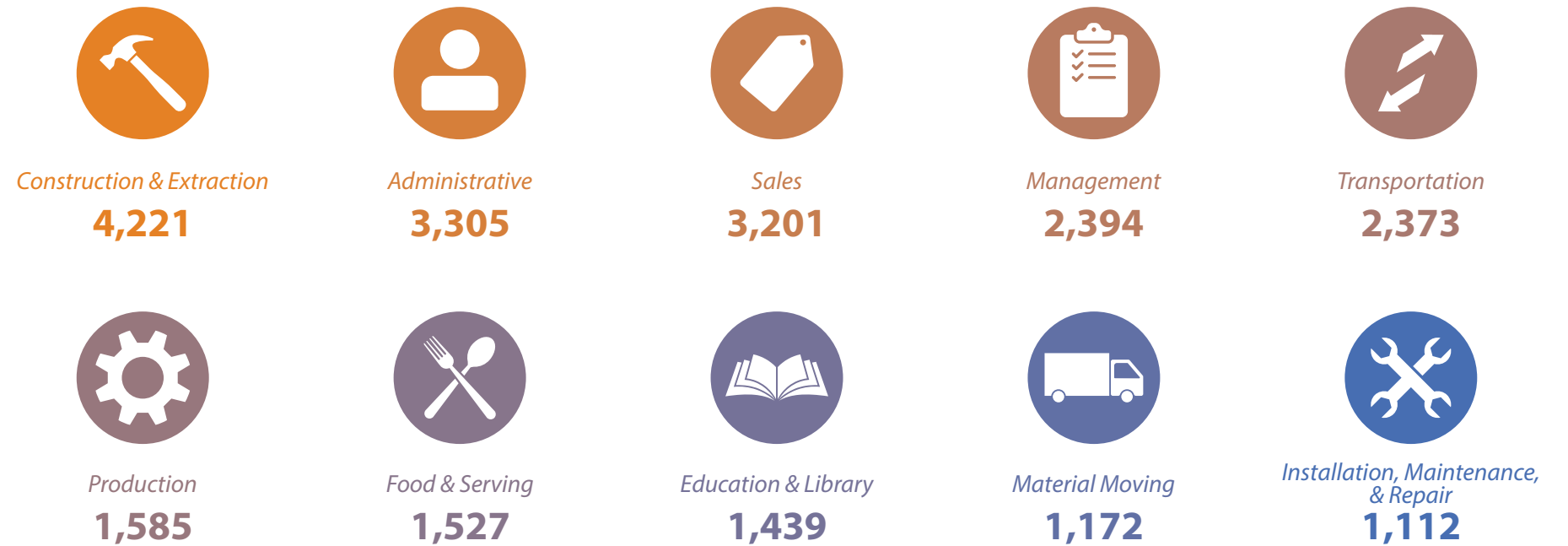


LARGEST EMPLOYERS

Employer	Jobs
Hobbs Schools	1,014
City Of Hobbs	466
Nor Lea Hospital	453
Lovington Schools	392
Lea Regional Hospital	340
Ferguson Construction	330
Lea County	301
State Of New Mexico	262
Lea County Correctional	247
Zia Racetrack And Casino	237



OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

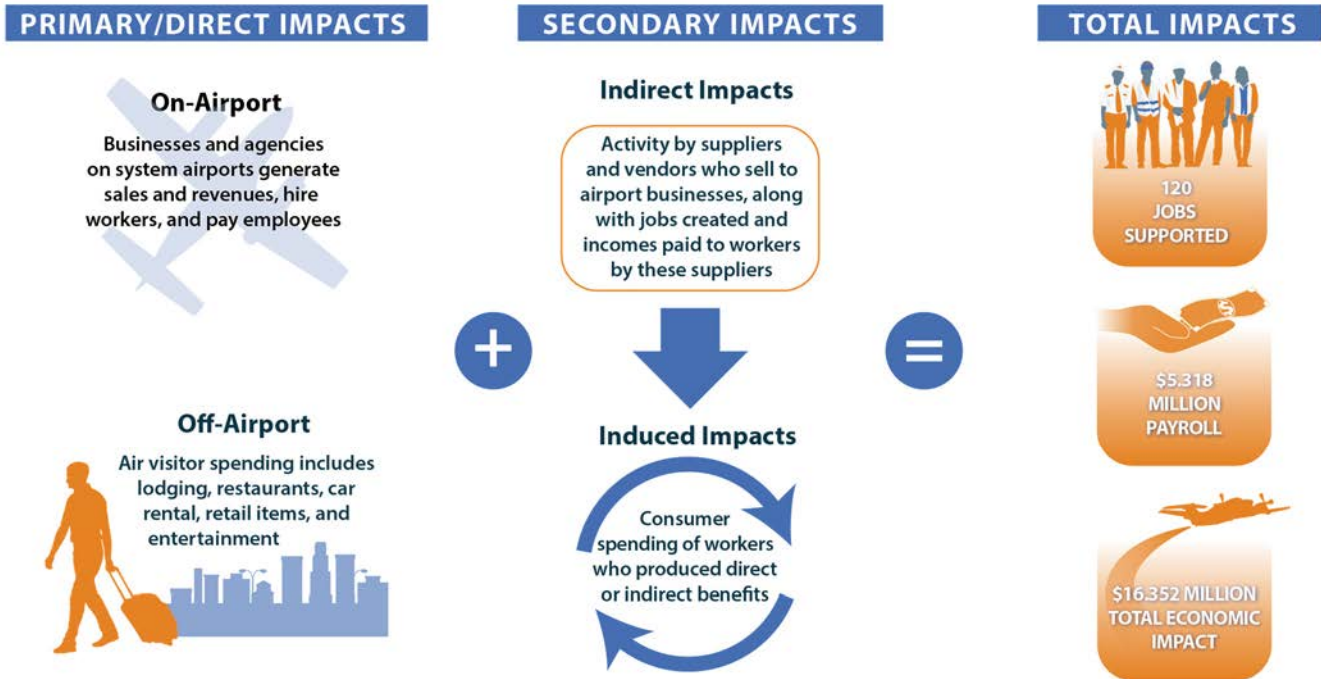


Source: Woods & Poole 2024 Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source (CEDDS), Lea County, New Mexico; New Mexico Partnership in cooperation with the New Mexico Economic Development Department (2024)

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ECONOMIC IMPACT SUMMARY



Source: New Mexico Airport System Plan Update, 2017

Figure 1B: Economic Impact of HOB

THE AIRPORT'S SYSTEM ROLE

Airport planning takes place at the local, state, and national levels, and each level has a different emphasis and purpose.

- **Local** | At the local level, HOB was included in a 2015 airport system master plan completed for Lea County, New Mexico. The airport layout plan (ALP) was also completed as part of the study in 2015.
- **State** | The NMDOT maintains the NMASP, which is a guide for decision-making that provides a framework by which the state and stakeholders may maintain, improve, and plan for the state's aviation network. The NMASP was last updated and adopted in 2017 and identifies 61 public-use aviation facilities that are designed to fulfill a variety of roles.
- **National** | HOB is included in the FAA's *National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems* (NPIAS). The NPIAS lists the airports across the country that are important to the National Airspace System and are therefore eligible for FAA grant funding for certain capital improvements. The NPIAS classifies both commercial service and general aviation airports based on certain operational characteristics of each airport.



LOCAL AIRPORT PLANNING

The airport master plan is the primary local planning document that provides a 20-year airport development vision based on aviation demand forecasts. The 2015 *Lea County Airport System Master Plan* used data from 2011 for its aviation forecast baseline. Given the inevitable uncertainties as a master plan ages, the FAA recommends that airports update their master plans every five to 10 years, or as necessary, to address any significant changes. Primary recommendations from the airport's previous planning effort included remodeling and expanding the existing terminal building, constructing a new airport fire station near the terminal, and extending Runway 4-22 to a length of 8,000 feet. Since then, the terminal building has been expanded, the new fire station has been constructed, and the Runway 4-22 extension to 8,000 feet has been constructed and is operational, as of fall 2024.

STATE AIRPORT PLANNING

HOB is included in the NMASP, which is an evaluation of New Mexico's aviation system and serves as a guide for future development. Airports were examined and evaluated based on key performance metrics, and each airport is assigned one of six system classifications. The classifications range from Low Activity General Aviation Airports to Primary Commercial Service Airports. HOB is identified as one of four Primary Commercial Service Airports in the state and is expected to remain as such. These airports have scheduled passenger service, experience more than 10,000 enplanements per year, and typically serve the highest levels of aviation activity in New Mexico (including commercial service and general aviation). They are generally located in the areas of the state with the largest populations. The typical facilities and services expected at Primary Commercial Service Airports are listed on **Exhibit 1D**.

FEDERAL AIRPORT PLANNING

Many of the nation's existing airports were either initially constructed by the federal government, or their development and maintenance were partially funded through various federal grant-in-aid programs to their local communities; therefore, the system of airports that exists today is largely due to federal policy that promotes the development of civil aviation. As part of a continuing effort to develop a national airport system, U.S. Congress has maintained a national plan for the development and maintenance of airports.

The FAA maintains a database of public-use airports that are eligible for AIP funding, called the *National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems* (NPIAS). The NPIAS is published and used by the FAA in administering the AIP, which is the source of federal funds for airport improvement projects across the country. The AIP is funded exclusively by user fees and user taxes, such as those imposed on fuel and airline ticket sales. An airport must be included in the NPIAS to be eligible for federal funding assistance through the AIP.

The most recent plan is the 2025-2029 NPIAS, which identifies 3,292 public-use airports (3,287 existing and five proposed) that are important to the national air transportation system. The plan estimates that approximately \$67.5 billion in AIP-eligible and justified airport development projects will occur between 2025 and 2029. **Table 1D** identifies the types of airports included in the NPIAS.



AIRPORT CRITERIA	PRIMARY COMMERCIAL SERVICE AIRPORTS
ARC	C-III or greater
Runway Length	75% of large aircraft at 90% useful load
Runway Width	150 or 100*
Runway Strength	SWG of 60,000 lbs.
Taxiway	Full Parallel
Instrument Approach	Precision or Near-precision (LPV)
Visual Aids	Rotating beacon Lighted windcone/segmented circle Runway end identifier lights Visual glide slope indicator MALSR
Lighting	HIRL, MITL
Weather Reporting Facilities	AWOS or ASOS
Wind Coverage	Primary and crosswind have 95% wind coverage
Services	Phones Restrooms Full service FBO 24/7 AvGas and Jet A Rental cars available Full service maintenance Public transportation available
Facilities	Terminal with public restrooms, conference rooms, pilots lounge Hangar storage for 80% of based aircraft and 25% of transient Auto parking
Safety and Security	Emergency response plan Perimeter fencing

KEY	
ASOS: Automated Surface Observation System	MIRL: Medium Intensity Runway Lighting
AWOS: Automated Weather Observation System	MITL: Medium Intensity Taxiway Lighting
HIRL: High Intensity Runway Lighting	SWG: Single Wheel Gear
MALSR: Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights	



*Per FAA AC 5300-13A Table 3-5 Note 12: For airplanes with maximum certificated takeoff weight of 150,000 lbs or less, the standard runway width is 100 feet, the shoulder width is 20 feet, and the runway blast pad width is 140 feet.



TABLE 1D | Activity and Development at NPIAS Airports

Airport Category	Number of Airports	% of Airports	% of Paved Runways	% of 2023 Total Enplanements	% of All Active GA Aircraft ¹	% of NPIAS Cost
Large Hub	31	1	3	71	1	36
Medium Hub	33	1	2	17	2	14
Small Hub	74	2	4	8	4	10
Nonhub	252	8	11	3	9	12
Primary Subtotal:	390	12	19	99	16	72
National	122	4	5		14	5
Regional	586	18	18		25	9
Local	1,220	37	34		18	9
Basic	778	24	19		3	5
Unclassified	191	6	5		1	0
Nonprimary Subtotal:	2,897	88	81	1	61	28
Total NPIAS Airports:	3,287	100	100	100	77	100

¹Based on active general aviation fleet of 204,380 aircraft in 2020. The remaining aircraft are based at other (non-NPIAS) airports.

Source: NPIAS, 2025-2029

HOB is currently classified as a primary commercial service (CS) airport in the NPIAS. CS airports are publicly owned airports with at least 2,500 annual enplanements (passenger boardings) and scheduled air carrier service. The NPIAS further categorizes CS airports into four hub subcategories based on the number of annual enplanements: large hub, medium hub, small hub, and nonhub. The standards for each subcategory are defined in **Table 1E**. HOB is defined as a nonhub commercial service airport; as such, HOB receives less than 0.05 percent but more than 10,000 of all U.S. annual enplanements. HOB also provides general aviation (GA) support to airport users, including flight training, emergency services, personal flying, and business/corporate jet travel.

TABLE 1E | Commercial Service Airport Hub Categories

Hub Type	Criteria
Large Hub	Receives 1% or more of all U.S. annual commercial enplanements
Medium Hub	Receives 0.25% to 1.0% of all U.S. annual commercial enplanements
Small Hub	Receives 0.05% to 0.25% of all U.S. annual commercial enplanements
Nonhub	Receives less than 0.05% but more than 10,000 of all U.S. annual commercial enplanements

Source: NPIAS, 2025-2029

Part 139 Certification | An airport must have an Airport Operating Certificate (AOC) if it serves air carrier aircraft with more than nine seats or unscheduled air carrier aircraft with more than 30 passenger seats. Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 139 describes the requirements for obtaining and maintaining an AOC, including meeting various Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs).

Airports are classified in the following categories based on the type(s) of air carrier operations they serve:

- Class I Airport – an airport certificated to serve scheduled operations of large air carrier aircraft (31 passenger seats or more) that can also serve unscheduled passenger operations of large air carrier aircraft and/or scheduled operations of small air carrier aircraft; **HOB is a Class I airport**
- Class II Airport – an airport certificated to serve scheduled operations of small air carrier aircraft (10 to 30 passenger seats) and unscheduled passenger operations of large air carrier aircraft; a Class II airport cannot serve scheduled large air carrier aircraft



- Class III Airport – an airport certificated to serve scheduled operations of small air carrier aircraft; a Class III airport cannot serve scheduled or unscheduled large air carrier aircraft
- Class IV Airport – an airport certificated to serve unscheduled passenger operations of large air carrier aircraft; a Class IV airport cannot serve scheduled large or small air carrier aircraft

Part 139 implemented provisions of the *Airport and Airway Development Act of 1970* (as amended November 27, 1971) and set standards for the marking and lighting of areas used for operations; firefighting and rescue equipment and services; the handling and storage of hazardous materials; identification of obstructions; and safety inspection and reporting procedures. This regulation also requires each airport operator to have an FAA-approved Airport Certification Manual (ACM). A Class I airport must comply with all sections of Part 139.

