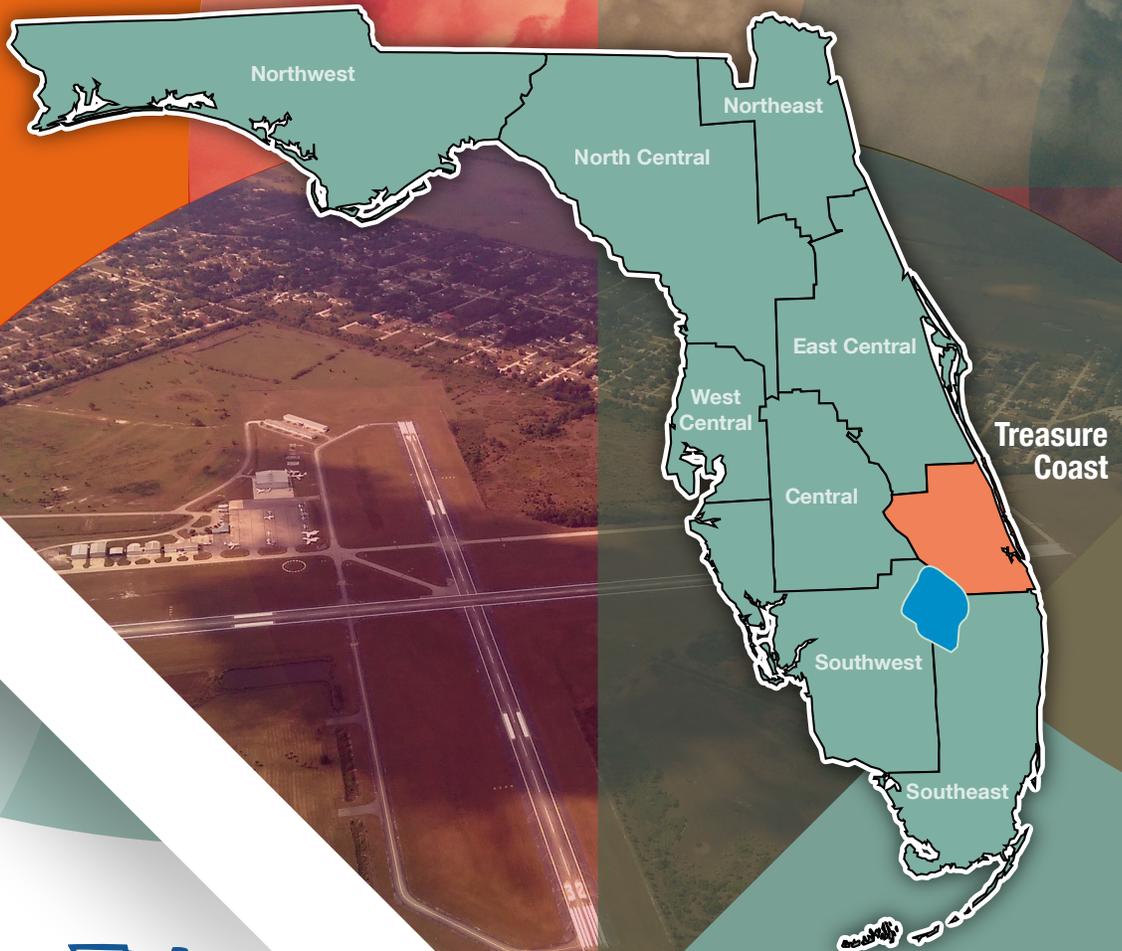




Florida Aviation System Plan 2035



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
AVIATION AND SPACEPORTS OFFICE

# Treasure Coast CFASPP Region

November 2017

## Florida Aviation System Plan 2035 Update

Florida offers the most dynamic and progressive aviation system in the United States (U.S.). The state's 128 public-use commercial service and general aviation airports supported nearly nine million aircraft operations in 2015, and that number is anticipated to continuously rise over the next 20 years. International air cargo is a multi-billion dollar industry with over \$64 billion in total air trade value in 2014. That same year, 2.7 million tons of domestic and international air cargo passed through Florida's airports. Air transportation serves as a backbone of the state's tourism economy and links rural communities to lifesaving amenities, such as emergency medical care and firefighting services.

