



2025 North Dakota
State Aviation System Plan



2025 North Dakota
Aviation Economic Impact Study

Hutson Field (GAF)

Associated City: Grafton



GAF's Airport Economic Impacts

The impacts below present the sum of direct and multiplier impacts of all activity associated with GAF. The table below offers a breakdown of the total impacts by direct, multiplier, total, and source of impact.

Jobs

15

Payroll

\$813,000

Value Added

\$1.25 M

Output

\$2.22 M

Source of Impact	Jobs		
	Direct	Multiplier	Total
Airport Management	1	<1	1
Airport Tenants	2	1	3
Capital Expenditures	5	2	7
GA Visitor Spending	3	1	4
CS Visitor Spending	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Jobs Impacts	11	4	15

Source of Impact	Payroll		
	Direct	Multiplier	Total
Airport Management	\$14,000	\$17,000	\$31,000
Airport Tenants	\$127,000	\$31,000	\$158,000
Capital Expenditures	\$322,000	\$163,000	\$485,000
GA Visitor Spending	\$87,000	\$52,000	\$139,000
CS Visitor Spending	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Payroll Impacts	\$549,000	\$264,000	\$813,000

Source of Impact	Value Added		
	Direct	Multiplier	Total
Airport Management	\$47,000	\$26,000	\$73,000
Airport Tenants	\$127,000	\$51,000	\$178,000
Capital Expenditures	\$483,000	\$284,000	\$767,000
GA Visitor Spending	\$144,000	\$84,000	\$228,000
CS Visitor Spending	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Value Added Impacts	\$801,000	\$446,000	\$1.25 M

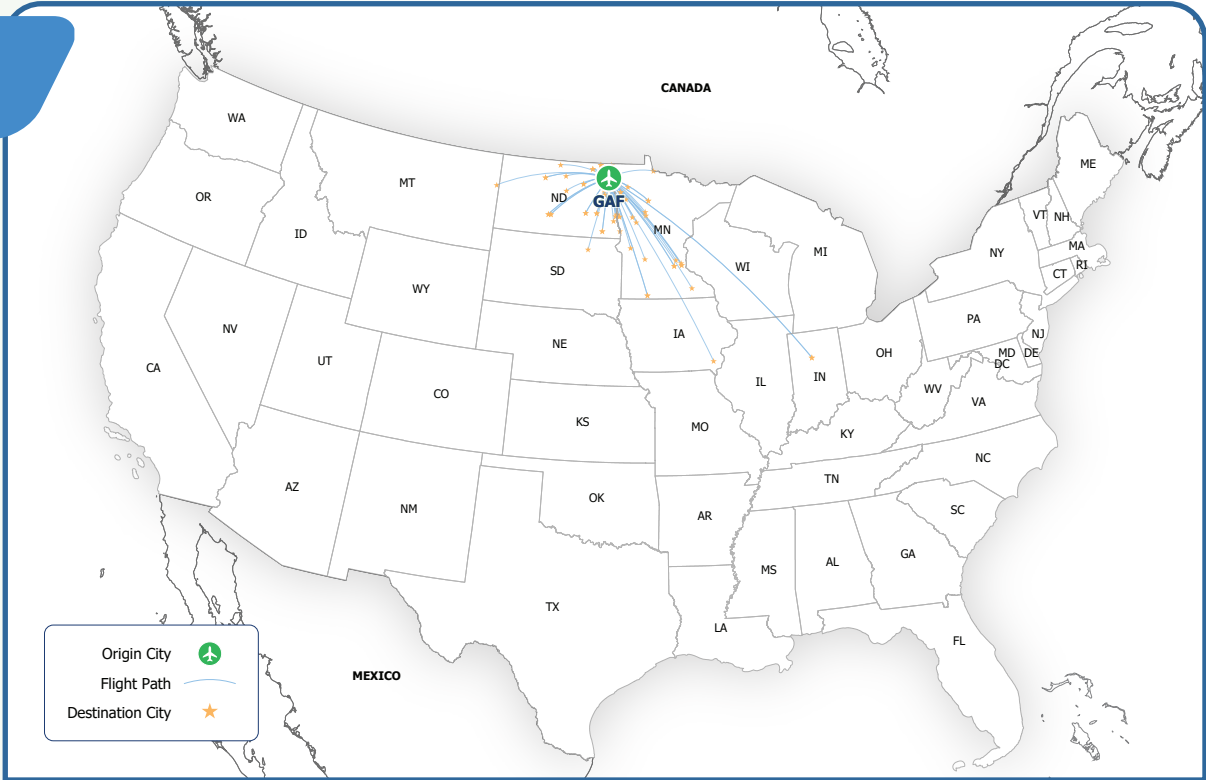
Source of Impact	Output		
	Direct	Multiplier	Total
Airport Management	\$63,000	\$47,000	\$110,000
Airport Tenants	\$149,000	\$90,000	\$239,000
Capital Expenditures	\$920,000	\$516,000	\$1.44 M
GA Visitor Spending	\$275,000	\$163,000	\$438,000
CS Visitor Spending	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Output Impacts	\$1.41 M	\$816,000	\$2.22 M

Sources: 2025 NDAEIS Airport Manager Survey; IMPLAN, 2025; Kimley-Horn, 2025. Notes: Dollar values rounded to the nearest 1,000. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Airport Flight Map

This Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) map shows annual flight activity data and helps to demonstrate the important role that GAF plays in providing time-saving connections for local and visiting businesses and residents. IFR Flights Completed as Filed between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024.