The ACM is a required document that defines the procedures to be followed in the routine operation of the airport and for response to emergency situations. The ACM is a working document that is updated annually. It reflects the current condition and operation of the airport and establishes responsibility, authority, and procedures, as required. Required sections for the ACM cover administrative and procedural details, and each section independently addresses “who (primary/secondary), what, how, and when” as they relate to each element.

The administrative sections of the ACM cover elements such as the organizational chart, operational responsibilities, maps, descriptions, weather sensors, access, and cargo. The procedural elements cover items such as paved and unpaved areas, safety areas, lighting and marking, communications and navigational aids, aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF), hazardous materials handling, utility protection, public protection, self-inspection programs, ground vehicle control, obstruction removal, wildlife management, and construction supervision. HOB has an ACM, which was recently revised and approved in October 2024.

AVIATION ACTIVITY

At commercial service airports, the number of passenger boardings (enplanements) is a key indicator of operational strength, as enplanement levels are typically the basis for federal grants-in-aid. Enplanement activity is also a good indicator of operational conditions, as enplanements can be used to measure the strength of commercial passenger airline services. The airport’s based aircraft and annual operations (takeoffs and landings) are also important aeronautical activity measures to factor. These indicators are briefly described in this section and will be used in more depth in the *Forecasts* chapter of this master plan to project future aviation activity and determine future facility needs.

PASSENGER ENPLANEMENTS

Commercial service airports provide local and regional access to the national and international aviation systems. As such, these airports are vital to interstate commerce and are a key component of local and regional economic infrastructure. These facilities support (and can even drive) growth in all socioeconomic categories.



An *enplanement* is defined as any revenue passenger that boards an aircraft at the airport. This statistic is important because the FAA uses it to determine the annual level of entitlement funding dedicated to an airport under the AIP. An airport must reach 10,000 annual enplanements to be eligible for a minimum of \$1 million in annual entitlement funds. Airline passenger enplanements are typically influenced by many factors, including the number of airlines serving the airport, frequency of daily departures, types of aircraft used, and number of nonstop destinations. Historical passenger enplanement data in **Table 1F** shows that HOB averaged more than 17,800 annual enplanements from 2014 to 2023. This average is slightly lower than expected because of the COVID-19 pandemic; the enplanement count for 2019 (before the pandemic) was 27,765, which dropped to 9,080 enplanements in 2020. As of 2023, annual enplanements have rebounded to 22,187.

HOB is currently served by United Airlines (operated by United Express) and offers daily nonstop flights to and from Denver International Airport (DEN) and George Bush Intercontinental/Houston Airport (IAH).

AIRPORT OPERATIONS AND BASED AIRCRAFT

Table 1F also presents the historical annual operations and based aircraft at HOB. Airport operational statistics are recorded by the airport traffic control tower (ATCT), which classifies each operation as a takeoff or landing. Aircraft operations are further classified as local or itinerant operations and will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. Annual operations at HOB have been relatively consistent, averaging over 8,600 operations between 2014 and 2023. The airport experienced a total of 9,035 annual operations in 2023.

TABLE 1F | Historical Aviation Activity at HOB

Year	Enplanements	Operations	Based Aircraft
2014	18,280	8,523	40
2015	16,615	9,214	45
2016	14,748	8,884	46
2017	16,214	8,189	52
2018	23,413	8,084	52
2019	27,765	9,734	52
2020	9,080	7,515	53
2021	11,970	8,428	53
2022	17,877	8,483	52
2023	22,187	9,035	45

Sources: HOB Records; FAA Terminal Area Forecast; OPSNET

The number of based aircraft at an airport is another important part of the master plan process; however, accuracy can be difficult because of the transient nature of aircraft storage. HOB maintains a record of based aircraft, the FAA’s *Terminal Area Forecast (TAF)* was also consulted. In 2023, the TAF reported 52 aircraft based at HOB – seven more aircraft than the airport’s current based aircraft count of 45. Historical based aircraft data are shown in **Table 1F**.

AIRSIDE FACILITIES

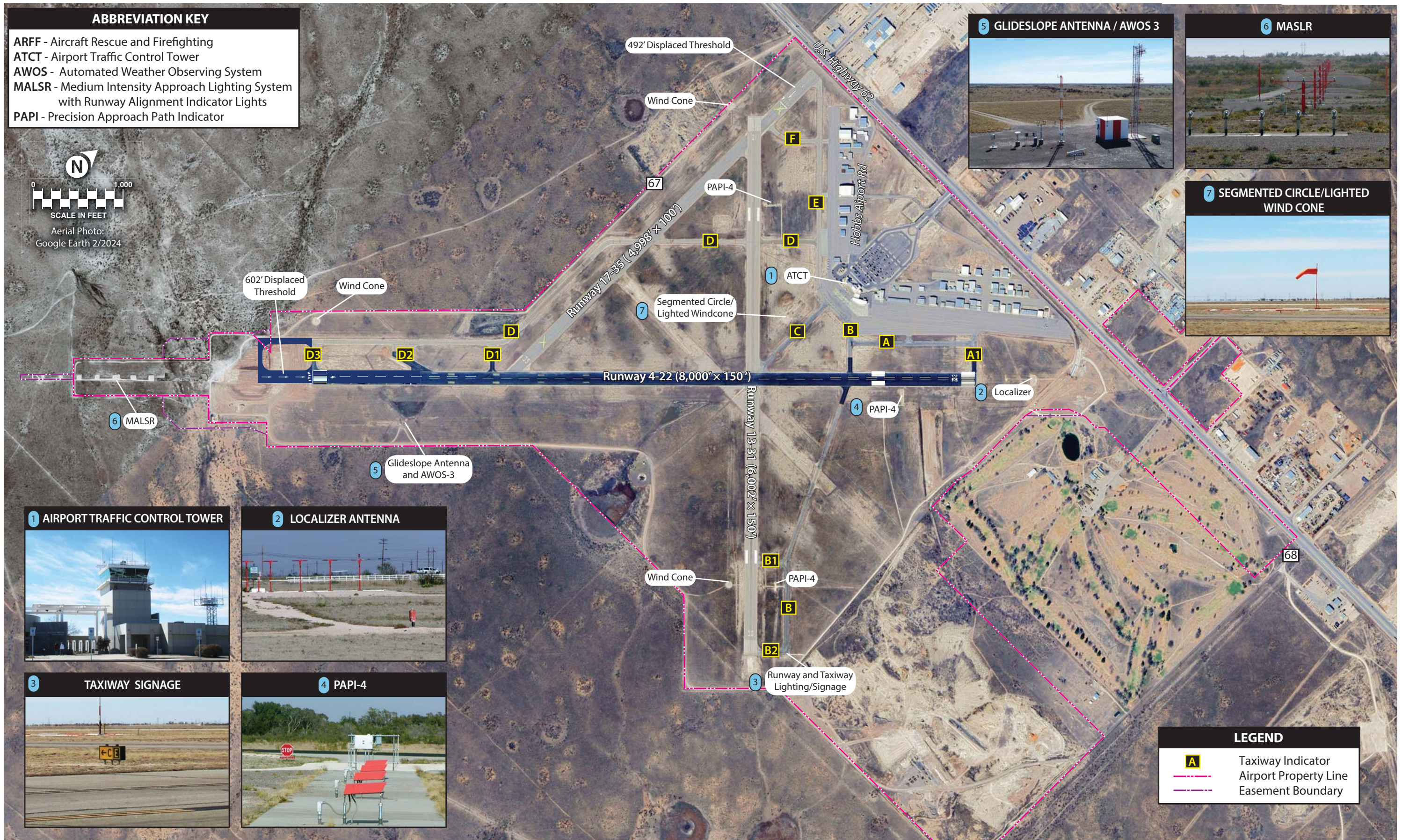
Airside facilities facilitate aircraft movement between the air and ground. Generally, these facilities include runways, taxiways/taxilanes, terminal ramp aprons, airport lighting and markings, and weather and communication aids. The airside facilities at HOB are depicted on **Exhibit 1E**.

RUNWAYS

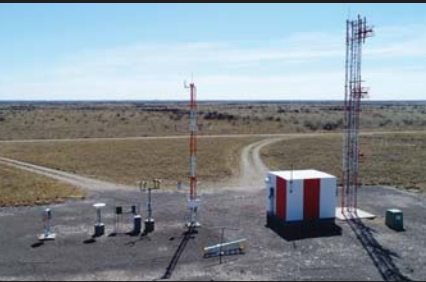
Three runways serve HOB: Runway 4-22, Runway 13-31, and Runway 17-35. Runway 4-22 is the airport’s primary runway and Runways 13-31 and 17-35 serve as crosswind runways. All runways at HOB use the standard left-hand traffic pattern. Information pertaining to the runways is available on **Exhibit 1E**.

ABBREVIATION KEY

ARFF - Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting
 ATCT - Airport Traffic Control Tower
 AWOS - Automated Weather Observing System
 MALSR - Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights
 PAPI - Precision Approach Path Indicator



5 GLIDESLOPE ANTENNA / AWOS 3



6 MALSR



7 SEGMENTED CIRCLE/LIGHTED WIND CONE



1 AIRPORT TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER



2 LOCALIZER ANTENNA



3 TAXIWAY SIGNAGE



4 PAPI-4



LEGEND

- A** Taxiway Indicator
- Airport Property Line
- Easement Boundary

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Runway 4-22 | Runway 4-22 is the primary runway and is 8,000 feet long and 150 feet wide. It has an asphalt surface and is in good condition. Runway 4 has precision instrument markings, which consist of the runway designator, a centerline, threshold markings, and aiming point and touchdown markings. Runway 22 has non-precision instrument markings, which are similar to precision markings but do not have touchdown zone markings. Currently, Runway 4 has a 602-foot threshold displacement and a landing distance available of 7,398 feet. The surface has a published strength rating of 112,000 pounds for single wheel landing gear configurations (S), 168,000 pounds for dual wheel configurations (D), and 259,000 pounds for dual tandem gear configurations (2D). The gradient of the runway is 0.075 percent, with the Runway 4 end elevation at 3,652 feet MSL and the Runway 22 end at 3,646 feet MSL. The runway is equipped with white high-intensity runway lighting to illuminate the runway edges at night and/or during poor meteorological conditions.



Runway 4-22

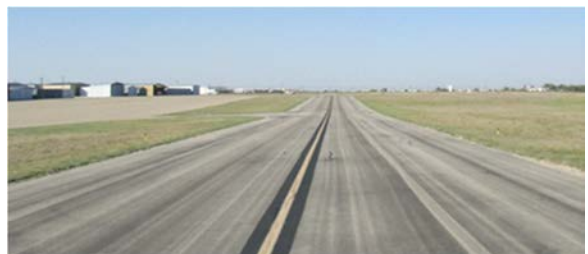
Runway 13-31 | Runway 13-31 is 6,002 feet long and 150 feet wide, is paved with asphalt, and is in good condition. Non-precision instrument markings are located at each runway end. The surface has a published strength rating of 120,000 pounds S, 171,000 pounds D, and 279,000 2D. Runway 13-31 is equipped with medium-intensity runway lighting and has an effective grade of 0.38 percent.

Runway 17-35 | Runway 17-35 is 4,998 feet long and 100 feet wide, is paved with asphalt, and is reported in the Airport Master Record 5010 Report to be in good condition; however, recent site visits indicate that the runway is in need of rehabilitation. Basic markings are located at each runway end. Runway 17 currently has a threshold displacement of 492 feet and a published landing distance available of 3,878 feet. Similarly, Runway 35 has a published takeoff distance available of 3,418 feet and accelerate-stop and landing distance available of 3,878 feet. The surface has a published strength rating of 32,000 pounds S and 50,000 pounds D. Runway 17-35 is currently not lighted and has an effective grade of 0.19 percent.

TAXIWAYS

Taxiways are aircraft movement surfaces that generally provide direct access to runways, including parallel and connector taxiways. Taxilanes are surfaces that generally provide access to hangars or aircraft tiedown areas.

The taxiway system at HOB includes parallel, entrance/exit, access, and connector taxiways. Taxiway A is a partial parallel taxiway that serves the north side of primary Runway 4-22 and is located 400 feet west of the runway (centerline to centerline). To the southwest, Taxiway D serves as the partial parallel taxiway for the southern portion of Runway 4-22 and is also separated from the runway centerline by 400 feet. Four entrance/exit taxiways link the partial parallel taxiways with Runway 4-22 and are designated as A1, D1, D2, and D3 (moving from northeast to southwest). In addition, Taxiways B and C provide entrance/exit access to and from Runway 4-22.



Taxiway A



Taxiways B and E serve Runway 13-31 as partial parallel taxiways. Taxiway B extends east of Runway 4-22 and serves the eastern portion of Runway 13-31, leading to the Runway 31 threshold. At its closest point to the runway, Taxiway B is located 400 feet north of the runway centerline. Taxiway E is located 725 feet north of the Runway 13-31 centerline and serves as its partial parallel taxiway west of the intersection of Runways 4-22 and 13-31. Four entrance/exit taxiways link partial parallel Taxiways B and E with Runway 13-31 and are designated as F, D, B1, and B2 (moving northwest to southeast). Taxiway C also provides access to and from Runway 13-31.

Taxiway E provides access to Runway 17 on the northwest side of the airport. Taxiway D1 allows for entrance/exit access to Runway 35. Taxiway D intersects Runway 17-35 and is aligned parallel to the southern half of the runway 300 feet west of its centerline.