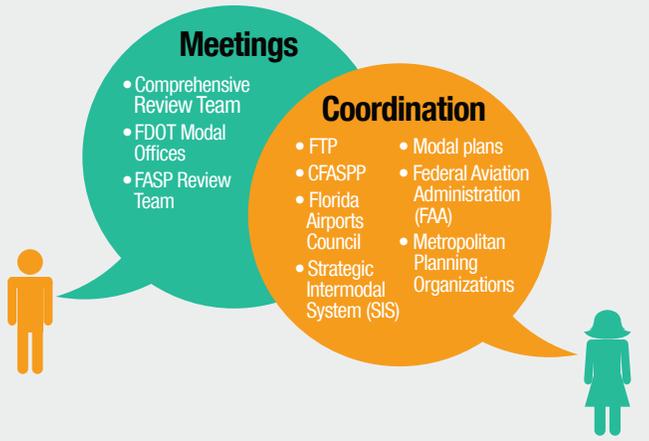
Aviation in Florida supports the economy, as well as the safety, resiliency, and security of the state's residents, visitors, and businesses. Over the past several years, a number of major shifts have impacted the aviation industry. Some, like airline consolidations, federal regulatory requirements, and fuel costs, impact airports across the U.S. Others, such as shifting demographics, state regulations, and pilot shortages, impact Florida's airports differently than other states.

Against a background of rapidly evolving industry trends, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Aviation and Spaceports Office (ASO), with the assistance of the Continuing Florida Aviation System Planning Process (CFASPP), updated the Florida Aviation System Plan (FASP) to ensure Florida's airports continue to provide a high level of service to all users. The development of the FASP is grounded on the framework of the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP), Florida's overarching transportation planning document.<sup>1</sup>

Known as the FASP 2035 Update, this long-term planning process is designed to comprehensively assess all public-use airports in Florida to understand the relationships between these facilities and their unique users. This integrated study

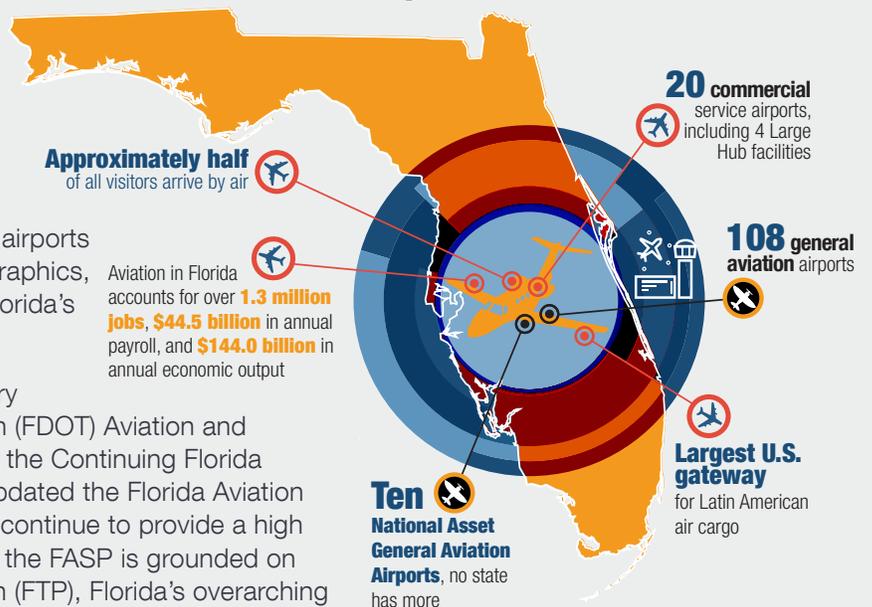
is designed to assess the ability of the existing system to achieve current and anticipated future demands. The FASP 2035 Update is a tool to help FDOT maintain an efficient, safe, and reliable system, evaluate future funding decisions by identifying the facilities and services that are needed to meet future demand, and effectively expand capacity in those areas where it is most needed and beneficial. The FASP 2035 Update offers policy and development recommendations for the continuing improvement of the state aviation system.

The FASP 2035 Update included analyses of the facilities, aviation activities, and future demands specific to the state's nine CFASPP regions and metropolitan areas (MAs). The process encompassed a variety of interrelated technical analyses and tasks to ensure the aviation system continues to effectively serve the needs of businesses, citizens, and visitors—both today and well into the future.



FDOT used a comprehensive public outreach and stakeholder engagement process to ensure the FASP 2035 Update was developed with the input of many audiences.

### Florida by the Numbers

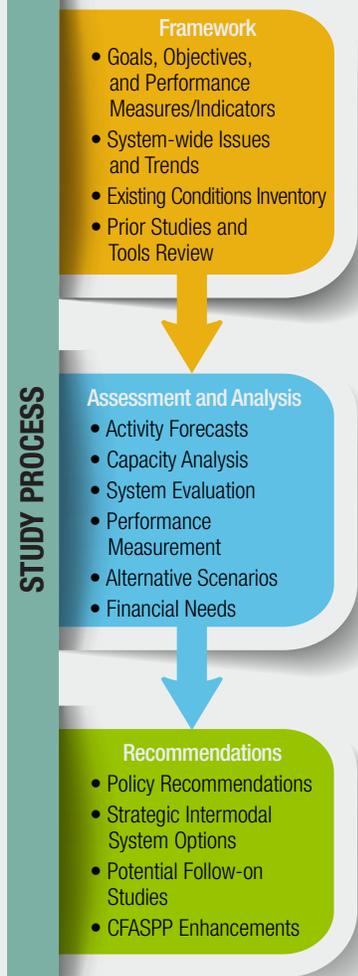


<sup>1</sup> The FTP can be accessed at [www.FloridaTransportationPlan.com](http://www.FloridaTransportationPlan.com).