Source: FlightAware



Airport Facts

The airport and the activities it supports generate approximately \$240,000 annually in federal, state, and local tax revenues.

An estimated 2,870 out-of-state visitors traveled through GAF in 2024 via general aviation aircraft.

Visitors using GAF spent approximately \$47,000 on lodging, \$80,000 on food and beverage, \$50,000 on local transportation, \$55,000 on retail, and \$44,000 on entertainment, supporting local businesses throughout the region.

GAF offers 100LL and Jet-A services to based and transient aircraft, allowing the airport to support a variety of critical operations, such as recreational flying, flight instruction, and corporate activity.

Over the past four years, more than \$3.7 million has been invested in capital improvements at GAF, averaging approximately \$920,000 annually from federal, state, local, and private funding sources.

Study Methodology

Comprehensive data collection was essential to producing accurate economic impact estimates for calendar year 2024. Primary data sources, including airport staff, airport business tenants, and visitors, were used to estimate direct economic impacts. These data were gathered through onsite visits and a combination of in-person, telephone, and online surveys. Where needed, additional industry sources were consulted to supplement the primary data. A nationally recognized economic modeling platform, IMPLAN, was used to calculate multiplier effects. Economic impacts were estimated for airport management, airport tenants, capital investment activity, GA visitor spending, and commercial service visitor spending.

Economic Impact Levels

The economic impacts for North Dakota's airports are presented at three distinct levels (direct, multiplier, and total) to describe where in the economic cycle the impact is generated.

Airport Administration

Airport Tenants

Capital Investment

GA and Commercial Services Visitor Spending

Indirect

Portions of direct output used to purchase goods and services from businesses inside the study region

Multiplier Impacts

Induced

Income earned by workers from direct and supplier sales transactions that are then spent inside the study region

Total Impacts

There are four measures used to express the economic impact of North Dakota's airports: jobs, payroll, value added, and output.

Jobs

Total number of people employed. This includes both full-time and part-time because of aviation.

Payroll

Total employment compensation, including wages and benefits, of those employed

Value Added

The value of final goods and services produced locally because of economic activity, excluding the value of goods and services used to produce them

Output

Total expenditures associated with airport administration, capital projects, tenant sales of goods and services, as well as visitor spending in North Dakota's hospitality-related sectors

About Hutson Field

Located just east of Grafton in Walsh County, Hutson Field (GAF) is a vital general aviation facility supporting agriculture, healthcare, and regional infrastructure in northeastern North Dakota. The airport plays a key role in the agricultural economy, with an aerial applicator based on-site and additional transient operators using the facility for crop spraying and pasture treatment. These operations help area producers manage large acreages efficiently, especially during challenging field conditions. In 2024, the airport completed extensive taxiway and ramp improvements in front of the terminal, expanded aircraft tiedown areas, and constructed a new three-stall T-hangar. These upgrades strengthen Hutson Field’s ability to serve both agricultural and general aviation users. Healthcare access is enhanced through emergency patient transfers, with nearby hospitals relying on the airport to connect critically ill individuals to advanced care. The airport also supports public service operations, including wildlife surveys and aerial enforcement activities in remote areas. Each spring, Hutson Field hosts an Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Fly-In, drawing pilots from across the region and providing an opportunity for aviation enthusiasts and the community to gather. Through its support of agriculture, emergency response, community engagement, and regional mobility, combined with recent infrastructure improvements and expanded services, Hutson Field continues to grow as a cornerstone of northeastern North Dakota’s infrastructure and economic resilience.



Airport Activities



Recreational Flying



Flight Instruction



Corporate Activity



Aerial Inspections



Agricultural Spraying

Runways

The most critical infrastructure of an airport is the runway system. Runway characteristics determine the types of activity the airport can support.

Type	Orientation	Dimensions	Surface	Approach
Primary Runway	17/35	3,898 ft x 74 ft	Asphalt	RNAV (GPS) / RNAV (GPS)
Secondary Runway	08/26	4,074 ft x 115 ft	Turf	VIS / VIS
Tertiary Runway	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Additional Runway	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Aviation Activity Demand Forecasts

Aviation activity demand forecasts are included in the NDSASP to understand how aviation demand is expected to change over time. These forecasts help inform future infrastructure needs and long-term system planning decisions.

Activity Type	Base Year (2024)	Future Year (2044)	2024-2044 CAGR
Commercial Service Enplanements	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commercial Service Operations	N/A	N/A	N/A
General Aviation Operations	26,300	26,300	0.00%
Based Aircraft	19	22	0.74%

Note: CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate