

**St. Mary's County
Airport Advisory Board
2025 Annual Report**

01/31/2026



**George Hill, Chairman
Charles Stickney, Vice Chairman
Secretary- Matt Dimarco
Albert Babcock
Chris Fuller
Adam Osborne
Paul Teas
Johnny Alvey**

Appointed Ex-Officio Members:
Allison Swint, Deputy Director Transportation and Airport Manager
LT Sonia Mantillapena, NAS Patuxent River ATC

Assigned Technical Advisor and Staff Support:
Gary B. Whipple, P.E.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE BOARD

The Bylaws of the St. Mary's County Airport Advisory Board, adopted January 15th, 2019, govern the purpose, composition, and procedures of the Board. The purpose of the Board is to "advise the Commissioners of St. Mary's County concerning the development and management of the St. Mary's County Regional Airport." This broad purpose encompasses airport operations, planning, economic development, responsible growth, and identification of the needs and best interests of the citizens of St. Mary's County. Specific goals of the Board are:

- Ensure safe and secure facilities for general aviation
- Promote safe ground and flight operations
- Maintain a friendly environment for the aviation community and the general public
- Engage economic development potential and revenue
- Provide an observation area, and pilot lounge for the benefit of the airport community and general public
- Protect and enhance airspace and approaches
- Ensure that commercial, private and public development in and around the airport meets standards with respect to safety and noise
- Promote the sustainment and growth of general aviation through local activities that showcase the airport to the general public, introduce youth to potential aviation careers, and support Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education
- Focus on identifying and resolving airport-related issues in a timely manner.

Mission Statement

"To satisfy aviation demand and promote airport development that both integrates with the community and serves the region's general aviation needs."

BOARD COMPOSITION

The Board currently consists of seven volunteer members appointed by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. The current board composition includes a range of experience across aircraft operations and maintenance, airfield construction and maintenance and the aerospace industry to include the burgeoning unmanned aircraft systems segment. Board officers are elected by the Board each January or as required. Aircraft. Additionally, two Ex-Officio members, one from Patuxent River Naval Air Station and one from Naval Test Wing Atlantic to garner safety and operational input. The Board meets on the fourth Monday of each month in the conference room of the Captain Walter F. Duke Terminal Building in California, Maryland, unless otherwise indicated on the county website or a special meeting is necessary.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The St. Mary's County Airport Advisory Board (AAB) submits this 2025 annual report in accordance with Bylaws Article III. The report includes the following highlights:

- St. Mary's County airport is still guided by the 2002 Airport Master Plan and associated Airport Layout Plan. Airport master plans are updated approximately every 20 years and a scope of work for the next master plan is in work through the FAA.
- A pavement of the runway and taxiways has been completed and indicates the need to repave the runway. This is likely to be accommodated across the federal FY29/30 budgets due to cost.
- Runway and taxiway extension, a multi-year project, was finally completed and the runway is now 5,300 ft long. Extra runway length brings significant new operational capability to our airport as it accommodates more aircraft of larger size and landing speeds.
- An updated Automated Weather Observation System was installed replacing the previous nearly obsolete system.
- The Walter Francis Duke terminal received considerable external and interior enhancements to include new modern furniture in the terminal, new landscaping and a pergola in front of the terminal and new parking lot surfaces.
- New signage was installed around the airport property and along Airport Rd.
- St. Mary's County Airport continues to be self-sufficient. In 2025, the airport operated at a net gain of \$58, 214 when comparing direct operational expenses and direct revenues.
- Airport Activity and Capacity – FAA Based Aircraft Inventory was updated December 2024 showing a total of 225 aircraft are based at the airport. The airport is currently at aircraft storage hangar capacity with several aircraft owners on the waiting list for occupancy. Outdoor tie-downs remain available.

AIRPORT DATA

SAFETY & SECURITY

The AAB, having several members with flying and ATC backgrounds continues to monitor safety aspects of operations at the airport. Ex-officio members from NAS Patuxent River and Naval Test Wing Atlantic safety officer bring outstanding insight to issues affecting the close aircraft traffic patterns between NAS Pax and St. Mary's County Airport. Guidance to the local and wider flying community has been updated accordingly.

Additionally, there is a FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam) which serves the airport and hosted a forum in May to provide outreach and solicit input on safe operations in the surrounding area. NAS Pax also participated in this event.

No security incidents were noted at the airport this year.