## Treasure Coast Florida CFASPP Region



Source: FAA 5010 (extracted October 2016)



**Growing Dynamic Florida Active Prosperous Region**

**Treasure Coast AVIATION Serving its Community**

Members of the region say: **Regional Acclaim!**

The Treasure Coast CFASPP Region is encompassed within FDOT Districts One and Four. The Treasure Coast CFASPP Steering Committee is supported by the St. Lucie, Indian River, and Martin County Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and FDOT.

## Treasure Coast Florida CFASPP Region Background

CFASPP was established by the FAA and FDOT to ensure that the state continues to meet the evolving demands placed upon its aviation system.

As part of this process, nine centers of aviation activity were identified in the state. Each of these CFASPP regions or MAs contributes to the aviation system by supporting different types and levels of aviation activity, driven by a unique set of social, economic, and environmental conditions impacting the area.

For more information, please visit [www.cfaspp.com](http://www.cfaspp.com).

The Treasure Coast CFASPP Region is approximately 2,651 square miles encompassing Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie, and Okeechobee counties. The 2016 population was 635,300, the overwhelming majority of whom live in urban areas along the southeast coast and inland to Lake Okeechobee. The Treasure Coast is a booming area that can attribute much of its growth to the expanding retiree population moving northward along the Atlantic coast.

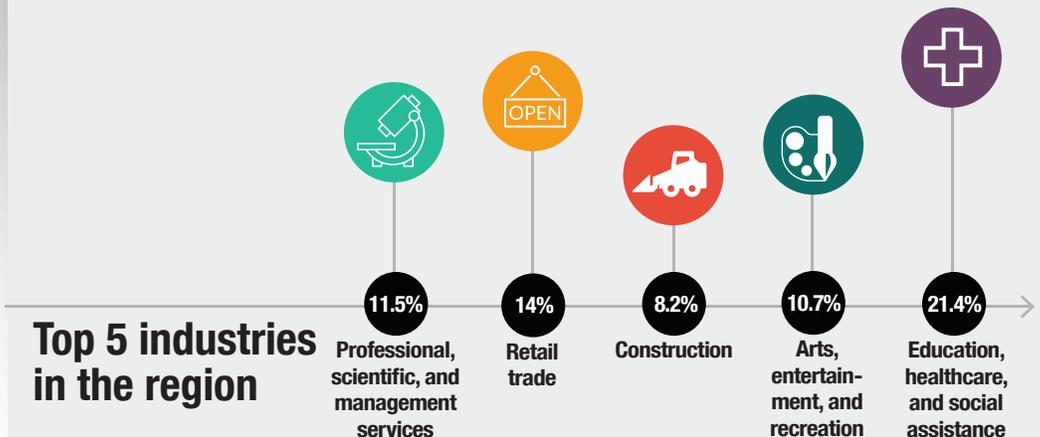
Vero Beach Regional Airport is the busiest airport in the Treasure Coast, and the facility has experienced extraordinary growth in recent years. In 2016, Elite Airways served an estimated 12,000 commercial passengers during its first full-year of operations. The carrier now offers flights to Newark, New Jersey and Asheville, North Carolina (as of May 2017). Vero Beach Regional Airport is currently moving forward with a plan to improve Transportation Security Administration-compliant infrastructure and services that will allow Elite Airways or other carriers to fly larger aircraft and further expand service levels. Additionally, Piper Aircraft has developed and manufactured aircraft at Vero Beach Regional Airport since 1957. Nine years later (in 1966), FlightSafety International established the FlightSafety Academy at the airport. Today, the academy trains future aviators from around the world at its 15-building complex adjacent to the flight line.

Treasure Coast International Airport, located between Vero Beach and West Palm Beach, hosts a Federal Inspection Station administered by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The airport's economic development potential was recently bolstered by a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Commerce Division of the Economic Development Administration. Combined with state and county dollars, this federal grant will help fund a 30,000-square-foot hangar with sufficient space for two Boeing 737 aircraft. Treasure Coast International Airport has also recently made significant investments to expand its customs processing capacity and improve its taxiway system.

