

Businesses and Industries

Tennessee airports support businesses and industries across the state by providing essential services to support manufacturing operations. From automotive to aviation manufacturing, Tennessee's aviation system supports the booming industry that contributes hundreds of millions of economic impact to the state.

Automotive Manufacturing – Keeping Ground Transportation Moving from the Air

Some major automotive manufacturers call Tennessee home, such as General Motors (GM) and Nissan. The GM Spring Hill Factory is located approximately 20 miles from Maury County Airport (MRC) and 40 miles from Nashville International Airport (BNA). As of December 2020, about 3,200 workers staff the 2,000-acre facility, which has produced 4.5-million vehicles since 1996. Nissan operates two of its four US-based manufacturing facilities in Tennessee, including its first in Smyrna. The Smyrna facility opened in 1983 and is located within sight of the Smyrna Airport (MQY). Employing almost 7,000 people on an 884-acre property, Nissan reports that the Smyrna assembly plant has a production capacity of 640,000 vehicles per year. Both factories' proximity to Smyrna Airport and Nashville International Airport allows for ease of access in receiving and shipping assembly materials and finished products by air to locations across the United States and the globe. Air cargo operations support approximately 2,500 Tennessee automotive manufacturing jobs. Combined, these jobs earn \$191 million in wages per year.



Photo: [John Gress Media, Inc., shutterstock.com](#)

Aviation Manufacturing and Repair

Tennessee's airports support the aviation manufacturing and repair industry across the state. In 2019, aviation-related manufacturing and/or repair contributed over 900 jobs and \$113 million in wages, as well as \$455 million in total economic impact to Tennessee. Airports such as McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS) and Lovell Field (CHA) support aviation manufacturing and repair in Tennessee by providing space and facilities for these operations. Cirrus Aircraft builds aircraft for the civilian market and provides maintenance and training services in Tennessee. In 2015, Cirrus Aircraft built a large full-service campus at McGhee Tyson Airport, dubbed the Cirrus Aircraft Vision Center, to provide sales, repairs, and training in one central location. Cirrus Aircraft plans to make the McGhee Tyson Airport facility a central location in their business model. The Knoxville facility operates on McGhee Tyson Airport and employs nearly 200 people and contributes over \$16 million of direct economic impact to Tennessee.

Since 2015, West Star Aviation has been headquartered at Lovell Field. West Star Aviation employs 61 full-time Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-certified service personnel. The 60,000-square-foot facility at Lovell Field contributes over \$89 million to Tennessee's economy. West Star Aviation recently demonstrated their commitment to Lovell Field and the region by acquiring an additional 12,500 square feet of hangar space at the airport to expand their current repair and maintenance operations.



Photos: [Cirrus Aircraft](#)

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Cleveland, Tennessee - Fast-Growing Industry in the Volunteer State

Tennessee's newest airport, Cleveland Regional Jetport (RZR), calls Cleveland home. Cleveland is Tennessee's 14th largest city, hosts the state's fifth-largest industrial economy, and is home to 13 Fortune 500 companies. Cleveland Regional Jetport supports Cleveland's industrial and manufacturing economy by serving as a hub for general and business aviation users. A variety of the area's top manufacturers, such as Whirlpool (appliance manufacturer), Mars Chocolate of North America (candy producer), Duracell (battery and smart power system manufacturer), and Eaton Electrical (electrical control equipment manufacturer) use Cleveland Regional Jetport as part of their business operations. Airport facilities, such as its 6,200-foot-long runway and new state-of-the-art terminal, support the jet operations of the area's top manufacturers.



Photo: Kimley-Horn



Overview

Tennessee's airports support businesses and industries of all scales. Tennessee's airports provide much-needed space and facilities for aviation manufacturing and repair and serve as hubs for shipping and receiving manufacturing equipment, parts, and finished products. Manufacturers located near Tennessee's airports rely on aviation facilities to support and expand their businesses.