ANNUAL BUDGETING

The FAA Airport provides 75 to 95% of eligible costs for local airport improvements with the balance of funds provided by the state and

Currently, the draft FY2026 Capital Budget Master Plan Improvements include:

- \$500,000 for an continued Airport Master Plan
- FY2028 \$600,000 for Runway Rehabilitation design, \$80,000 for access and security improvements design, and \$450,000 for the Master Plan's Environmental Assessment.
- FY2029 \$7,600,000 for Runway Rehabilitation construction, \$400,000 for the Commercial Apron design, and \$600,000 for Access and Security Improvements construction.
- FY2029 \$5,400,000 for Commercial Apron Construction, \$600,000 North Parallel Taxiway design. FY2030 \$7,600,000 for North Parallel Taxiway Construction.

These improvements are still pending the overall completion of the Airport Master Plan.

ANNUAL EXPENSES AND REVENUES

The table below presents the costs and revenue associated with maintaining and operating the airport. Expenses are grouped by type. Revenues include tie-down and hangar rentals, office space rent, and fuel sales.

Facility Expenses	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Facility Maint/Utility	\$ 35,511.48	\$ 20,395.39	\$ 6,108.82	\$ 18,698.22	\$ 63,709.00
Electric (incl. Nav Aids and Lighting)	\$ 21,917.01	\$ 23,778.43	\$26,905.29	\$28,497.26	Combined in above
Airport Lighting	\$ 1,200.01	Combined in above	Combined in above	Combined in above	Combined in above
Liability Insurance	\$ 7,700.00	\$ 7,700.00	\$ 7,700.00	\$ 7,700.00	\$ 7,700.00
Property Insurance (structure)	\$ 3,980.00	\$ 3,980.00	\$ 5,613.00	\$ 5,613.00	\$ 5,613.00
Grounds	\$ 7,626.00	\$ 3,183.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -
Runway/Taxiway Main	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 97,848.37	
Total Expenses	\$ 77,934.50	\$ 59,036.82	\$ 47,987.12	\$ 71,756.85	\$ 77,022.00
Direct Revenue	\$ 119,724.19	\$ 127,077.12	\$ 122,814.23	\$ 129,970.54	\$135,563.70
Asset/ (Liability)	\$ 41,789.69	\$ 68,040.30	\$ 74,827.11	\$ 58,213.69	\$ 58,541.70

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The two most recent Maryland Aviation Administration economic impact statements are shown below and demonstrate the large impact St. Mary's County Airport has on the local community.

Type of impact	2018	2024
Business Revenue	\$35, 376,000	\$108,428,000
Total Employment	499 jobs	917 jobs
Personal Income	\$32, 682,000	\$80,322,000
State and Local Taxes	\$8,290,000	\$17,206,000

AEROPARK AIRPORT INNOVATION DISTRICT

AeroPark combines business, industry, education, and research centered on the St. Mary's County Regional Airport. Per the Department of Economic Development, "This effort provides a unique opportunity to strengthen and expand the local economy, deliver education and employment opportunities, and create a world-class research and innovation hub."

The Airport Advisory Board looks forward to future developments with AeroPark.

AIRPORT CAPACITY

The FAA's National Based Aircraft Inventory assists the FAA in administering its various national airspace planning programs. The data update ensures that all planes are accounted for by location and tail number and is a requirement for receiving continued Federal and State funding. The FAA requires each airport to review and update their based aircraft inventory in December of each year.

Total airport capacity is 74 tie-down spaces, 123 general aviation hangar spaces, and 14 commercial hangars (including the county hangar). While outdoor tie-downs are available the waiting list for a hangar continues to grow and as of December 2025, there are 76 requests for space with 23 of those for immediate occupancy.

Aircraft Type	Validated Inventory
Single Engine	190
Multi Engine	23
Jet	6
Helicopter	6
N-Numbers Not Found	Not Counted
<i>Total</i>	225

AIRPORT OPERATIONS

Each take-off and landing is considered a separate aviation-related operation. The MAA conducts a study every three years for aircraft operations at all Maryland airports. A new study was conducted in 2019 and St. Mary's County Regional Airport had 40,263 operations in 2019, an increase of 13.1% over the previous report. Similar results are predicted for 2025 (Maryland Airport Authority does not release their activity tracking until Feb-Mar). New automated airport activity software was installed in April 2025 which will result in a highly accurate count for 2026.

AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

One of the two on-site aircraft maintenance companies left St. Mary's County Airport in 2025 largely due to staffing shortages. Chesapeake Aviation remains on site and provides FAA certified aircraft maintenance to local and fly-in aircraft. There is a significant shortage of certified Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) mechanics throughout the aviation industry.

OPERATIONS EQUIPMENT AND NAVIGATION AIDS

- A new Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) system was installed this year replacing the previous nearly obsolete system. AWOS sends periodic aviation weather and airport information updates over a short interval on a dedicated radio frequency, the internet and a phone system. Additionally, the website k2w6.awos.live provides graphic and text AWOS reporting which became critical when a contract between the State of Maryland and a third party vendor lapsed preventing airport AWOS data dissemination across aviation internet services.