Recognizing the growing demands in the Treasure Coast, other airport sponsors have also taken a proactive role in expanding and improving their airports' facilities and services as well. The Okeechobee County Airport is currently working on an airport master plan update to expand its hangar and business opportunities. The Sebastian Municipal Airport has undertaken numerous airside and landside airport improvements



*Everglades Restoration Tour at Okeechobee County Airport. Photo by the South Florida Water Management District.*



in recent years. Witham Field hosts two fixed-base operators who welcome general aviation users to the Treasure Coast. Indiantown Airport and New Hibiscus Airpark both offer well maintained grass landing strips.

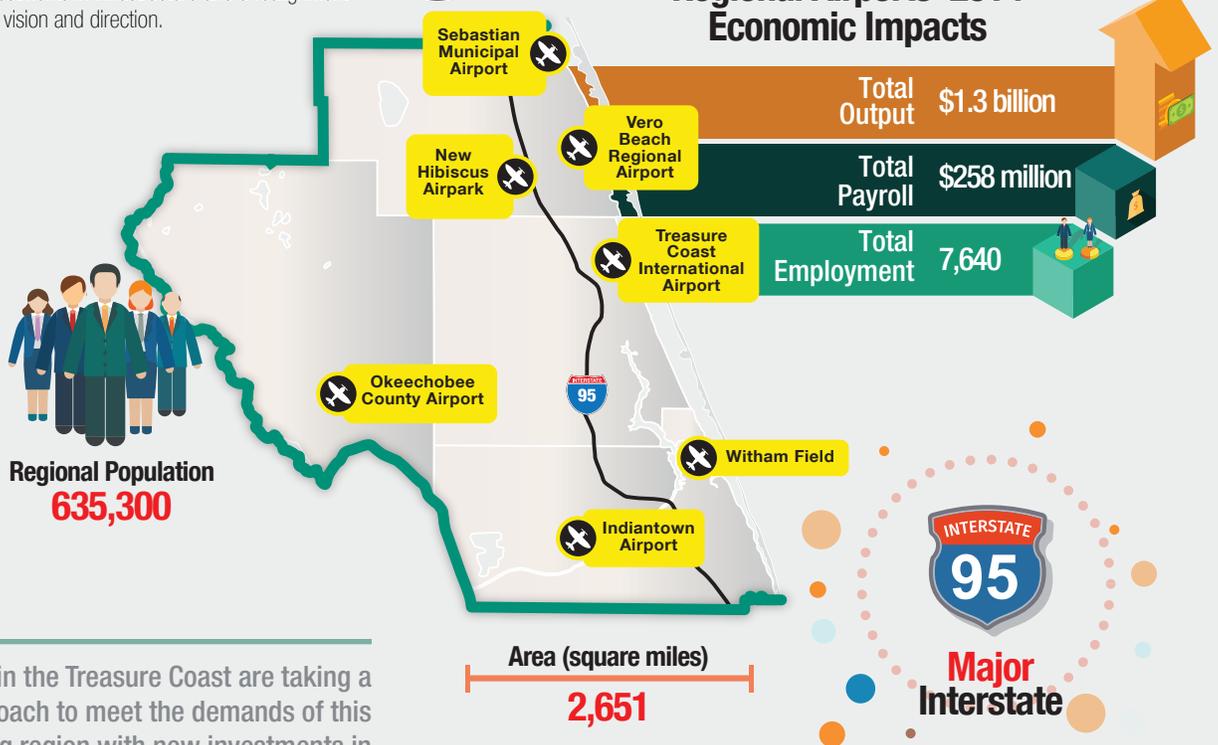
The Treasure Coast offers residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the warm climate and beaches that have earned Florida its enduring reputation as the Sunshine State. Port St. Lucie is home to the New York Mets Spring Training as part of the Grapefruit League. The Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) Village is also located in Port St. Lucie. The PGA Village is a world-class resort offering 54 holes of championship golf and a 35-acre PGA Learning Center.

Hutchinson Island is a 23-mile-long barrier island stretching along St. Lucie and Martin counties in the middle of the Treasure Coast. The island offers an abundance of wildlife, natural beaches, and a variety of outdoor activities. Hutchinson Island is also one of the most important nesting areas for loggerhead turtles in the world. Other popular beaches in the Treasure Coast—so named for the treasure of 11 Spanish ships lost during a 1715 hurricane—include Stuart, Jensen, Vero, and Bathtub beaches.

- **I-95** is the main interstate highway on the east coast of the U.S. running parallel to the Atlantic Ocean between Florida and Maine.
- The **Florida Turnpike Mainline** traverses the region as part of an innovative public/private partnership that serves over 1.8 million motorists in Florida each day.
- **Port of Fort Pierce** historically served trade partners in the Caribbean, Bahamas, Far East, and Europe. Today, St. Lucie County is seeking to revitalize the port through strategic investments in infrastructure and a realignment of the port's vision and direction.



### Regional Airports' 2014 Economic Impacts



Many airports in the Treasure Coast are taking a proactive approach to meet the demands of this rapidly growing region with new investments in infrastructure and service offerings.

## Intermodal Connectivity

An integrated multimodal transportation system:

- ◆ Improves the efficient movement of people and goods to and from airport facilities
- ◆ Attracts visitors by providing multiple options to travel between destinations
- ◆ Reduces vehicular traffic on the roadway network
- ◆ Decreases congestion throughout the surrounding area
- ◆ Facilitates the movement of goods between suppliers, manufacturers, and consumers

Airports provide access to the national air transportation system, but also require links to other modes of transportation to facilitate the movement of people and goods to and from the airport. The linkages between airports and highway, passenger rail, transit, rental car, and other modes of travel are essential aspects of an airport system’s accessibility.

While roadways provide access to all airports, intermodal connectivity is particularly important at those facilities that have been deemed essential for statewide mobility, economic growth, and development. In Florida, the airports that play a unique role in the transportation system are designated as Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facilities.

*Twenty of Florida’s 128 airports are SIS or Emerging SIS facilities, including 18 commercial service and two general aviation reliever airports.* Commercial service airports require more connections to facilitate access to airline service, while the general aviation reliever airports typically serve a high level of demand in metropolitan areas.

The FASP 2035 Update evaluated all airports’ level of connectivity with a particular emphasis on the SIS facilities’ integration with other key modes of transportation.

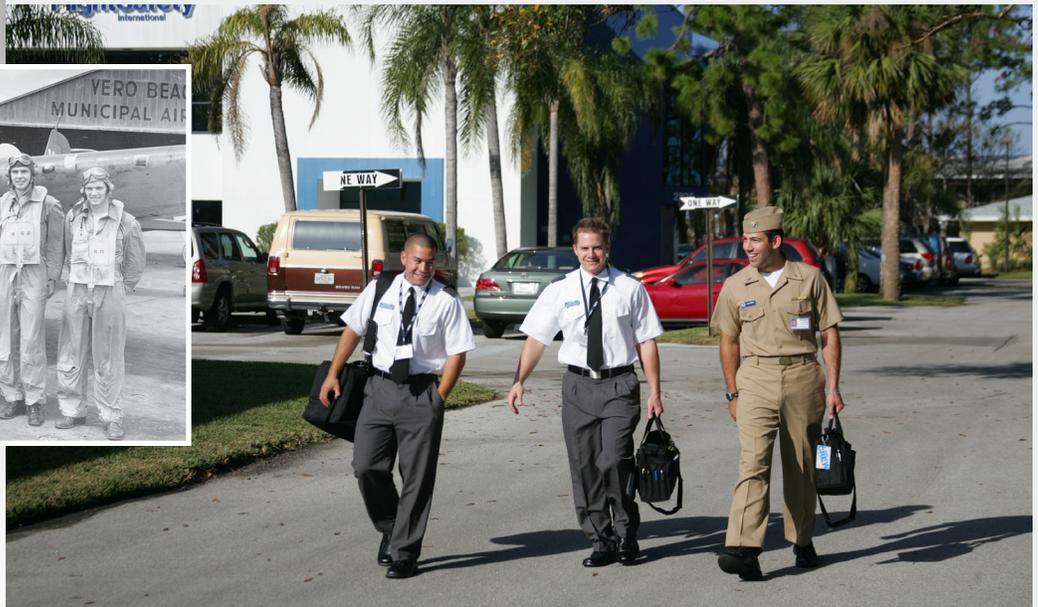
### Intermodal Services at Florida’s 20 SIS Airports



