DETROIT AIRPORT SET TO SOAR WITH AVFLIGHT PARTNERSHIP AND MAJOR REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

News / Business aviation

Avflight and the City of Detroit announced first significant initiative in 50 years to rejuvenate Coleman A. Young International Airport (KDET), marking a new chapter in Detroit's aviation history. Last year, the city received FAA approval to institute a 20-year airport development and strategy design plan, enabling the airport to apply for federal funding to subsidize infrastructure upgrades. Now, as an integral component of the rejuvenation effort, the city offered Avflight a 30 year-leasehold, the first such long-term lease in the airport's history.

The long-term lease not only reflects the city's confidence in Avflight as the airport's sole FBO, but also allows the company a path forward to significantly invest in the property. Beginning this summer, Avflight will construct a modern terminal measuring—at a minimum—3,000 square feet, along with a 15,000-square-foot heated hangar next to the existing terminal. The structures will greatly enhance the airport's amenities, services and security, making KDET an enticing option for transient visitors, airport tenants, charter operators and more.

Detroit's chief operating officer, Brad Dick, commented: "There is so much potential at the Coleman A. Young International Airport, and after several years of hard work, residents and visitors alike will begin to see signs of the enormous change to come as Avflight kicks off construction this summer. I look forward to a few years from now, when Detroit once again has a

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truly state-of-the-art airport within our city limits.”

Avflight vice president of operations, Joe Meszaros said: “We’re proud of our operation at KDET. We’ve always seen the value in preserving Coleman A. Young International Airport’s operations and have worked hard the last decade and a half to not only keep it operational, but also make it a successful enterprise—one that supports the city’s economy by serving as a gateway to Detroit business and as an employer of Detroit’s citizens.”

Avflight has provided essential services to the airport’s flight operations since moving onto the field in 2011. It has operated on the airfield since then under short-term leases, earning a reputation over the past 13 years for safely providing care to aircraft, pilots and passengers. Avflight also aids the city in providing maintenance for the airport’s infrastructure. In doing so, the company has and continues to greatly assist the city in preserving the operational integrity of the airport.

City-led enhancements to KDET

Other enhancements to the Coleman A. Young Municipal Airport include a recently completed $350,000 LED taxi lighting upgrade and $3.5 million runway renovation. Upcoming projects include a $1.2 million ramp pavement improvement project and $8.1 million engineered material arresting system.

Further city-planned initiatives include constructing a new control tower with the FAA beginning in 2026, an airport beautification initiative, upgraded snow removal equipment, and establishing educational and community organizations at the airport to promote and host educational opportunities for Detroit citizens. In time, proponents hope the airport revitalization project provides a pathway to move the Davis Aerospace Technical High School back to the airfield.

Helping Detroit’ economy soar

“We couldn’t be more excited to finally bring this project to fruition,” said Meszaros. “With its location near the city’s business district, and close to many automotive companies and suppliers, our new terminal will provide a shining beacon to welcome commerce to Detroit. It will be a facility citizens can be proud of, and one that will support many livelihoods as we look to double our staff with an increase in traffic, expand our service offerings and provide greater educational opportunities on the airfield. With the city and Avflight’s investments, we’re making significant strides to revitalize Coleman A. Young International Airport, carrying the city into a new generation of aviation.”

Avflight’s multimillion-dollar complex is a long-anticipated investment for the company. The FBO has successfully executed many such projects with long leaseholds throughout its 26-location network across North America and Europe, including newly constructed FBOs and hangars at Michigan’s Traverse City (KTVC), Grand Rapids (KGRR) and Willow Run (KYIP) airports.

"This transformative partnership with Avflight marks a pivotal moment in KDET's history,” said Jason Watt, director of Coleman A. Young Municipal Airport. "With a shared vision for innovation and excellence, we are poised to elevate KDET as a premier aviation hub, driving economic growth and opportunity for the City of Detroit and our region."

Serving the community

The Coleman A. Young International Airport has long been an important transportation hub for the region. It supports a wealth of public services for Detroit citizens, including Certified Aircraft

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Rescue Firefighting, Civil Air Patrol, and the Detroit Police Department's aviation unit. It also supports Detroit's economy by facilitating business travel and promoting tourism with tenants like MyFlight Tours Detroit.

Supporting cleaner technology

In addition, the airport is a hub for sustainable innovations. KDET is home to Airspace Experience Technologies (ASX), which develops next-generation eVTOL aircraft. The company has built more than 55 eVTOL aircraft for defense, emergency response and other sectors. ASX now sets its site on large-scale eVTOL aircraft to commercialize electric aircraft—which produce low to no emissions—for public use.

28 MAY 2024

ARTICLE LINK:
https://50skyshades.com/index.php/news/business-aviation/detroit-airport-set-to-soar-with-avflight-partnership-and-major-revitalization-efforts

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