All active taxiways and their associated dimensions are listed on **Exhibit 1E**. Several other taxiways and taxilanes serve more remote areas of the airfield, such as hangar complexes and aircraft parking aprons. Taxiway and taxilane centerline markings are provided to assist pilots in maintaining proper clearance from pavement edges and objects near the taxiways/taxilanes. Taxiway markings also include hold positions located on the entrance/exit taxiways that serve all three runways. Aircraft holding positions are located prior to the entrance of a runway and require pilots to “hold short” and wait for clearance before moving onto or crossing a runway. This clearance is provided by the air traffic controllers. For Runway 4-22, the hold lines are located at least 250 feet from the runway centerline. The hold lines associated with Runway 13-31 range from 200 to 250 feet from the runway centerline and the hold lines associated with Runway 17-35 are situated 200 feet from the runway centerline.

PAVEMENT CONDITION

An airport sponsor is required to maintain the airport’s pavement surfaces in suitable condition, as outlined in Federal Grant Assurance 11. To this end, the airport sponsor must implement an effective airport pavement maintenance/management program. Essentially, airport sponsors must continually assess the condition of pavements and provide preventative maintenance to preserve the useful life of the pavements. A pavement condition survey for HOB was completed in 2022.

The survey was conducted using the pavement condition index (PCI) procedure documented in the following publications:

- FAA Advisory Circular 150/5380-6B, *Guidelines and Procedures for Maintenance of Airport Pavements*
- American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) D-5340, *Standard Test Method for Airport Pavement Condition Index Surveys*

The PCI procedure is the standard used by the aviation industry to visually assess pavement conditions. It was developed to provide engineers with a consistent, objective, and repeatable tool to represent overall pavement condition. During a PCI survey, visible signs of deterioration within a selected sample area are identified, recorded, and analyzed.



The results of a PCI evaluation provide an indication of the structural integrity and functional capabilities of the pavement, but it should be recognized that only the top layer of the pavement is examined during a PCI inspection and no direct measure is made of the structural capacity of the pavement system; nevertheless, the PCI provides an objective basis for determining maintenance and repair needs and establishing rehabilitation priorities in the face of constrained resources. Furthermore, the results of repeated PCI monitoring over time can be used to determine the rate of deterioration and estimate the time at which certain rehabilitation measures can be implemented. **Table 1G** presents the PCI range and associated pavement condition descriptions.

TABLE 1G | PCI Ratings and Condition

PCI Range	Condition Description
100-85	Good
84-70	Satisfactory
69-55	Fair
54-40	Poor
39-25	Very Poor
24-10	Serious
9-0	Failed

Sources: New Mexico Aviation Automated Pavement Survey, 2022; Furgo USA Land, Inc.

Exhibit 1F shows the pavement condition index map from 2022. The 2022 pavement condition report is somewhat dated as of this writing (November 2024). A general rule of thumb is to subtract one to two PCI index points for each year removed from the survey date.

In 2022, several pavement surfaces were showing distress. Runway 4-22 was in fair condition, with an overall PCI value of 53. Runway 13-31 was in good condition, with a PCI value of 93, and Runway 17-35 was in very poor condition, with a PCI of 26. Other airfield pavements ranged from PCI values of 69 down to 16, for an overall airfield PCI of 54, which is categorized as poor condition, according to ASTM D-6433.

AIRFIELD LIGHTING

Airfield lighting systems extend an airport’s usefulness into periods of darkness and/or poor visibility. Various lighting systems are installed at the airport for this purpose. These lighting systems are categorized by function and summarized as follows.

Identification Lighting | The location of the airport at night is universally identified by a rotating beacon, which projects two beams of light, one white and one green, 180 degrees apart. The beacon operates from sunset to sunrise or during periods of instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) and is located on top of the airport traffic control tower (ATCT).



Airport Beacon atop the ATCT

Pavement Edge Lighting/Signage | Runway edge lighting uses light fixtures placed near the edges of the pavement to define the lateral limits of the surface. This lighting is essential at night and/or during times of low visibility to maintain the safe and efficient movement of aircraft. Runway 4-22 is equipped with high-intensity runway lighting (HIRL), Runway 13-31 is equipped with medium-intensity runway lighting (MIRL), and Runway 17-35 is not currently lighted. The taxiways are equipped with medium-intensity taxiway lighting (MITL). To differentiate between the two, taxiway lighting is typically blue, and runway lighting is generally white.



Blue Taxiway Edge Light

The presence of runway/taxiway signage is an essential component of a surface movement guidance control system and is necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the airport. At HOB, runway holding position signs are currently installed at each runway holding position marking. The airport also has location signage that indicates the taxiway or runway where an aircraft is located, as well as directional signage, which provides directions to locations at the airport, such as a ramp or terminal.



Various Runway and Taxiway Signage at HOB

(Note: Runway designations have since changed to 4-22 and 13-31)

Visual Glideslope Approach Aids | Visual approach aids provide pilots with glideslope information when landing in visual meteorological conditions (VMC) or when transitioning from an instrument approach procedure. Approach aids consist of light boxes that shine either red or white lights that the pilot of a landing aircraft interprets to determine if they are on the correct glide path to the runway. The two most commonly used approach aids are the visual approach slope indicator (VASI) and precision approach path indicator (PAPI).

Runway 13 and Runway 31 are both equipped with a four-box PAPI (PAPI-4) system. The PAPI serving Runway 13 is located on the left side of the runway, while the PAPI serving Runway 31 is located on the right side of the runway. Both PAPIs are set to a standard glide path of 3.00 degrees. The PAPI serving Runway 13 is located approximately 1,000 feet from the runway threshold, while the PAPI serving Runway 31 is located approximately 770 feet from the runway threshold.

Runway 22 is also equipped with a PAPI-4, which provides a standard 3.00-degree glide path to the runway. The PAPI-4 serving Runway 22 is located on the left side of the runway, 820 feet from the threshold. Runway 4 does not have a PAPI or VASI system but is equipped with a medium-intensity approach lighting system with runway alignment indicator lights (MALSR), which is discussed in more detail in the next section.



Runway 31 PAPI-4



Runway 22 PAPI-4

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Approach Lighting System (ALS) | An approach lighting system (ALS) is a configuration of lights positioned symmetrically along the extended runway centerline to supplement navigational aids, such as an instrument landing system (ILS), and provide lower visibility minimums. Runway 4 is equipped with a MALSR, which is a combination of a medium-intensity ALS with runway alignment indicator lights. This system is commonly used for runways with category I precision approaches. The MALSR extends for a length of 2,400 feet and includes a combination of threshold lights, steady-burning light bars, and flashers, which provide visual guidance and references to pilots on approach to the runway.

Pilot-Controlled Lighting (PCL) | During times of low light and/or poor visibility when the ATCT is closed (6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.), pilots can use the pilot-controlled lighting (PCL) system to activate the runway lights and the Runway 4 MALSR. The airfield lights are activated by a series of clicks by a pilot's radio transmitter using the airport common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) of 120.65 megahertz (MHz).

WEATHER AND COMMUNICATION AIDS

At times when the ATCT is closed, it is essential that pilots can still communicate with each other and receive current weather reports. Weather and communication devices provide pilots with information about the existing conditions at the airport; these devices are described below.

Wind Indicator | HOB is equipped with a lighted wind cone, which is located approximately 750 feet north of the intersection of Runways 4-22 and 13-31 within a segmented circle. The wind cone provides information to pilots regarding wind direction and approximate intensity. Supplemental wind cones are located at the ends of Runways 4, 13, and 31 to provide immediate wind speed and direction information to pilots operating on the runways.

Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) | Different weather recording and reporting systems are available to airports to provide pilots with information on current weather conditions. HOB is served by an automated weather observation system (AWOS-3), which measures and reports the altimeter setting (barometric pressure) and density altitude, wind direction and speed, temperature and dew point, visibility, and cloud/ceiling heights.

The system updates observations every minute, 24 hours a day, and transmits the information to pilots at and near the airport by a very high frequency (VHF) ground-to-air radio transmitter via frequency 119.75 MHz. Pilots can also receive the weather report by calling a local telephone number (575-393-8418). The AWOS at HOB is located on the southeast side of Runway 4-22 near the Runway 4 threshold.



Supplemental Wind Cone



AWOS, Primary Wind Cone, and Segmented Circle



Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) | A CTAF is used by pilots at and near the airport to communicate with each other about approaches to or departures from the airport when the ATCT is closed. The CTAF is also used to control the airport's PCL system, which is discussed earlier in this chapter. The CTAF radio frequency at HOB is 120.65 MHz.

AREA AIRSPACE AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

The *Federal Aviation Act of 1958* established the FAA as the responsible agency for the control and use of navigable airspace within the U.S. The FAA has established the National Airspace System (NAS) to protect people and property on the ground, in addition to establishing a safe and efficient airspace environment for civil, commercial, and military aviation. The NAS covers the common network of U.S. airspace, including air navigation facilities; airports and landing areas; aeronautical charts; associated rules, regulations, and procedures; technical information; and personnel and material. The system also includes components shared jointly with the military.

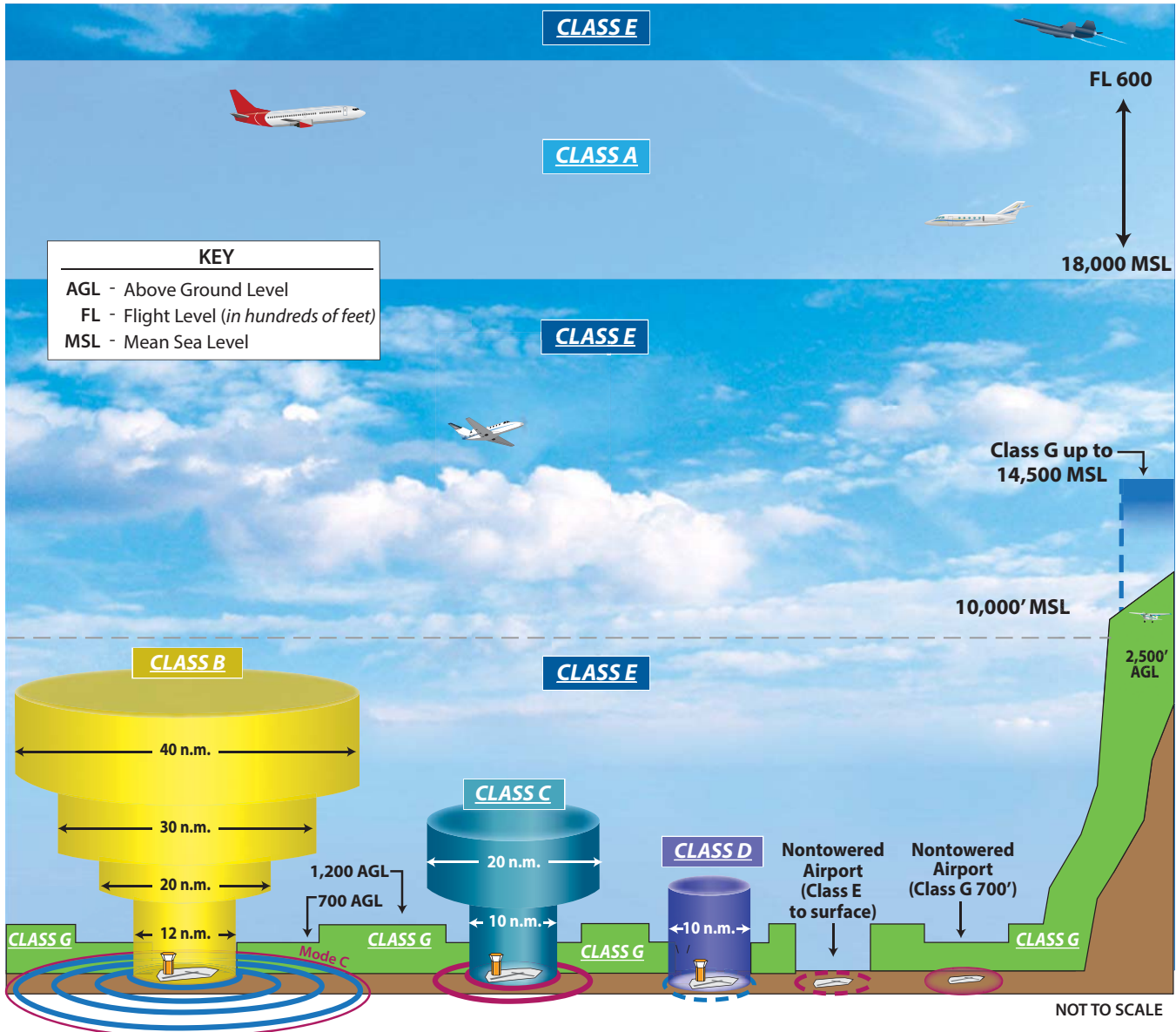
AIRSPACE STRUCTURE

Airspace within the U.S. is broadly classified as either controlled or uncontrolled. The difference between controlled and uncontrolled airspace relates primarily to requirements for pilot qualifications, air-to-ground communications, navigation and air traffic services, and weather conditions. Six classes of airspace have been identified in the U.S. and given letter designations, as shown on **Exhibit 1G**. Airspace designated as Class A, B, C, D, or E is considered controlled airspace. Aircraft operating within controlled airspace are subject to varying requirements for positive air traffic control. The airspace near HOB is depicted on **Exhibit 1H**.

Class A Airspace | Class A airspace includes all airspace from 18,000 feet MSL to flight level (FL) 600 (approximately 60,000 feet MSL) over the contiguous 48 states and Alaska. This airspace is designated in FAR Part 71.33 for positive control of aircraft. Any aircraft operating within Class A airspace must have an instrument flight rules (IFR) clearance and flight plan.

Class B Airspace | Class B airspace has been designated around some of the country's major airports, such as Chicago O'Hare International Airport, to separate all aircraft within a specified radius of the primary airport. Each Class B airspace is specifically tailored for its primary airport. All aircraft operating within the Class B airspace must have air traffic control (ATC) clearance. Certain minimum aircraft equipment and pilot certification requirements must also be met. This airspace is the most restrictive controlled airspace routinely encountered by pilots operating under visual flight rules (VFR). The nearest Class B airspace surrounds Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), approximately 310 nautical miles (nm) to the east of HOB.