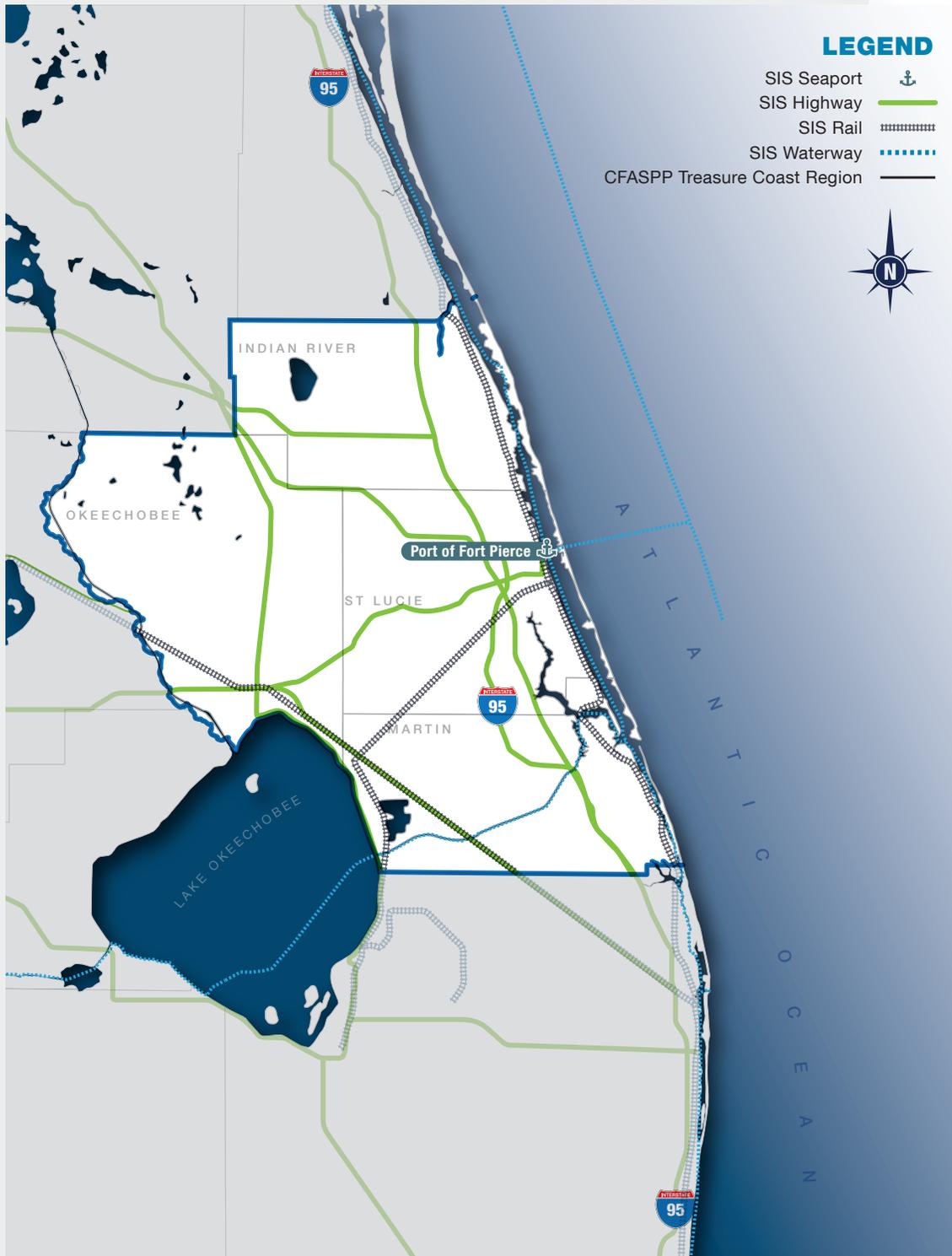
*FlightSafety Academy at Vero Beach Regional Airport*



*Vero Beach Regional Airport once served as the Naval Air Station Vero Beach, a training base for airmen during World War II.*



## Regional SIS Facilities



While the Treasure Coast does not host any SIS airports, such facilities are available to travelers via I-95, a major north/south SIS highway corridor that traverses the length of the region. Southbound I-95 provides access to one of the most concentrated areas of aviation activities in the state in the Southeast CFASPP MA. Two additional SIS airports are available via I-95 to the north within the East Central CFASPP MA.

## System Goals and Performance

The FASP 2035 Update validated a series of seven goals established during previous FASP updates aimed at ensuring Florida's airports continue to meet the evolving needs of FDOT, stakeholders, and the aviation public. Based on these goals, a comprehensive set of FASP performance measures and performance indicators was developed to assess progress on system-wide objectives developed in association with each goal.

This analysis is used to quantify the ability of the existing system to achieve FASP goals and provides important insight to guide the development of system recommendations and, ultimately, funding and other planning decisions.

FDOT identified 13 performance measures and 31 performance indicators to evaluate the system's performance. A representative sample is provided.

Over 70 percent of airports in the Treasure Coast have emergency airfield lighting, a critical system for continued operations when local power is unavailable.

### FASP 2035 Goals

1. Provide safe, efficient, secure, and convenient service to Florida's citizens, businesses, and visitors. 
2. Contribute to operational efficiency, economic growth, and competitiveness while remaining sensitive to Florida's natural environment. 
3. Support and enhance the national position of leadership and prominence held by Florida's aviation industry. 
4. Protect airspace and promote compatible land uses around airports. 
5. Foster technological innovation and support the implementation of new technologies. 
6. Promote support for aviation from business, government, and the public. 
7. Foster Florida's reputation as a military- and aerospace- friendly state. 

### Performance Measures

Performance measures quantitatively evaluate specific aspects of system performance that can be improved through funding or project implementation. Performance measures are the metrics that FDOT can influence through funding, planning efforts, or policies and procedures.

#### → Electronic Airport Layout Plans (eALP)

To support NextGen implementation, the FAA is shifting its standards toward eALPs instead of the traditional static-map format. eALPs use a Geographic Information System (GIS) to allow airports and the FAA to collect and store aeronautical data, develop satellite-based approach procedures, and better manage the National Airspace System (NAS).

