



NEWS RELEASE

Mike Browning

PUBLIC INFORMATION DIRECTOR

Twitter: @cityofmborotn

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cityofmurfreesborotn

PHONE: 615-849-2629

EMAIL: mbrowning@murfreesborotn.gov

Website: www.murfreesborotn.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 15, 2020

Municipal Airport awarded \$1M grant for MTSU apron upgrades as part of economic development

\$4.5 million Terminal Facility, other Airport improvements underway

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — The City of Murfreesboro Municipal Airport has been awarded a 2020 Aeronautics Economic Development Fund grant of \$1 million, the maximum grant approved from the Aeronautics Division of the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The announcement came in a Jan. 10, letter from Michelle Frazier, director of Aeronautics.

“The development strategy for this fund is to impact job creation and investment opportunities in Tennessee’s aviation industry,” said Frazier in a letter to Municipal Airport Director Chad L. Gehrke. “We are pleased to provide funding for this economic development project. Our aviation facilities are critical to the economic development of communities across the state.”

This Economic Development Grant will be used toward the expansion of the apron at the Middle Tennessee State University Aerospace Airport Campus. Construction will include the development of Taxiway E, which will allow for aircraft to maneuver in and out of new facilities. The facilities will be built on the MTSU Aerospace Airport Campus in the near future.

The MTSU Aerospace Department has experienced over 30% growth in the last three years. Today, over 1,000 students are enrolled in the nationally-recognized program. To keep up with this growth and the demands of the aviation industry, the Aerospace Department is working with the University and City of Murfreesboro on a new Master Plan for their facilities at the airport.

A recent study conducted by the MTSU Business and Economic Research Center (BERC) with assistance from the MTSU Aerospace Department concluded that the MTSU Airport Campus would have to increase its hangar, briefing rooms, labs, classrooms, and office space from around 44,000 square feet to over 102,000 square feet. This expansion would create jobs such as flight instructors, faculty positions, and additional staff.

-(MORE)-

The new Aeronautics grant is key to providing the infrastructure to address the MTSU Aerospace Department's immediate needs along with supporting their future expansion plans.

The announcement comes as the City constructs a new Municipal Airport Terminal anticipated for completion in August 2020. The new \$4.5 million Airport Terminal replaces the old terminal originally built in 1952. The new 15,200-square-foot terminal will include a large main lobby with raised and ground-level observation areas, lounge seating, a large leasable business conference center, smaller conference room space, pilot lounge, and office space.

In June 2019, the Tennessee Aeronautics Division awarded the Municipal Airport a \$2 million Airport Economic Development (AED) Grant for the South Terminal Development Project. The \$2 million grant is being used toward the construction of a large aircraft, maintenance and storage hangar, offices, apron expansion, and the removal of the old Quonset-style hangar.

"The new airport terminal will be three times bigger than the existing terminal," said Gehrke. "We want the terminal to present air travelers with the best impression possible and to fulfill the needs of a growing city for the next half-century."

Murfreesboro-based Smith Design Build, a commercial building contractor, and Nashville-based architectural firm Lowen+Associates, LLC designed the new terminal to meet the unique needs of the municipal airport.

The airport caters to MTSU's Aerospace Department and Air Methods LifeFlight emergency medical transport for Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Murfreesboro has a land lease with TDK Hangar with a 16,400-square-foot hangar and 4,000-square-foot office space.

The terminal will include a raised observation area with stairs leading to the main lobby and to an outdoor balcony. A catering kitchen with ample storage can serve a large leasable Business Conference Center accommodating 75 people. The Center will provide patrons with a view of the airfield.

On the exterior runway side, a mezzanine will extend outside to an observation deck to allow for easy-viewing of air traffic. On the land side, entrance to the terminal exterior includes multiple-vehicle parking around the existing circular area where the flag pole is currently located. Earth tones with accents in metal, tall glazing and brick create a feel for use beyond an airport terminal. To watch a two-minute YouTube video from December 2018 on the Airport Terminal, click <https://youtu.be/Fjk5yVusVNE>.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photo graphic attached: 1. *Expansion of MTSU Aerospace Airport Campus Apron*

Rendition Photo attached provided by Lowen+Associates, LLC

2. *Airside Exterior View of Terminal.jpg*

3. *Chad Gehrke, Airport Manager presents to City Council, Dec. 12, 2018.jpg*

(###)