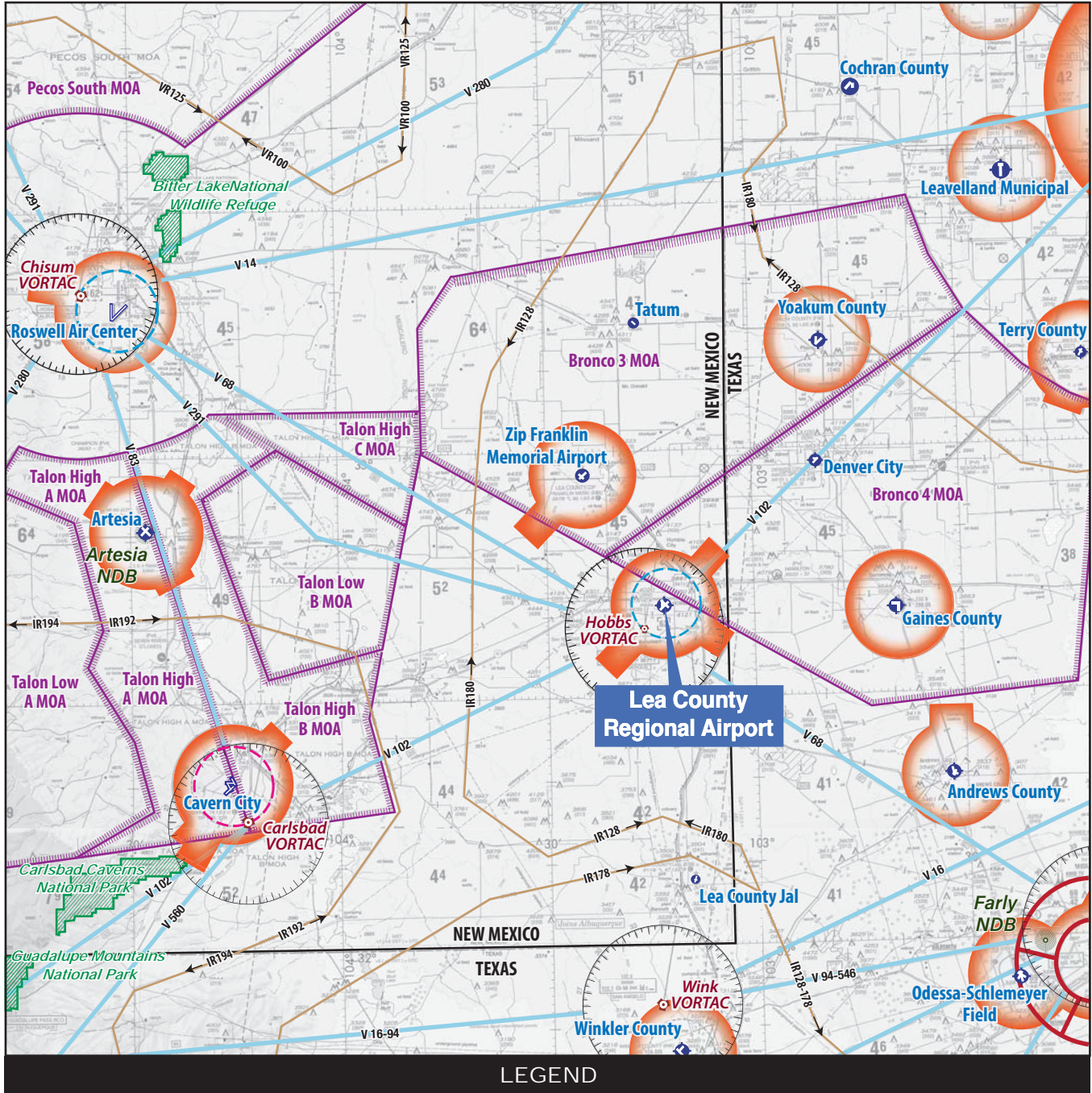
Class C Airspace | The FAA has established Class C airspace at approximately 120 airports around the country that have significant levels of IFR traffic. Class C airspace is designed to regulate the flow of uncontrolled traffic above, around, and below the arrival and departure airspace required for high-performance, passenger-carrying aircraft at major airports. To fly inside Class C airspace, an aircraft must have a two-way radio and an encoding transponder, and must have established communication with ATC.



DEFINITION OF AIRSPACE CLASSIFICATIONS

- CLASS A** Think A - Altitude. Airspace above 18,000 feet MSL up to and including FL 600. Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) flights only, ADS-B 1090 ES transponder required, ATC clearance required.
- CLASS B** Think B - Busy. Multi-layered airspace from the surface up to 10,000 feet MSL surrounding the nation's busiest airports. ADS-B 1090 ES transponder required, ATC clearance required.
- CLASS C** Think C - Mode C. Mode C transponder required. ATC communication required. Generally airspace from the surface to 4,000 feet AGL surrounding towered airports with service by radar approach control.
- CLASS D** Think D - Dialogue. Pilot must establish dialogue with tower. Generally airspace from the surface to minimum 2,500 feet AGL surrounding towered airports.
- CLASS E** Think E - Everywhere. Controlled airspace that is not designated as any other Class of airspace.
- CLASS G** Think G - Ground. Uncontrolled airspace. From surface to 1,200 feet AGL (in mountainous areas 2,500 feet AGL) Exceptions: near airports it lowers to 700 feet AGL; some airports have Class E to the surface. Visual Flight Rules (VFR) minimums apply.

Source: www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/handbooks_manuals/aviation/phak/media/15_phak_ch15.pdf



	Airport with hard-surfaced runways 1,500' to 8,069' in length		Class C Airspace		Victor Airways
	Airports with hard-surfaced runways greater than 8,069' or some multiple runways less than 8,069'		Class D Airspace		Military Training Routes
	Compass Rose		Class E Airspace		Wilderness Areas
	VORTAC		Class E Airspace with floor 700 ft. above surface		Alert Area and Military Operations Area
	Non-Directional Radio Beacon (NDB)				

Source: Albuquerque Sectional Chart, US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. November 30, 2023, El Paso Sectional Chart, US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. November 30, 2023, San Antonio Sectional Chart, US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. November 30, 2023



Aircraft may fly below the floor or above the ceiling of the Class C airspace without contacting ATC. The nearest Class C airport to HOB is Midland International Air and Space Port (MAF), approximately 68 nm to the southeast.

Class D Airspace | Class D airspace is controlled airspace surrounding an airport with an ATCT. The Class D airspace typically constitutes a cylinder with a horizontal radius of four or five nm from the airport, extending from the surface up to a designated vertical limit, which is typically set approximately 2,500 feet above the airport elevation. Pilots planning to operate within Class D airspace are required to contact the ATCT prior to entering the airspace and must remain in contact while within the airspace. **HOB is located in Class D airspace.**

Class E Airspace | Class E airspace is controlled airspace designed to contain IFR operations near an airport and while aircraft are transitioning between the airport and en-route environments. Unless otherwise specified, Class E airspace terminates at the base of any overlying airspace. Only aircraft operating under IFR are required to be in contact with ATC when operating in Class E airspace. While aircraft conducting visual flights in Class E airspace are not required to be in radio contact with ATC facilities, visual flight can only be conducted if minimum visibility and cloud ceilings exist. Class E airports are the predominant airport types and can be found nationwide; Lea County/Zip Franklin Memorial Airport (E06) and Lea County/Jal Airport (E26) are two examples of Class E airports and are located less than 35 nm from HOB.

Class G Airspace | Airspace not designated as Class A, B, C, D, or E is considered uncontrolled, or Class G, airspace. Air traffic control does not have the authority or responsibility to exercise control over air traffic within this airspace. Class G airspace lies between the surface and the overlying Class E airspace (700 to 1,200 feet above ground level [AGL]).

While aircraft may technically operate within Class G airspace without any contact with ATC, it is unlikely that many aircraft would operate so low to the ground. Furthermore, federal regulations specify minimum altitudes for flight. FAR Part 91.119, *Minimum Safe Altitudes*, generally states that, except when necessary for takeoff or landing, a pilot may not operate an aircraft over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open-air assembly of people, below an altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet from the aircraft.

Over less congested areas, pilots must maintain an altitude of 500 feet AGL, except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In those cases, aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vehicle, or structure. A helicopter may be operated at less than the minimums prescribed above if the operation is conducted without hazard to people or property on the surface. In addition, each person operating a helicopter shall comply with any routes or altitudes specifically prescribed for helicopters by the FAA.

SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE

Special use airspace is defined as airspace where activities must be confined because of their nature or where limitations are imposed on aircraft not taking part in those activities. The designation of special use airspace identifies for other users the areas where military activity may occur, provides for segregation of that activity from other operators, and allows charting to keep airspace users informed.



Victor Airways | For aircraft arriving or departing the regional area using very high frequency omnidirectional range (VOR) facilities, a system of federal airways, referred to as Victor airways, has been established. Victor airways are corridors of airspace eight miles wide, extending upward from 1,200 feet AGL to 18,000 feet MSL, that extend between VOR navigational facilities. Victor airways near HOB are identified on **Exhibit 1H**. For aircraft en route to or departing from HOB, several Victor airways are available, converging on the Hobbs VORTAC 3.9 nm to the southwest of the airport.

Military Training Routes | Military training routes (MTRs) are designated areas of airspace that have been established for use by high-performance military aircraft to train below 10,000 feet AGL and at speeds of more than 250 knots. There are VR (visual) and IR (instrument) designated MTRs. MTRs with no segment above 1,500 feet AGL are designated with VR or IR followed by a four-digit number. MTRs with one or more segments above 1,500 feet AGL are identified by the route type (VR/IR) followed by a three-digit number. The arrows on the route show direction of travel. The closest MTR to HOB is IR-180, which runs north/south approximately 15 nm west of the airport.

Military Operations Area | Military operations areas (MOAs) are areas of airspace in which military activities are conducted. The nearest MOAs to HOB are Bronco 3 and Bronco 4 High/Low, the southwest borders of which are located approximately 1.5 nm to the northeast of the airport. The Bronco 3 and 4 MOAs are controlled by the Fort Worth Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC). Both MOAs are defined as the airspace 10,000 feet MSL up to (but not including) 18,000 feet MSL. Each MOA is operated from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (mountain time), Monday through Friday, and at other times as issued by a notice to air missions (NOTAM). Other MOAs in the vicinity of HOB include the Talon High A, Talon Low A, Talon High B, Talon Low B, and Talon High C, located to the west of the airport, as well as the Pecos South MOA, located northwest of the airport.

Restricted Airspace | Restricted airspace is an area (volume) of airspace typically used by the military in which the local controlling authorities have determined that air traffic must be restricted (if not continually prohibited) for safety or security concerns. It is depicted on aeronautical charts with the letter R followed by a serial number. Restricted areas denote the existence of unusual and often invisible hazards to aircraft, such as artillery firing, aerial gunnery, or guided missiles. Penetration of restricted areas without authorization from the using or controlling agency may be extremely hazardous to the aircraft and its occupants. Restricted airspace zones may not always be active; in such cases, schedules of local dates and times are typically available to aviators that specify when the zone is active; at other times, the airspace is subject to normal operation for the applicable airspace class. There are no restricted areas in the vicinity of the airport.

Alert Areas | Alert areas are depicted on aeronautical charts to inform non-participating pilots of areas that may contain a high volume of pilot training or an unusual type of aerial activity, such as military operations. Pilots should be particularly alert when flying in these areas. Military activities or other flight training in these areas typically operate at lower altitudes and may occur at any time of day or night. General aviation flights are not restricted within these areas, but pilots are strongly cautioned to be alert for high-speed military training aircraft. There are no restricted areas in the vicinity of the airport.

Wilderness Areas | When operating near designated wilderness areas, aircraft are required to maintain a minimum altitude of 2,000 feet above the surface of designated National Park areas, including wilderness areas and designated breeding grounds. FAA AC 91-36C defines the surface as the highest



terrain within 2,000 feet laterally of the route of flight or the uppermost rim of a canyon or valley. Wilderness areas currently established within the vicinity of HOB include the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge, located to the northwest, as well as the Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Guadalupe Mountains National Park, located to the southwest of the airport.

AIRSPACE CONTROL

A system of facilities provides services to aircraft operating at airports and within the NAS. These include arrival and departure clearance, flight plan filings, aircraft separation, navigational instructions, weather information, and more. The most common of these facilities is the airport traffic control tower, which provides immediate control within the boundaries of an airport and its associated airspace, while air route traffic control centers and flight service stations cover wider expanses of the NAS. The control facilities applicable to HOB are discussed below.

Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) | HOB has an ATCT, which provides separation and clearance instructions to pilots operating at and within the airspace of the airport. The tower is located adjacent to the commercial terminal and has a top elevation of 3,651 feet MSL. The tower operates from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. seven days per week. When the tower is closed, the airport is uncontrolled, and pilots announce their relative positions and intentions within the airspace or when on the ground via the airport's CTAF. Aircraft looking for IFR flight clearances must contact the Fort Worth ARTCC when the tower is closed.



ATCT at HOB

Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) | The FAA has established 22 ARTCCs throughout the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii to control aircraft operating under IFR flight plans within controlled airspace and while en route. An ARTCC assigns specific routes and altitudes along federal airways to maintain separation and orderly traffic flow. The Fort Worth ARTCC controls IFR traffic en route to and from HOB.

Flight Service Station (FSS) | A flight service station is an air traffic facility that provides pilot briefings, flight plan processing, in-flight radio communications, search and rescue services, and assistance to lost aircraft or aircraft in emergency situations. An FSS can also relay air traffic control clearances, process NOTAMs, broadcast aviation meteorological and aeronautical information, and notify Customs and Border Protection of transborder flights. The Albuquerque FSS provides these services to HOB.

NAVIGATIONAL AIDS

Navigational aids are electronic devices that transmit radio frequencies that pilots of properly equipped aircraft can translate into point-to-point guidance and position information. The types of electronic navigational aids available for aircraft flying to or from the airport include very high frequency omnidirectional range (VOR), non-directional beacon (NDB), and global positioning system (GPS).



A VOR provides azimuth readings to pilots of properly equipped aircraft by transmitting radio signals at every degree to provide 360 individual navigation courses. Frequently, distance measuring equipment (DME) is combined with a VOR facility (VOR-DME) to provide distance and directional information. Military tactical air navigation aids (TACANs) and civil VORs are commonly combined to form a VORTAC. The VORTAC provides distance and direction information to both civil and military pilots. The Hobbs VORTAC is the closest navigational aid to HOB, located 3.9 nm to the southwest of the airport.

An NDB is a low- or medium-frequency radio beacon that transmits non-directional signals that a pilot of a properly equipped aircraft can use to determine bearings and “home” on the station. The Farly NDB is the closest NDB to HOB, located approximately 62 nm to the southeast of the airport.

GPS was initially developed by the U.S. Department of Defense for military navigation around the world; however, GPS is now used extensively for a wide variety of civilian uses, including civil air navigation. GPS uses satellites placed in orbit to transmit electronic signals that pilots of properly equipped aircraft can use to determine altitude, speed, and navigational information. With GPS, pilots can navigate directly to any airport in the country and are not required to navigate to a specific ground-based facility, such as a VOR or NDB. This provides more freedom in flight planning and allows for more direct routing to a destination. GPS provides en-route navigation and non-precision instrument area navigation (RNAV) approaches to Runways 4-22 and 13-31 at HOB.

INSTRUMENT APPROACH PROCEDURES

Instrument approach procedures assist pilots in locating and landing at an airport at night and/or during poor meteorological conditions. Approaches may be categorized as either precision, approach with vertical guidance (APV), or non-precision. Precision instrument approach procedures provide an exact course alignment and vertical descent path for an aircraft on final approach to a runway with a height above threshold (HATh) lower than 250 feet and visibility lower than $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile. APVs also provide course alignment and vertical guidance but have HAThs of 250 feet or more and visibility minimums of $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile or greater. Non-precision instrument approaches only provide course alignment information with no vertical guidance.

Approach minimums are published for different aircraft categories and consist of a minimum altitude and required visibility. (Aircraft categories are described in detail in Chapter Two.) According to FAR 91.175, a pilot must be able to make a safe landing (have a stabilized approach), have the runway in sight, and meet the visibility requirement. There are no cloud ceiling requirements; the published minimum altitude (decision height) is the point at which the pilot must meet all three criteria for landing, otherwise they cannot land using the published instrument approach and must execute a missed approach and try again.

There are currently five published instrument approach procedures at HOB. These are shown on **Table 1H**, along with their respective visibility minimums and decision heights relative to aircraft category. Aircraft categories will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, while visibility minimums will become a factor during the facility requirements and alternatives analyses later in the master plan process.



TABLE 1H | Instrument Approach Data

	WEATHER MINIMUMS BY AIRCRAFT TYPE			
	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D
ILS or LOC Runway 4				
ILS Straight-In 4	200'/½-mile			
LOC Straight-In 4	368'/½-mile		368'/¾-mile	
Circling	459'/1-mile	499'/1-mile	799'/2¼-mile	799'/2½-mile
RNAV (GPS) Runway 4				
LPV – DA	200'/½-mile			
LNAV/VNAV – DA	250'/½-mile			
LNAV – MDA	368'/½-mile		368'/¾-mile	
Circling	459'/1-mile	499'/1-mile	799'/2¼-mile	799'/2½-mile
RNAV (GPS) Runway 22				
LPV – DA	250'/¾-mile			
LNAV/VNAV – DA	250'/¾-mile			
LNAV – MDA	371'/1-mile			
Circling	459'/1-mile	499'/1-mile	799'/2¼-mile	799'/2½-mile
RNAV (GPS) Runway 31				
LPV – DA	250'/¾-mile			
LNAV/VNAV DA	250'/¾-mile			
LNAV MDA	311'/1-mile			
Circling	459'/1-mile	499'/1-mile	799'/2¼-mile	799'/2½-mile
VOR Runway 22				
Straight-In 22	471'/1-mile		471'/1⅜-mile	
Circling	459'/1-mile	499'/1-mile	799'/2¼-mile	799'/2½-mile

Note: (xxx'/ x-mile) = visibility (in feet)/cloud ceiling height (in miles)

Aircraft categories are based on the approach speed of aircraft, which is determined as 1.3 times the stall speed in landing configuration. The approach categories are as follows:

- Category A: 0-90 knots (e.g., Cessna 172)
- Category B: 91-120 knots (e.g., Beechcraft KingAir)
- Category C: 121-140 knots (e.g., B-737, Regional Jets, Canadair Challenger)
- Category D: 141-166 knots (e.g., B-747, Gulfstream IV)

Abbreviations:

- ILS = instrument landing system
- LOC = localizer
- GPS = global positioning system
- LNAV/RNAV/VNAV = a technical variant of GPS (lateral, area, vertical navigation)
- DA = decision altitude (used for vertically guided approaches)
- MDA = minimum descent altitude (used for non-precision approaches)

Source: U.S. Terminal Procedures, effective October 31, 2024

RUNWAY USE AND TRAFFIC PATTERNS

The traffic pattern at the airport is maintained to provide the safest and most efficient use of the airspace. At HOB, each runway uses the standard left-hand traffic pattern, which means aircraft make left turns when in the pattern for landing. The established pattern altitude at HOB is 4,500 feet MSL.

The airport does not have aircraft restrictions, curfews, or a mandatory noise abatement program, as these programs would violate the *Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990* (ANCA). Federal law requires the airport to remain open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and to accept all civilian and military aircraft that can be safely accommodated.



REGIONAL AVIATION FACILITIES

A review of other public-use airports with at least one paved runway within a 30-nm radius of HOB was conducted to identify and distinguish the types of air services provided in the region. It is important to consider the capabilities and limitations of these airports when planning for future changes or improvements to HOB. Only three public-use facilities with paved runways are within 30 nm of HOB:

- Zip Franklin Memorial Airport (E06), located 18.7 nm north-northwest of HOB
- Denver City Airport (E57), located 25.5 nm northeast
- Gains County Airport (GNC), located 28.5 nm east of HOB

It should be noted Denver City Airport is privately owned but is available for public use. Additionally, Jal Airport, located slightly beyond 30-nm has been included in this analysis as it is also owned and operated by Lea County. **Table 1J** provides basic information on these airports, along with data on HOB.

TABLE 1J | Regional Airports Within 30 Nautical Miles – Lea County Regional Airport

Airport	nm/Direction from HOB ¹	FAA Service Level ²	Towered ¹	Based Aircraft ³	2023 Annual Operations ⁴	Longest Runway ¹	Visibility Minimum ¹
Lea County Regional Airport	–	Commercial	Yes	45⁵	9,035	8,000'	½-mile
Zip Franklin Memorial Airport	18.7 nm NNW	GA	No	12	4,600	6,001'	1-mile
Denver City Airport	25.5 nm NE	N/A	No	12	Unknown	5,780'	None
Gains County Airport	28.5 nm E	GA	No	9	12,125	5,381'	1-mile
Jal Airport	33.5 nm S	GA	No	8	3,000	4,704'	None

GA = general aviation
 N/A = not applicable
 nm = nautical miles

Sources: ¹AirNav.com; ²FAA NPIAS; ³BasedAircraft.com; ⁴ADIP; ⁵HOB Based Aircraft Records

LANDSIDE FACILITIES

Landside facilities support the aircraft and pilot/passenger transition between air and ground. Typical landside facilities include the terminal, fixed base operators, on-airport businesses, aircraft hangars, and vehicle parking. An overview of the landside facilities and a building inventory at HOB are depicted on **Exhibit 1J**.

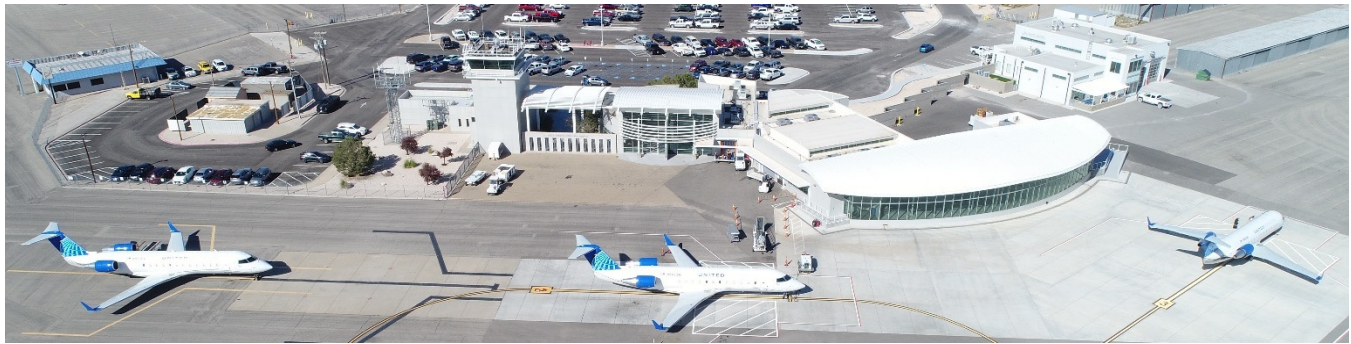
TERMINAL BUILDING

HOB has a dedicated terminal building for the handling of passengers and baggage for commercial airline service. The original terminal facility was constructed throughout the 1940s and 1950s. The terminal building was replaced in 2006. The new terminal building underwent an expansion project, which was completed in 2020, and is approximately 19,000 square feet (sf) in its current condition. The terminal building is located along Airport Entrance Road, a looped road that extends south from U.S. Highway 62/180. The terminal is a linear, semicircular-style concept with a single level, which is a common layout for nonhub airports that serve primarily origin and destination (O&D) passenger traffic. Key areas of the existing terminal building are described as follows.

No.	Building Type	Size (sf)	No.	Building Type	Size (sf)	No.	Building Type	Size (sf)	No.	Building Type	Size (sf)
1	Executive Box	8,200	15	Executive Box	3,000	29	Executive Box	4,800	43	Executive Box	1,800
2	Executive Box	7,200	16	Executive Box	6,400	30	Quonset	2,800	44	Executive Box	5,000
3	Conventional	12,200	17	Executive Box	4,200	31	Executive Box	3,000	45	Executive Box	8,100
4	Executive Box	4,800	18	Executive Box	3,900	32	Executive Box	3,300	46	Executive Box	4,800
5	Executive Box	4,500	19	Executive Box	5,100	33	Executive Box	3,000	47	Executive Box	3,600
6	Executive Box	1,800	20	Port-a-Port	1,400	34	Port-a-Port	1,600	48	Executive Box	2,000
7	Executive Box	1,200	21	Executive Box	4,300	35	Executive Box	3,000	49	Executive Box	4,000
8	Executive Box	2,600	22	Executive Box	2,500	36	Executive Box	4,400	50	Executive Box	3,000
9	Executive Box	2,600	23	Executive Box	5,400	37	Executive Box	3,000	51	Executive Box	4,300
10	Executive Box	1,800	24	Port-a-Port	1,600	38	Executive Box	1,600	52	Executive Box	3,600
11	Executive Box	3,600	25	Port-a-Port	1,800	39	Executive Box	2,500	53	Executive Box	3,000
12	Conventional	17,600	26	Executive Box	6,400	40	T-Hangars (8-Unit)	8,800	54	Executive Box	3,500
13	Executive Box	7,500	27	Quonset	1,400	41	Executive Box	4,700	55	T-Hangars (8-Unit)	9,900
14	Executive Box	6,400	28	Quonset	1,800	42	Executive Box	6,400	56	Executive Box	3,300



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New Terminal Building and Commercial Apron Area

Airline/Rental Car Counters | Near the main entrance, the terminal building consists of counter and office space for airline and rental car companies. One airline ticketing/check-in counter is currently used by United Airlines. Opposite the airline counter are three rental car counters, one of which is currently occupied by Enterprise and National. A public waiting area with restrooms is also located in this area.



Airline Ticket Counters



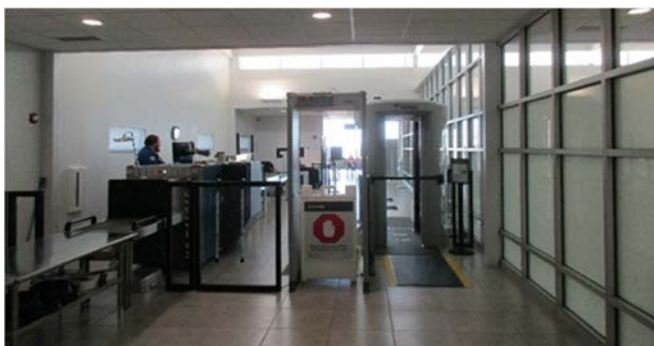
Rental Car Counters



Gate 1 Holding Area

Security Screening Area | The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) security checkpoint is located beyond the airline counter and consists of a passenger queuing area that leads into a single screening station equipped with a walk-through scanner, metal detector, and baggage x-ray machine.

Baggage Claim | Arriving passengers depart the secured area via a hallway parallel to the TSA checkpoint. The baggage claim is located adjacent to the TSA checkpoint and consists of a single conveyor belt.



TSA Checkpoint



Baggage Claim

Secured Area | Beyond the security checkpoint is the secured holdroom area. This area primarily consists of seating and queuing for the terminal's Gate 2 and Gate 3. The existing Gate 1 is located outside the secure area, near the terminal lobby. Passengers exit the terminal at the assigned gate and board aircraft outside via a loading ramp.



Gates 2 and 3 Holdroom

Restrooms | Public restrooms are available in both the secured and unsecured areas of the terminal.

TERMINAL VEHICLE PARKING

Vehicle parking at HOB is provided for commercial air passengers, staff, and general aviation users. The current parking layout consists of one large parking lot serving the terminal building. Parking in the terminal area totals over 600 marked vehicle parking positions, including 15 accessible parking positions. Terminal parking is currently a free service provided by the airport. At present, there is no dedicated parking area for airport staff; however, the ARFF facility and rental car facilities have their own parking areas, which are contiguous to the main parking lot. The ARFF facility is served by six parking positions, one of which is an accessible parking position. The parking area serving the car rental facilities is located immediately west of the ATCT, includes 33 parking positions, and is shared with the ATCT staff. The fixed base operator (FBO) Tailwind Aviation currently has 10 spots for customers and employees located northwest of the rental car parking lot.