#### → Runway Hot Spots

A runway hot spot is a safety-related problem area or intersection at an airport. Most often, a hot spot is a complex intersection between two taxiways or a taxiway and runway. The issues resulting from these confusing areas may be compounded by miscommunication between an air traffic controller and a pilot, which may cause an aircraft separation standard to be compromised.

#### → Wildlife Site Visits, Assessments, and/or Management Plans

Wildlife such as birds and deer in proximity to an airfield threaten the safe and efficient operation of airfield users. Airports can perform wildlife hazard site visits, conduct wildlife hazard assessments, and/or prepare management plans to mitigate against these hazards.

## Performance Indicators

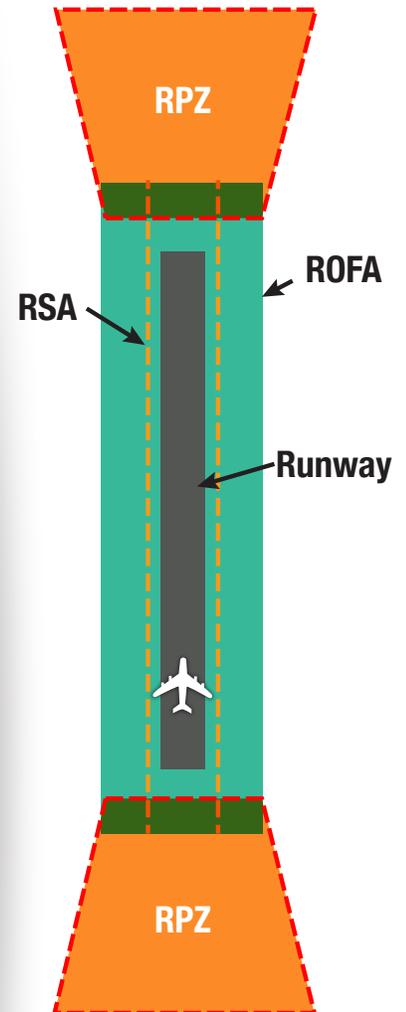
Performance indicators are generally used as a reporting mechanism to gather data on those aspects of system performance that cannot be directly impacted by FDOT action.

### → Emergency Airfield Lighting

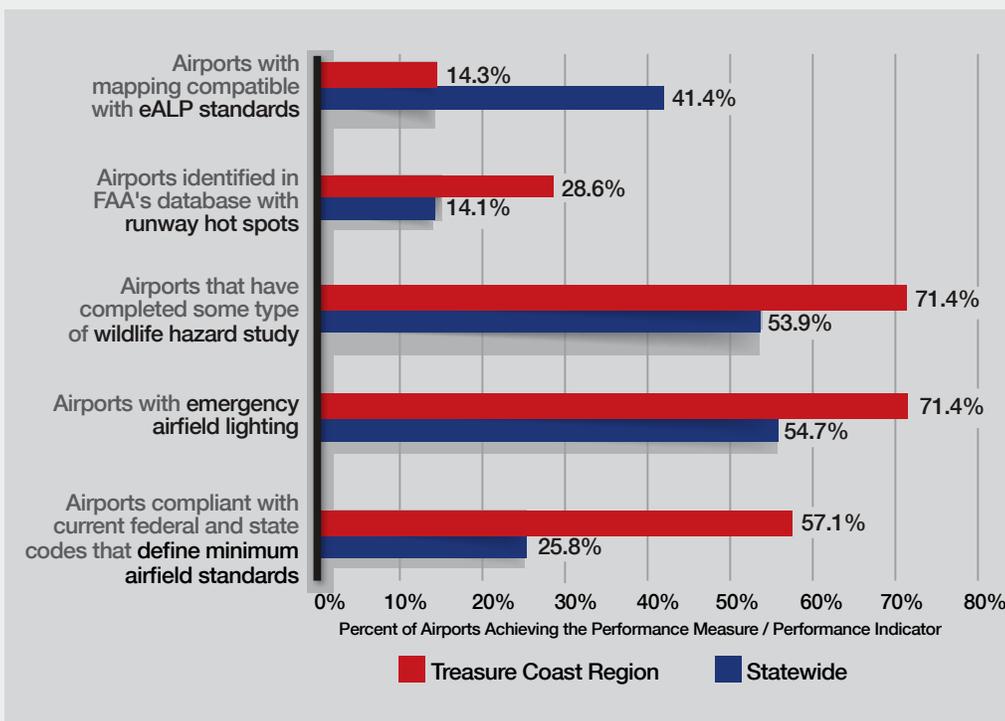
The ability for an airport to remain operational through natural and man-made disasters is critical for the movement of people, goods, and equipment to ensure that the needs of the affected communities are met. Emergency airfield lighting provides for continued operations during nighttime hours or low-visibility conditions when local power is unavailable.