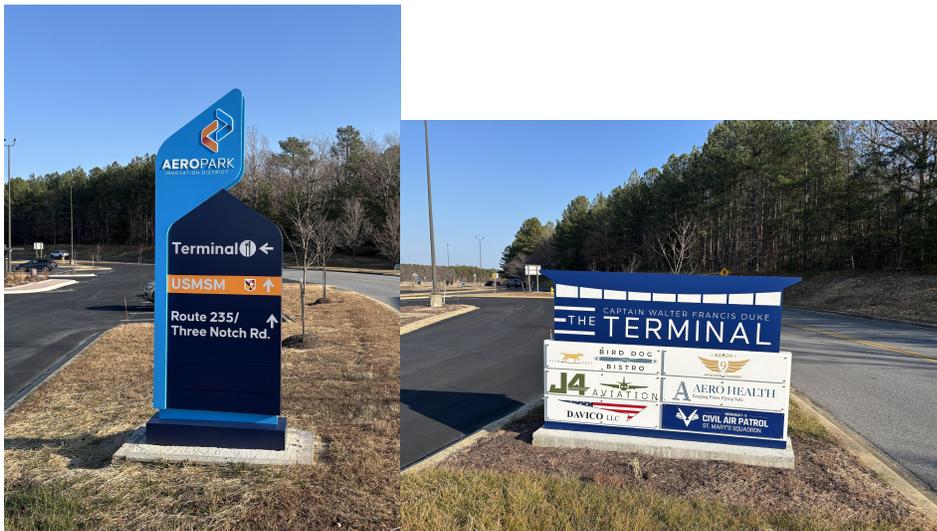
- Each end of the runway is equipped with a Precision Approach Path Indicator light system which provides glideslope information to proper runway touchdown location.
- For Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations, the airport is serviced by non-precision RNAV GPS approaches for both runways 11 and 29.
- The county began utilizing a new flight tracking system which provides greater accuracy and data filtering of aircraft operations at the airport. This data provides insight into the quantity and type of airport operations so the county can better serve aviation users.

SERVICES AND EVENTS

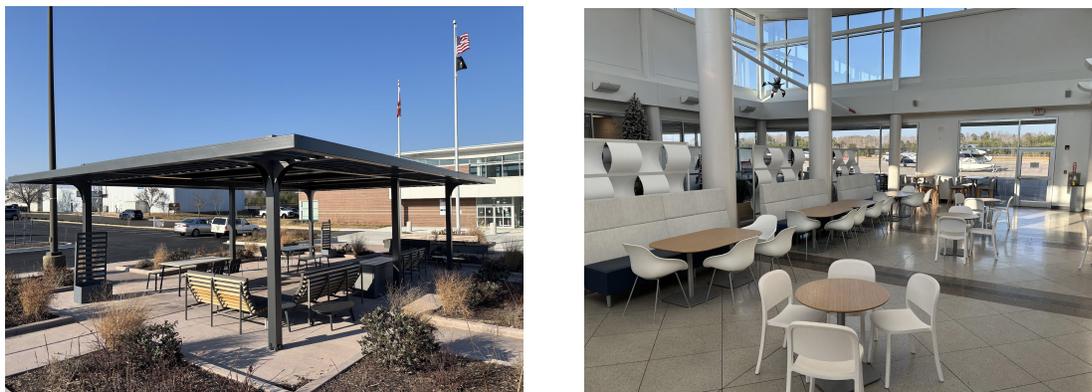
- The AeroPark Innovation District hosts a wealth of aviation business aligned to our local and regional economy. Many commercial enterprises across manufacturing, research and development, academia, aircraft maintenance, unmanned systems and government contracting and services reside in the Innovation District area or maintain a presence on the airport itself to provide flight test and services.
- Non-profit entities such as the Experimental Aircraft Association, Civil Air Patrol and Ready 9 provide youth flight and leadership opportunities.
- RCS Services LLC provides fixed based operator (FBO) services such as aircraft fueling, transient aircraft support and also hosts Piedmont Flight Center which conducts flights training and discovery flights.
- S. Hunt Aero, LLC: The company continues in developing/leasing general aviation hangars, commercial hangars, office/R&D buildings and production facilities. The rapid growth of St. Mary's County Airport would not be possible without this substantial corporate involvement.
- Maryland State Police Trooper 7: The Maryland State Police Aviation Command continues to provide critical community services through Trooper 7 located at the airport. Trooper 7 is the most tasked of MSP's helicopters and completed 520 missions (484 Medevac, 28 search and rescue and 8 law enforcement)
- MedSTAR Transport: MedSTAR Transport, a non-profit service based out of MedStar Washington Hospital Center, provides enhanced response times to better assist critical care patients in the Southern Maryland region. The sole MedSTAR helicopter based at St. Mary's County airport flew 775 transport missions in 2025.
- RoboNation UAS competition. 2025 was the last year this event will be held at St. Mary's County Airport due to its impact on airport operations. However, the drawing of young STEM minded individuals from around the world provides

tremendous visibility to the aviation industry in St. Mary's County and another venue in the county should be used to keep this event in the county.