Parking for other airport users is located among the landside facilities through controlled access gates. An additional 28 parking positions designated for GA users, as well as airport staff and on-airport businesses, are located to the west of the terminal parking area. Furthermore, 11 designated parking positions are located on the east side of the terminal parking area serving the other FBO, Christian Aero LLC.

The parking areas discussed do not include private parking spaces at businesses and private hangars inside the fence line of the airport; admission to these spaces is restricted to those with access and is also controlled by gates. Designated vehicle parking spaces inside and outside the airport security fencing are identified on **Exhibit 1J**.

TERMINAL ACCESS ROADWAYS

The terminal building is accessible from Airport Entrance Road, which extends from U.S. Highway 62/180. The terminal's one-way loop provides the opportunity to enter the terminal's free parking immediately north of the terminal. The loop road also provides access to the rental car ready/return spaces and employee parking for the airport traffic control tower. Airport Entrance Road continues past the terminal and ARFF facility and reconnects to U.S. Highway 62/180. Airport tenants and authorized users can turn east or west off Airport Entrance Road to access landside facilities within the perimeter fence after passing through a controlled access gate.



Airport Entrance with Terminal Loop and Parking

TERMINAL CURB FRONTAGE

The terminal loop also provides curbside access at the terminal for immediate passenger drop-off and pick-up. The curbside area is clearly denoted with pavement markings and pedestrian crossing signs and markings. The entirety of the curbside area is approximately 170 feet in length.



Curbside at HOB Terminal

AIRPORT BUSINESSES

A passenger terminal is not the only building at an airport that may provide services to its users. HOB also has two fixed base operators (FBOs) located at the airport.

An FBO is an airport service center that is responsible for a variety of aviation services, such as passenger handling, aircraft fueling, parking, maintenance, aircraft towing and storage, and other related services. Two FBOs currently serve the airport:

- **Tailwind Aviation** | Tailwind Aviation currently offers quick-turn service, ground handling, ground power unit service, ground deicing, a pilots' lounge, restrooms, a shower, a snooze room, pilot supplies, a weather briefing/flight planning kiosk, and refreshments and vending, as well as rental and courtesy car services.
- **Christian Aero LLC** | Christian Aero LLC currently offers catering, quick-turn service, ground handling, ground power unit service, a pilots' lounge, restrooms, a snooze room, office space, and refreshments and vending, as well as rental and courtesy car services.



Tailwind Aviation FBO Terminal and Ramp



AIRCRAFT HANGARS

It is important to identify existing hangars that may be used for aircraft storage. By having a reasonable estimate of the baseline hangar capacity, a determination of future hangar needs can be made based on forecast hangar demand. Existing hangar facilities at HOB include conventional, executive box, and Quonset-style hangars that are capable of storing multiple aircraft, as well as T-hangars and port-a-port hangars that are designed to accommodate smaller aircraft. Conventional and executive box hangars provide open space, free from roof support structures, and have the capability to store multiple aircraft simultaneously, depending on size and function. In general, conventional hangars are 10,000 sf or greater, while executive box hangars are less than 10,000 sf.

Quonset hangars typically allow for the storage of multiple aircraft, as well. The tops of these hangars are dome-shaped, with the highest point of the structure running down the center of the building. Aircraft must be positioned so their tails and wings remain in the central portion of the hangar; the outer areas of the facility are generally dedicated to storage space.

T-hangars provide separate storage facilities within a larger hangar complex. These hangars typically provide space for only individual aircraft and are used for private aircraft storage. Port-a-port hangars are similar to T-hangars in that they are enclosed hangars for individual aircraft storage; however, each port-a-port hangar can be disconnected and transported to a different location.

As shown on **Exhibit 1J**, there are 56 separate hangar facilities at HOB that provide approximately 244,000 total sf of hangar, maintenance, storage, and office space. Conventional and executive box hangars comprise the majority of the hangars and available space at the airport. Combined, these facilities include 47 separate hangars that total approximately 212,900 sf. Two separate T-hangar facilities on the airport provide 16 separate storage units that comprise approximately 18,700 sf. Additionally, there are three Quonset hangars, which provide 6,000 total sf of storage space, and four port-a-port hangars, which total 6,400 sf of storage space. It should be noted that two additional buildings are located on the airfield that provide another 3,700 sf of storage and maintenance space; however, these buildings are not configured to accommodate aircraft.



Conventional and Executive Box Hangar Facilities at HOB



T-Hangar and Quonset Hangar Facilities at HOB

TERMINAL AND GENERAL AVIATION APRONS

Aprons are expansive areas of pavement that are used for the parking and servicing of aircraft. Aircraft fueling, baggage loading, passenger egress, and other ground services are provided on an apron. Long-term parking is also common on aprons. The apron system at HOB is approximately 96,500 square yards (sy) in size and can be defined by location and design.

The terminal apron at HOB is located adjacent to the passenger terminal, ATCT, and ARFF building. This apron provides an area for ground service and handling of the commercial service aircraft that operate at HOB. The apron and movement area are approximately 15,500 sy in total size.

General aviation aprons are located in conjunction with hangar facilities along the northeast and northwest sides of the airport. These aprons provide areas for ground service and parking of GA aircraft, such as private single-engine aircraft and business jets. The northeast GA apron and movement area is located northeast of the terminal apron, adjacent to Runway 22, and is approximately 53,000 sy in size. The northwest GA apron is located northwest of the terminal apron. The northwest GA apron and movement area is approximately 28,000 sy in size.



Main Terminal Apron and GA Apron

Exhibit 1J shows the location and approximate size of each ramp area at HOB.

SUPPORT FACILITIES

The previous section addresses airside and landside facilities that are critical to the movement of aircraft and people on the airport. This section discusses other facilities that support airport operations, including aircraft rescue and firefighting, airport maintenance, fuel storage, and perimeter fencing. These facilities are identified on previous **Exhibits 1E** and **1J**.

AIRCRAFT RESCUE AND FIREFIGHTING (ARFF)

Airports that have regularly scheduled commercial air service using aircraft with 10 or more seats are required to provide ARFF services during air carrier operations. Each certificated airport maintains equipment and personnel based on an ARFF index established according to the length of the aircraft and scheduled daily flight frequency. There are five ARFF indices (A through E); A is applicable to the smallest aircraft and E is applicable to the largest.

HOB currently falls within ARFF Index A, due to the historical use of the Bombardier CRJ200, Embraer ERJ-145, and Embraer ERJ-135 by United Airlines. As the airlines, including United Airlines, transition to larger regional jets, such as the Bombardier CRJ700 (107 feet long), the airport could see an increase in its ARFF index from A to B.



ARFF Station

HOB maintains an on-site ARFF station, located immediately east of the new terminal building. The facility was completed in 2017 and houses ARFF vehicles, training and classroom facilities, and residential areas for when ARFF staff are activated. The ARFF station is identified on **Exhibit 1J**.

FUEL STORAGE

There are three fuel farms currently located on the airport that store aviation fuels, as shown on **Exhibit 1J**. One fuel farm is located nearly 600 feet northwest of the terminal building and contains two aboveground fuel storage tanks: one 12,000-gallon tank is dedicated to the storage of Jet A fuel and one 6,000-gallon tank is dedicated to 100LL fuel. Tailwind Aviation, one of the airport's FBOs, currently maintains this fuel farm and utilizes it to upload fuel into its refueler trucks.

A second fuel farm is located on the northwest side of the airport, adjacent to a large conventional hangar, and consists of a 12,000-gallon aboveground tank dedicated to the storage of Jet A fuel. This fuel farm is owned and operated by a private entity that is capable of uploading fuel to its aircraft via single-point or over-the-wing methods.

A third fuel farm is located on the northeast side of the airport and provides self-service fueling capabilities to the general public. This facility is owned and operated by Christian Aero LLC and consists of one 8,000-gallon 100LL fuel storage tank and one 12,000-gallon Jet A fuel storage tank. Both storage tanks are connected to a self-service fuel dispenser.

Tailwind Aviation owns and operates five refueling trucks to deliver fuel to aircraft. Two trucks are dedicated to 100LL fuel and allow for 1,250 and 1,500 gallons of storage capacity. The other three trucks are dedicated to Jet A fuel and allow for 2,000, 2,200, and 2,800 gallons of storage capacity.



Tailwind Aviation Fuel Farm



Christian Aero LLC Self-Service Fuel Tanks

PERIMETER FENCING

The entirety of the airfield is enclosed with eight-foot-tall security fencing, which is regularly inspected. The fence provides a barrier to both trespassers and wildlife. Vehicle access on and off the airport is provided through four controlled-access automatic gates situated at various locations around the airport.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY

The purpose of the following environmental inventory is to identify potential environmental sensitivities that should be considered when planning future improvements at the airport. Research was performed for each of the 14 environmental impact categories described within FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*.

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources (including fish, wildlife, and plants)
- Climate
- Coastal Resources
- *Department of Transportation Act*, Section 4(f)
- Farmlands
- Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention
- Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources
- Land Use
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Noise and Compatible Land Use
- Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children's Health and Safety Risks
- Visual Effects (including light emissions)
- Water Resources (including wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, groundwater, and wild and scenic rivers)



AIR QUALITY

The concentration of various pollutants in the atmosphere defines the local air quality. The significance of a pollutant's concentration is determined by comparing it to the state and federal air quality standards. In 1971, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established standards that specify the maximum permissible short- and long-term concentrations of various contaminants. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) consist of primary and secondary standards for criteria pollutants: ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), coarse particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and lead (Pb).

Based on federal air quality standards, a specific geographic area can be classified as an attainment, maintenance, or nonattainment area for each pollutant. The threshold for nonattainment designation varies by pollutant.

HOB is in Lea County, New Mexico, four miles west of Hobbs. Lea County is in attainment for all federal criteria pollutants.¹

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Biological resources include the various types of plants and animals that are present in an area. The term also applies to rivers, lakes, wetlands, forests, and other habitat types that support plants and animals.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is charged with overseeing the requirements of the federal *Endangered Species Act* (ESA), specifically Section 7. If an agency determines that an action may affect a federally endangered or threatened species, Section 7(a)(2) requires the agency to consult with the USFWS. If a species has been listed as candidate species, Section 7(a)(4) requires that each agency must confer with the USFWS on any action that is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a protected species or would result in the destruction or adverse modification of federally designated critical habitat in the area. The USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) resource list describes species and habitat protected under the ESA within the vicinity of the airport (**Table 1K**).

Section 3 of the ESA is used to protect critical habitat areas. Designated critical habitat areas are geographically defined and have been determined to be essential to the recovery of a specific species. There is no federally designated critical habitat at the airport.

The federal *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* (MBTA) protects migratory birds and their eggs, nests, and feathers. Potential impacts to species protected under the MBTA are evaluated by the USFWS in consultation with other federal agencies. Habitat for migratory birds may occur if bushes or other ground nesting substrate is present. The only migratory bird listed by the IPaC as potentially present at the airport is the Sprague's pipit (*Anthus spragueii*), which is noted to breed elsewhere.

¹ U.S. EPA, Green Book, New Mexico Nonattainment/Maintenance Status for Each County by Year for All Criteria Pollutants



TABLE 1K | Species Protected Under ESA Section 7 with Potential to Occur at the Airport

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Federal Status	Habitat and Range	Potential for Occurrence
Birds			
lesser prairie-chicken (<i>Tympanuchus pallidicinctus</i>)	Endangered	Found in southeastern New Mexico in shinnery oak or sand sagebrush (<i>Artemisia filifolia</i>) grasslands. Can also be found in shinnery oak-bluestem habitats that are dominated by sand bluestem (<i>Andropogon hallii</i>), little bluestem (<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>), sand dropseed (<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>), three-awn (<i>Aristida</i> sp.), and blue grama (<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>).	Unlikely to occur. The airport does not contain grassland habitat to support this species.
northern aplomado falcon (<i>Falco femoralis septentrionalis</i>)	Non-Essential Experimental Population	Habitat for this species can greatly vary, ranging from palm and oak savannahs, various desert grassland associations, and open pine woodlands. Essential habitat elements are open terrain with scattered trees, low ground cover, and an abundance of insects and small- to medium-sized birds.	May occur. The airport property contains scattered trees on the north and east sides.
Insects			
monarch butterfly (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>)	Candidate	A migratory species that can be found in a variety of habitats. This species requires milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.) for breeding. In New Mexico, peak migration occurs in April and subsides by mid-May. Breeding occurs within the state and reaches its peak by July. Southward migration back to Mexico begins in late August through September. The monarch butterfly is most abundant in southeast New Mexico.	Unknown. A biological species survey during the peak migration period is needed to determine the presence of this species.
USFWS Status Definitions:			
Candidate = a species for which the USFWS has sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposals to list as endangered or threatened under the ESA; however, these proposed rules have not yet been issued because such actions are precluded at present by other listing activity			
Endangered = an animal or plant species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its habitat range			
Non-Essential Experimental Population (NEP) = an experimental population of a species designated under Section 10(j) of the ESA that the USFWS believes is not essential for the continued existence of the species regulatory restrictions are considerably reduced under an NEP designation			

Sources: USFWS, IPaC (<https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/>); USFWS (<https://www.fws.gov/species>)

CLIMATE

Increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHG) can affect global climate by trapping heat in the earth’s atmosphere. Scientific measurements have shown that the earth’s climate is warming with concurrent impacts, including warmer air temperature, rising sea levels, increased storm activity, and greater intensity in precipitation events. Climate change is a global phenomenon that can also have local impacts. GHGs, such as water vapor (H₂O), carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and O₃, are both naturally occurring and anthropogenic (human-made). Research has established a direct correlation between fuel combustion and GHG emissions. GHGs from anthropogenic sources include CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), perfluorocarbons (PFC), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). CO₂ is the most important anthropogenic GHG because it is a long-lived gas that remains in the atmosphere for up to 100 years.



The U.S. EPA's *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990-2021* shows that total U.S. emissions have decreased by two percent from 1990 to 2021, down from a high 15.8 percent above 1990 levels in 2007. During 2020 to 2021, the U.S. experienced an increase in economic activity driven by businesses and persons rebounding after the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in an increase in total U.S. GHG emissions, of which CO₂ emissions accounted for the majority of GHG emissions.