- The airport grounds and terminal have received enhancements by the Department of Economic Development and the spaces continue to draw community both non-aviation and aviation events which enhances airport visibility and access as well as career introductions to the St. Mary's County community. In 2025 numerous events included A Taste of St. Mary's, Thirsty Thursday, Experimental Aircraft Young Eagles events where ages 8-17 are given free airplane rides and Chamber of Commerce Network Events.



New airport and terminal signage



Terminal Improvements – landscaping, pergola and furniture

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED OR EXPECTED

- State of Maryland funding for airport improvements is declining and this may impact needed improvements to St. Mary's County Airport while enacting the next Airport Master Plan.

- St. Mary's County continues to grow along with airport size, capacity and operations. Commercial and residential growth around the airport could impact airport operations and threaten the operational and economic viability of the airport.
- The AAB recognizes the unique operational demographics of the airport when attempting to maintain appropriate Rules, Minimum Standards, Standard Operating Procedures, and other documents. The Board will continue to engage the airport and surrounding community in order to provide sound recommendations to the County regarding these important documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Recommendations remain standing from previous years and reflect items addressed across airport development, continued operations and safety.

Development

1. The Board will support the upcoming review and revision of the Airport Master Plan in concert with St. Mary's 2050 Charting our Tomorrow, growth in the Southern Maryland region and at NAS Patuxent River.
2. Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) operations utilizing a new generation of electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft present a great opportunity for St. Mary's County and its airport due to the county's peninsular geography, proximity to major urban centers and lack of access to regional transportation networks.
 - a. AAM offers the opportunity to connect St. Mary's County with regional urban centers and transportation hubs.
 - b. St. Mary's County Regional could be a key location in the Chesapeake UAS Route Network (CURN) project being led by the University of Maryland.
3. The Board will work with the Department of Economic Development and airport stakeholders:
 - a. To further develop and market the airport and surrounding area (AeroPark Innovation District) as a regional asset for all Southern Maryland.
 - b. To increase utilization of the airport terminal building, attract transient and regional pilots as well as the public to the airport, and to increase revenue.
 - c. Continue to provide and support activities that promote interest in general aviation, flight and maintenance training, and STEM education.
 - d. Support the ultimate goal of growing a qualified workforce to meet the demands of the airport, the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, and local aviation and defense industry. The addition of an aircraft maintenance training program to local education offerings would be extremely beneficial to support high demand for contract maintenance technician support to NAS Patuxent River and for aviation maintenance at St. Mary's County

- airport. The AAB encourages one or more local education institutions to seriously consider this opportunity.
- e. Provide a public facing perspective on airport activities and opportunities.
4. The Board concurs with the Airport Operations action items that have been integrated with the DPW&T's 2006 Transportation Plan. Brudis & Associates, Inc. was contracted in November 2021 to update the Transportation Plan. The Board will continue to monitor and address these issues as presented for recommendation and/or action. Specific Action Items of particular interest to the Board are as follows:
- a. Develop an Airport Business/Finance Plan that is integrated with the Airport Master Plan and in conjunction with the Department of Economic Development. As the County deals with growth, budget challenges, and FAA requirements, it is essential the County have a vision on how to manage this essential resource.
 - b. Once the runway is extended, "open up" the southwestern portion of the airport for development by extending water and sewer with County funding resources as shown in the capital improvement plan and providing a second entrance to the airport via Lawrence Hayden Road connection to the planned Airport Loop Road.
 - c. Work with the Emergency Services Director to provide annual updates of the disaster preparedness plan.

Continued Operations

1. Continue monitoring of development within the Airport Environs and in the vicinity of the airport property to provide sound technical recommendations to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County in order to protect the County's and the FAA's substantial investment in this important public asset.
2. Continue to work with the County and the FBO to evaluate and provide recommendations on the Airport Layout Plan, identify additional areas for tie-down spaces, and consolidate parking areas where available to meet current and future demand.

Safety

1. Ensure increased safety for pilots, aircraft, persons and properties through the review and update of existing safety processes and encouraging participation in FAA Safety Team events and feedback from the user community to airport management, the FAA Safety Team and the Airport Advisory Board.

2. Track, monitor, and assist new activities on the airfield to ensure they are conducted with all notifications, permits, and notices. Facilitate the process of allowing new businesses to operate on the airfield in a timely manner.
3. Install working internet access in the terminal for transient visitors and working meetings.