In 2021, the transportation sector and power generation accounted for 79.3 percent of total CO₂ emissions; however, the overall aviation industry (excluding international bunkers) has shown an 18 percent decrease in CO₂ emissions between 1990 and 2021.² Commercial aircraft emissions have highly fluctuated over the past thirty years, with a 27 percent increase between 1990 and 2007, a two percent decrease from 2007 to 2019, and a 33 percent decrease from 2019 to 2020, followed by a 23 percent increase from 2020 to 2021. Overall, this represents an eight percent difference between 1990 and 2021 commercial aircraft emissions. Between 1990 and 2021, emissions from military aircraft decreased 65 percent.

New Mexico currently has a draft climate adaptation and resilience plan that outlines goals and recommendations for the State of New Mexico.³

Information regarding the climate for the airport and surrounding environs, including wind, temperature, and precipitation, can be found earlier in this airport master plan.

COASTAL RESOURCES

Federal activities involving or affecting coastal resources are governed by the *Coastal Barriers Resource Act*, the *Coastal Zone Management Act*, and Executive Order (E.O.) 13089, *Coral Reef Protection*.

The airport is not located within a coastal zone. The closest National Marine Sanctuary is the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, located 618 miles away.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACT, SECTION 4(F)

Section 4(f) of the *Department of Transportation Act*, which was recodified and renumbered as Section 303(c) of Title 49 United States Code, provides that the Secretary of Transportation will not approve any program or project that requires the use of any publicly or privately owned historic sites, public parks or recreation areas, or waterfowl and wildlife refuges of national, state, regional, or local importance unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from such use.⁴

² U.S. EPA, *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gases*, Chapter 3, Energy (<https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/inventory-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-sinks-1990-2021>), April 13, 2023

³ New Mexico Climate Change Action (<https://www.climateaction.nm.gov/carp/>), accessed October 2024

⁴ Title 49 U.S. Code § 303, Policy on Lands, Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges, and Historic Sites



Adjacent to the airport on its eastern boundary is Hobbs Country Club, which offers an 18-hole golf course for both its members and the public. Besides Hobbs Country Club, there are no Section 4(f) resources, including National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed resources and waterfowl or wildlife refuges, within one mile of the airport.

The nearest wilderness and national recreation areas are listed below.

- Nearest wilderness area: Carlsbad Caverns Wilderness – 78 miles from the airport
- Nearest national recreation area: Carlsbad Caverns National Park – 86 miles from the airport

FARMLANDS

Under the *Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)*, federal agencies are directed to identify and consider the adverse effects of federal programs on the preservation of farmland, consider appropriate alternative actions that could lessen adverse effects, and ensure such federal programs are compatible with state or local government programs and policies to protect farmland, to the extent practicable. The FPPA guidelines were developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and apply to farmland classified as prime, unique, or of state or local importance, as determined by the appropriate government agency with concurrence by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Web Soil Survey shows the types of soils on and adjacent to the airport, as well as their farmland classifications. The airport is outside designated urbanized area boundaries.⁵ The entirety of the airport is classified as not prime farmland; however, soils designated as farmland of statewide importance are located adjacent to the southwestern property line (**Exhibit 1K**). **Table 1L** presents farmland classifications based on the soil within and near the airport’s boundaries.

TABLE 1L | Summary by Map Unit – Lea County, New Mexico (NM025)

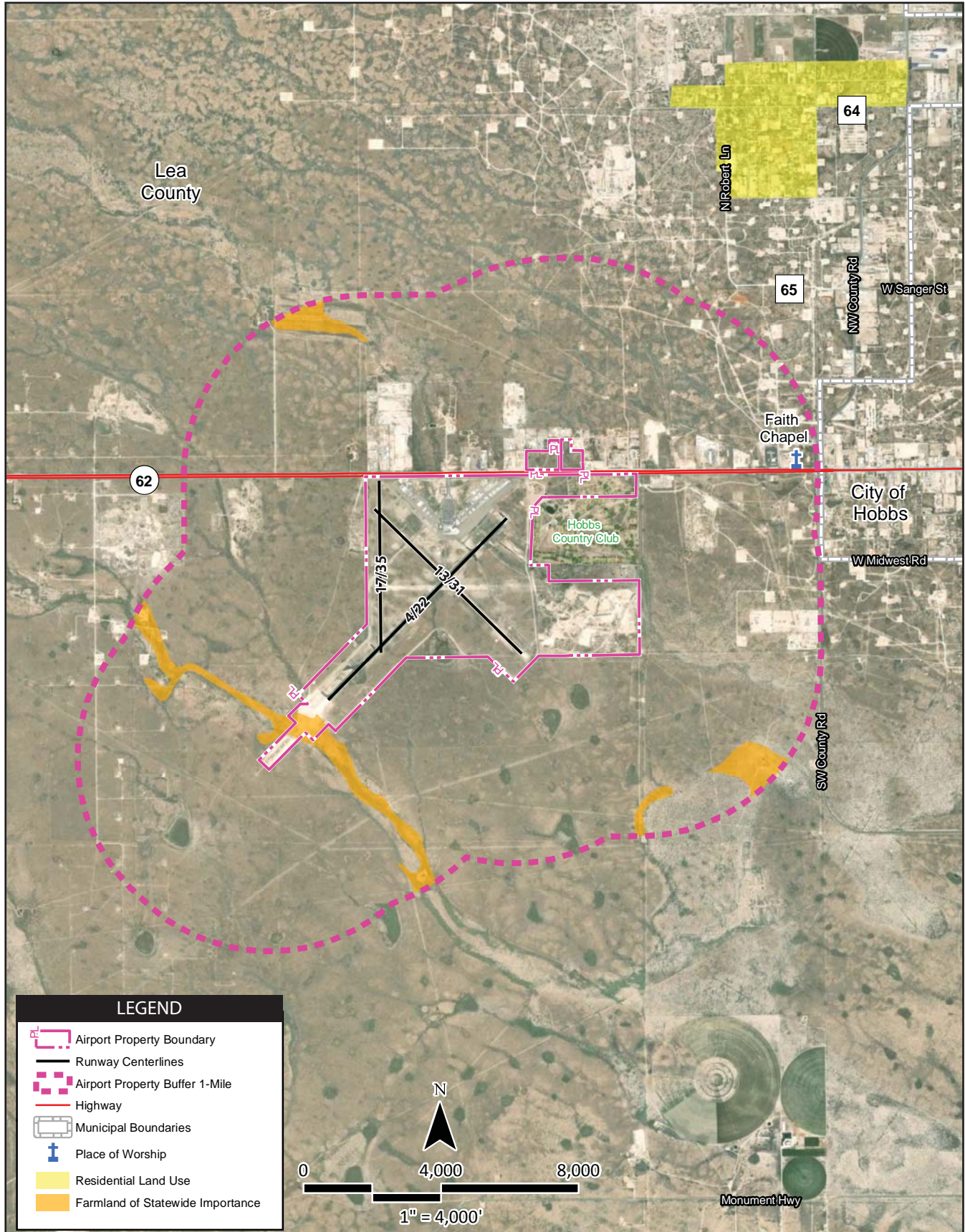
Web Soil Survey Symbol	Soil Type	Farmland Rating
KO	Kimbrough gravelly loam, dry, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
KU	Kimbrough-Lea complex, dry, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
PC	Portales loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance

Source: USDA-NRCS, *Web Soil Survey* (<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>)

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, SOLID WASTE, AND POLLUTION PREVENTION

Federal, state, and local laws regulate the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials. These laws may extend to past and future landowners of properties that contain these materials. In addition, disrupting sites that contain hazardous materials or contaminants may cause significant impacts to soil, surface water, groundwater, air quality, and the organisms using these resources.

⁵ U.S. EPA, EJSscreen (<https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>)



Source: ESRI Basemap Imagery (2022), USGS, USDA, Tiger/Line, Coffman Associates Analysis



The two statutes of most importance to airport projects are the *Resource Conservation Recovery Act* (RCRA), as amended by the *Federal Facilities Compliance Act of 1992*, and the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act* (CERCLA), as amended (also known as Superfund). The RCRA governs the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes. The CERCLA provides for the cleanup of any release of a hazardous substance that may endanger public health or the environment. Locations identified as Superfund sites are listed on the National Priorities List (NPL). According to the U.S. EPA's EJScreen online tool, there are no Superfund or brownfield sites within one mile of the airport.⁶

The closest landfill to HOB is Lea County Regional Landfill, located 19 miles southeast of airport property boundaries.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits outline the regulatory requirements of municipal stormwater management programs and establish requirements to help protect the beneficial uses of the receiving waters. The program requires permittees to develop and implement best management practices (BMPs) to control/reduce the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States, to the maximum extent practicable. In New Mexico, NPDES permitting authority is administered by the EPA as part of its NPDES program.

The airport has a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) in place, pursuant to the NPDES Stormwater Program, as outlined in Section 402 of the *Clean Water Act* (CWA). The SWPPP contains a list of spill prevention and response procedures that address potential pollution sources.

HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Determination of a project's environmental impact to historic and cultural resources is made under guidance in the *National Historic Preservation Act of 1974* (NHPA), the *Archaeological Resources Protection Act* (ARPA), and the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990* (NAGPRA). The *Antiquities Act of 1906*, the *Historic Sites Act of 1935*, and the *American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978* also protect historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources. Impacts may occur when a proposed project causes an adverse effect on a resource that has been identified (or is identified after being unearthed during construction) as having historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance.

From the information available at the time this report was prepared, no systematic airport-wide cultural surveys have been conducted. In 2016, an environmental assessment (EA) was completed for the acquisition of land located within the runway protection zone (RPZ) near the approach end of Runway 22. This EA resulted in a cultural resources survey of a 9.4-acre area located within the Runway 22 RPZ. The survey concluded that there were no cultural resources located within the 9.4-acre area.⁷ In 2020, another EA was completed for the proposed extension of Runway 4 and concluded that no cultural resources on record were located near the approach end of Runway 4, per coordination with

⁶ U.S. EPA, EJScreen (<https://ejsscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>), accessed October 2024

⁷ SWCA Consultants, A Cultural Resources Report for Runway Safety Improvements at Lea County Regional Airport in Hobbs, New Mexico, July 24, 2021



New Mexico's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).⁸ Much of the airport has been developed or disturbed by construction; however, there is still a chance intact cultural resources may be present either on the ground surface or subsurface.

The airport was opened in June 1942 and buildings or structures of historic age (i.e., 50 years or older) may still be present within airport property. For example, based on a review of historic aerials, there may be historic buildings located on the northern side of the airport.

The nearest Tribal land to Lea County Airport is the Mescalero Reservation, located more than 122 miles northwest of the airport. As mentioned above in the section on Section 4(f) resources, there are no NRHP resources within one mile of the airport.

LAND USE

Land use regulations near airports are achieved through local government codes, city policies, and plans that include airport districts and planning areas. Regulations are used to avoid land use compatibility conflict around airports.

According to the *Lea County Comprehensive Plan*, no formal zoning regulations are in place at a county level that regulate what types of land uses may be located next to each other. Different types of land use (i.e., industrial, residential, and commercial) can be placed adjacent to each other as long as they meet the subdivision regulations.⁹ Along the western and southern boundaries of the airport, the airport is surrounded by undeveloped land. A mixture of commercial and industrial land uses lies to the north of the airport across from U.S. Highway 62, while Hobbs Country Club is located to the east of the airport.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY SUPPLY

Natural resources and energy supply provide an evaluation of a project's consumption of natural resources. It is the policy of FAA Order 1053.1C, *Energy and Water Management Program for FAA Buildings and Facilities*, to encourage the development of facilities that exemplify the highest standards of design, including principles of sustainability.

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is the state-level environmental organization. Its main purpose is to protect and restore New Mexico's natural resources for present and future generations.¹⁰

HOB is supplied with water by the municipal water system of the City of Hobbs. Lea County and the City of Hobbs recently coordinated on a project that allowed for the extension of water and sewer lines along U.S. Highway 62 to the airport entrance. This connection of airport utility lines to existing city utility lines allows the airport to continue to develop and construct larger-scale projects.

⁸ Coffman Associates, Draft Environmental Assessment for Proposed Runway 3-21 Extension, Runway 35 Threshold Relocation, and Associated Actions, Appendix A

⁹ Lea County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Regulations in Lea County, page 35

¹⁰ New Mexico Environment Department (<https://www.env.nm.gov/>)

NOISE AND NOISE-COMPATIBLE LAND USE

Federal land use compatibility guidelines are established under Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 150, *Airport Noise Compatibility Planning*. According to 14 CFR Part 150, residential land and schools are noise-sensitive land uses that are not considered compatible with a 65-decibel (dB) day-night average sound level (Ldn or DNL).¹¹ Other noise-sensitive land uses (such as religious facilities, hospitals, or nursing homes) are generally compatible within a 65-dB DNL contour when an interior noise level reduction of 25 dB is incorporated into the design and construction of structures. Special consideration should also be given to noise-sensitive areas within Section 4(f) properties where the land use compatibility guidelines in 14 CFR Part 150 do not account for the value, significance, and enjoyment of the area in question.¹²

One place of worship, Faith Chapel, is located within one mile of the airport. There are no other noise-sensitive land uses within one mile of the airport. The closest residential area is located over one mile northeast of the airport across from N Robert Lane (**Exhibit 1K**).

SOCIOECONOMICS, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

Socioeconomics | *Socioeconomics* is an umbrella term used to describe aspects of a project that are either social or economic in nature. A socioeconomic analysis evaluates how elements of the human environment (such as population, employment, housing, and public services) might be affected by the proposed action and alternative(s).

FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, specifically requires that a federal action causing disproportionate impacts to an environmental justice population (i.e., a low-income or minority population) be considered, as well as an evaluation of environmental health and safety risks to children. The FAA has identified factors to consider when evaluating the context and intensity of potential environmental impacts, including whether the proposed action would:

- Directly or indirectly induce substantial economic growth in an area;
- Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community;
- Cause extensive relocation when sufficient replacement housing is unavailable;
- Cause extensive relocation of community business that would cause severe economic hardship for affected communities;
- Disrupt local traffic patterns and substantially reduce the levels of service of roads serving an airport and its surrounding communities; or
- Produce a substantial change in the community tax base.

¹¹ The DNL accounts for increased sensitivity to noise at night (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) and is the metric preferred by the FAA, U.S. EPA, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as an appropriate measure of cumulative noise exposure.

¹² Title 49 U.S. Code § 47141, Compatible Land Use Planning and Projects by State and Local Governments



Environmental Justice | *Environmental justice* is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental, and commercial operations or policies. Meaningful involvement ensures that:

- People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health;
- The public’s contribution can influence the regulatory agency’s decision;
- Their concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and
- The decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.¹³

The closest residential area is located over one mile northeast of the airport across from Northwest County Road. According to the five-year 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, the population within one mile of the airport is 65 persons, of which 37 percent of the population is considered low-income, and 72 percent are people of color.¹⁴ As indicated in **Table 1M**, approximately 65 percent of the population has identified as Hispanic or Latino.

TABLE 1M | Population Characteristics Within One Mile of the Airport

Characteristic	
Total Population	65
Population by Race ¹	
White	28%
Black	3%
American Indian	2%
Asian	1%
Pacific Islander	0%
Some Other Race	0%
Population Reporting Two or More Races	1%
Total Hispanic population (of any race)	66%

¹Percentages do not add up to 100 percent. Hispanic or Latino is treated by the U.S. Census as a question separate from Race.

Source: U.S. EPA, EJSscreen, 5-Year ACS Summary Report (2018-2022) (<https://ejsscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>)

Children’s Environmental Health and Safety | Per E.O. 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*, federal agencies are directed to make it a high priority to identify and assess environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately impact children. Such risks include those attributable to products or substances a child is likely to encounter or ingest (e.g., air, food, and water, including drinking water) or to which they may be exposed.

¹³ U.S. EPA, Environmental Justice (<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>)

¹⁴ EJSscreen defines low-income populations as individuals living with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, which differs from the Department of Transportation (DOT) definition recognized by the FAA. The DOT identifies individuals as low-income if their median household income is at or below poverty guidelines outlined by the Department of Health and Human Services.



According to the 2018-2022 ACS estimates, 31 percent of the population within one mile of the airport is between ages one and 18 years old. There are no schools located within one mile of the airport.

VISUAL EFFECTS

Visual effects deal broadly with the extent to which a proposed action or alternative(s) would either (1) produce light emissions that create an annoyance or interfere with activities or (2) contrast with or detract from the visual resources and/or the visual character of the existing environment. Each jurisdiction will typically address outdoor lighting, scenic vistas, and scenic corridors in its zoning ordinances and general plan.

Light Emissions | These impacts typically relate to the extent to which any light or glare results from a source that could create an annoyance for people or would interfere with normal activities. Generally, a local jurisdiction will include ordinances in its local code that address outdoor illumination to reduce the impact of light on surrounding properties.

Airfield lighting at the airport includes a rotating beacon, high-intensity runway lighting (HIRL) on Runway 4-22, medium-intensity runway lighting (MIRL) on Runway 13-31, medium-intensity taxiway lighting (MITL), and no lighting on Runway 17-35. The taxiways at HOB are equipped with medium-intensity lighting. Four-box precision approach path indicators are located at Runway 13, Runway 31, and Runway 22. Runway 4 is equipped with a medium-intensity approach lighting system (MALSR). The airfield lights utilize pilot-controlled lighting (PCL); thus, the airfield lights are only illuminated when activated by pilots using the airport. For further information, see the discussion of the types of airfield lighting and visual approach aids earlier in the inventory.

Visual Resources and Visual Character | *Visual character* refers to the overall visual makeup of the existing environment in which a proposed action or its alternative(s) would be located. For example, areas near densely populated areas generally have a visual character that could be defined as urban, whereas the visual character of less developed areas could be defined by the surrounding landscape features, such as open grass fields, forests, mountains, deserts, etc.

Visual resources include buildings, sites, traditional cultural properties, and other natural or human-made landscape features that are visually important or have unique characteristics. Visual resources may include structures or objects that obscure or block other landscape features. In addition, visual resources can include the cohesive collection of various individual visual resources that can be viewed at once or in concert from the area surrounding the site of the proposed action or alternative(s).

Although the airport environment is within a designated U.S. Census urban area, it is visually characterized by sparsely vegetated open areas and scattered buildings. Views of the airport are accessible from surrounding roadways due to the lack of clustered buildings and dense vegetation along nearby roadways. Long-range views are not readily available due to the relatively flat topography of the airport environs. There are industrial and commercial land uses along the northern portion of U.S. Highway 62, which lies near the northern portion of the airport boundary. Hobbs Country Club is near the eastern portion of the airport boundary and the airport is surrounded by open space on its western and southern boundaries.



WATER RESOURCES

Wetlands | The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates the discharge of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the United States, including adjacent wetlands, under Section 404 of the CWA. Wetlands are defined in E.O. 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, as “those areas that are inundated by surface or groundwater with a frequency sufficient to support and under normal circumstances does or would support a prevalence of vegetative or aquatic life that requires saturated or seasonally soil conditions for growth and reproduction.” Wetlands exhibit three characteristics: the soil is inundated or saturated to the surface at some time during the growing season (hydrology), has a population of plants able to tolerate various degrees of flooding or frequent saturation (hydrophytes), and is saturated enough to develop anaerobic (absent of air or oxygen) conditions during the growing season (hydric).

The USFWS manages the National Wetlands Inventory on behalf of all federal agencies. The National Wetlands Inventory identifies surface waters and wetlands in the nation. There are freshwater ponds and freshwater emergent wetlands within airport boundaries (see **Exhibit 1L**).¹⁵

Floodplains | E.O. 11988, *Floodplain Management*, directs federal agencies to take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare, and restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by the floodplains. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 5650.2, *Floodplain Management and Protection*, implements the guidelines contained in E.O. 11988.

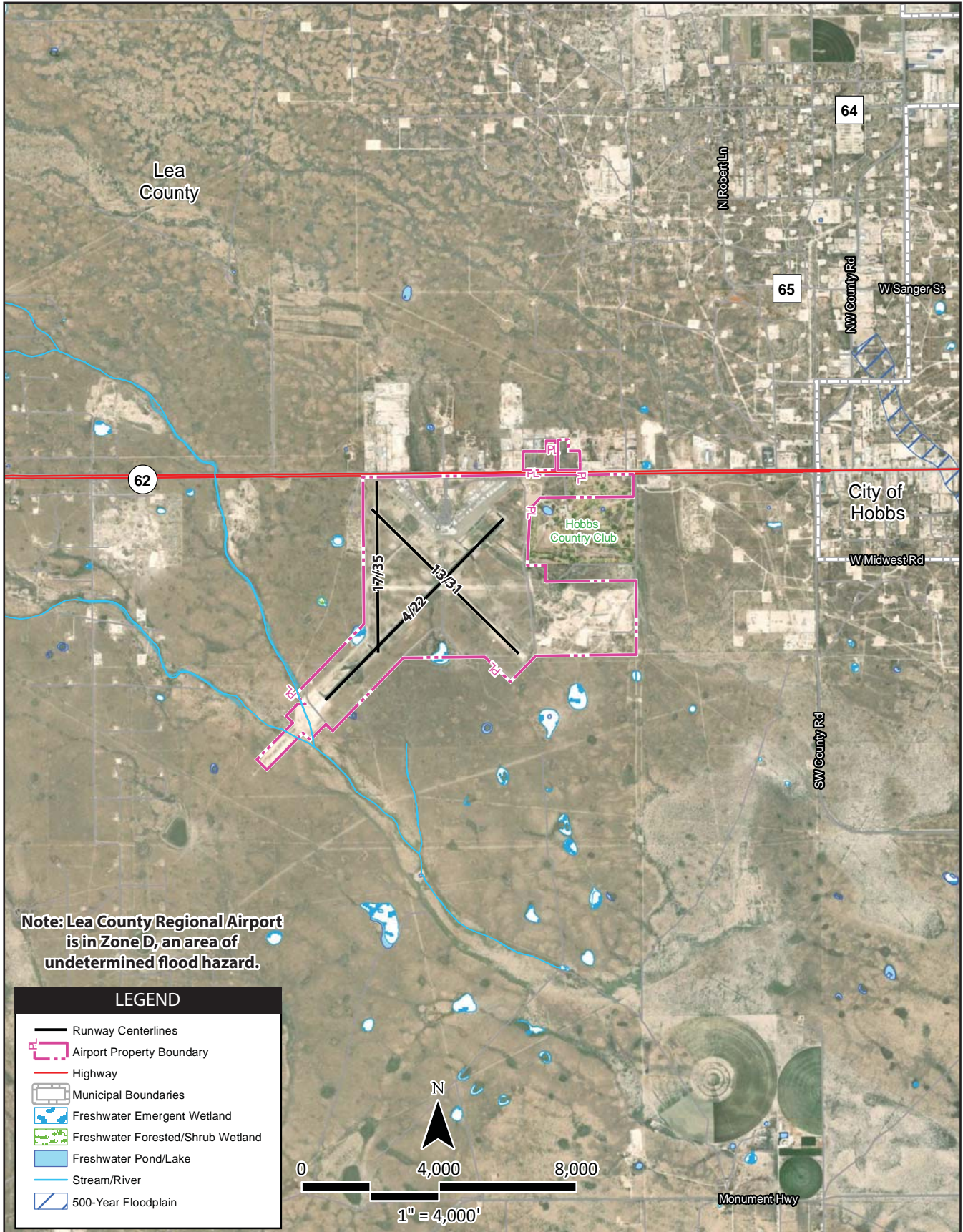
E.O. 14030, Climate-Related Financial Risk was established on May 25, 2021. Section 5(e) of E.O. 14030 reinstates E.O. 13690, *Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input* (originally set forth on January 30, 2015). E.O. 13690 amends E.O. 11988 and mandates that a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) be created. One of the primary purposes of the FFRMS is to expand the management of floodplains from a base flood evaluation to include a higher vertical elevation (and the corresponding floodplain) to protect against future flood risks for federally funded projects.

Under E.O. 13690 and its guidelines, one of several approaches should be used to identify floodplains and their risks to critical or non-critical federally funded actions:¹⁶

- Climate-Informed Science Approach (CISA) – the elevation and flood hazard area (i.e., 100-year floodplain) using data that integrate climate science with an emphasis on possible future effects on critical actions
- Freeboard Value Approach – the elevation and flood hazard area and an additional two or three feet above the base flood elevation, depending on whether the proposed federal action is critical or non-critical
- 500-year Floodplain Approach – all areas subject to the 0.2 percent annual chance flood
- Other methods resulting from updates to the FFRMS

¹⁵ USFWS, Wetlands Inventory (<https://fwsprimary.wim.usgs.gov/wetlands/apps/wetlands-mapper/>)

¹⁶ A critical action is defined in E.O. 13690 and the 2015 Guidelines for Implementing E.O. 11988 as any activity for which even a slight change of flooding is too great.



Source: ESRI Basemap Imagery (2022), USGS, USDA, Tiger/Line, Coffman Associates Analysis



Of these four approaches, federal departments and agencies should use the CISA approach when data to support such an analysis are available.

A review of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panel number 35025C1230D (effective December 12, 2008) indicates the airport is in Zone D, an area of undetermined flood hazard.

Surface Waters | The CWA establishes water quality standards, controls discharges, develops waste treatment management plans and practices, prevents or minimizes the loss of wetlands, and regulates other issues concerning water quality. Water quality concerns related to airport development most often relate to potential products, solvents, etc. Additionally, U.S. Congress has mandated the NPDES under the CWA.

Lea County Regional Airport is in the Lea County Regional Airport (120800030610) and Hobbs, New Mexico (120800030605) watersheds. There are no impaired waters within these watersheds; thus, there are no impaired waters near the airport.¹⁷

Groundwater | Groundwater is subsurface water that occupies the space between sand, clay, and rock formations. The term *aquifer* is used to describe the geologic layers that store or transmit groundwater, such as wells, springs, and other water sources. Examples of direct impacts to groundwater could include withdrawal of groundwater for operational purposes or reduction of infiltration or recharge area due to new impervious surfaces.¹⁸

The City of Hobbs is located within Lea County's underground water basin (UWB) range, which primarily draws water from the Ogallala Formation aquifer. The city has municipal well fields that withdraw potable water from Lea County's UWB.¹⁹

The U.S. EPA's Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) program was established under Section 1424(e) of the *Safe Drinking Water Act* (SDWA). Since 1977, this program has been used by communities to help prevent contamination of groundwater from federally funded projects and has increased public awareness of the vulnerability of groundwater resources. The SSA program is authorized by Section 1424(e) of the SDWA (Public Law 93-523, 42 U.S.C. 300 et. Seq), which states:

*"If the Administrator determines, on his own initiative or upon petition, that an area has an aquifer which is the sole or principal drinking water source for area and which, if contaminated, would create a significant hazard to public health, he shall publish notice of that determination in the Federal Register."*²⁰

¹⁷ U.S. EPA, How's My Waterway (<https://mywaterway.epa.gov/community/lea%20county%20regional%20airport/overview>)

¹⁸ United States Geological Survey, What is Groundwater? (<https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/what-groundwater>)

¹⁹ Broadhead and Speer, Lea County Regional Water Plan, Water Resources Assessment, 1993

²⁰ U.S. EPA, Overview of the Drinking Water Sole Source Aquifer Program (<https://www.epa.gov/dwssa/overview-drinking-water-sole-source-aquifer-program#Authority>)



According to the U.S. EPA Sole Source Aquifer for Drinking Water website, no sole source aquifers are located within airport boundaries. The nearest sole source aquifer is the Edwards Aquifer/San Antonio Area SSA, located more than 249 miles from the airport.

Wild and Scenic Rivers | The *National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* was established to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Nationwide River Inventory (NRI) is a list of over 3,400 rivers or river segments that appear to meet the minimum *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* eligibility requirements, based on their free-flowing status and resource values. The development of the NRI resulted from Section 5(d)(1) in the *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act*, which directs federal agencies to consider potential wild and scenic rivers in the comprehensive planning process.

The closest designated national wild and scenic river identified is the Rio Grande River, located 201 miles from the airport. The nearest NRI feature is the Pecos River, located 163 miles from the airport.