### → Runway Safety Areas (RSA)

According to the FAA, RSAs are “a defined surface surrounding the runway prepared or suitable for reducing the risk of damage to airplanes in the event of an undershoot, overshoot, or excursion from the runway.”



## Measures / Indicators



The FAA defines several key safety areas on and adjacent to runways. The RSA is a rectangular box surrounding the runway based on the runway design code. The runway object free area (ROFA) is an area centered on the runway that must be free of all objects except those provided for air navigation or aircraft maneuvering purposes. The runway protection zone (RPZ) is a trapezoid-shaped area off the end of the runway designed to protect people and property on the ground if the aircraft lands or crashes off the runway end.

## Aviation Drivers

Aviation drivers are the structural conditions and market opportunities that influence the demand for aviation facilities and services within a particular area. These external conditions shape the type and volume of activity that occurs and can significantly impact the ability of specific markets and populations to access the multiple benefits of aviation.

The Treasure Coast's rapidly growing population and economic diversification has led to a swift rise in the level of service offered by the region's commercial service and general aviation airports. The region's thriving tourism industry is another key driver of aviation activity as domestic and international travelers seek the renowned golf, beaches, and sun found along Florida's Atlantic coast.

### Aviation Services

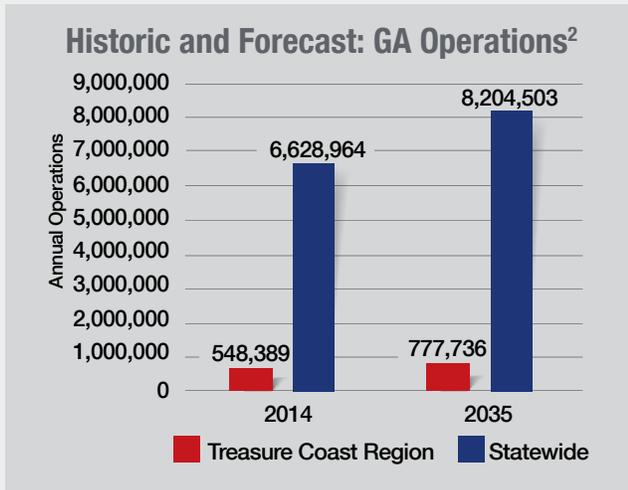


These and other key factors have resulted in a statewide system of airports capable of supporting the key aviation activities that businesses, Florida citizens, and visitors rely upon.

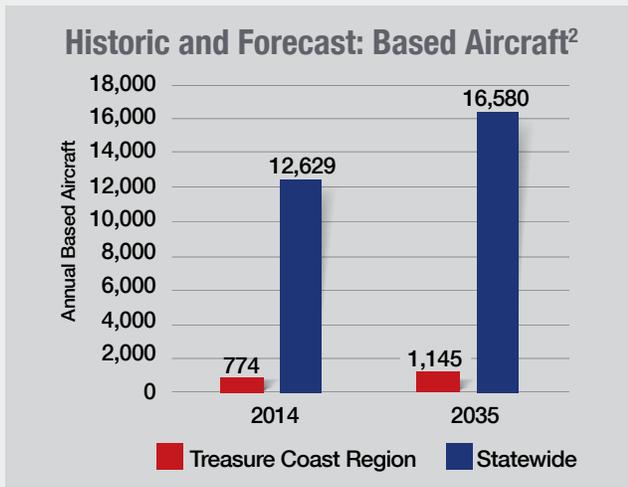
- **Tourism:** In 2016, a record-setting 112.8 million visitors traveled to Florida, showing that tourism remains one of the state's most important industries. Travelers are drawn by ease of travel and the continued expansion of air service into major airports. Nearly 50 percent of Florida's out-of-state visitors arrive by air.
- **Air Cargo:** Florida is the major hub for international trade between the U.S., Latin America, and the Caribbean and serves as an important connection for domestic goods. In total, over 40 percent of the nation's international cargo passes through the state.
- **Intercontinental Service:** Florida welcomes travelers from nearly 200 different countries each year, and 20 percent of all international travelers in the U.S. visit Florida. The state is a key gateway between the U.S. and abroad, and airlines continue to expand commercial service to a growing number of international destinations.
- **Flight Training:** Florida is the leading provider of flight instruction in the U.S., with training offered at over 80 airports. In 2014, aviation education was estimated to contribute \$980 million to Florida's annual economic output. Florida ranks first nationally in the following pilot certificates: student, sport, airline transport, and flight instructor.
- **Corporate/Business Aviation:** Corporate/business aviation offers companies significant time savings and scheduling capabilities when compared to scheduled commercial service, while improving security, safety, productivity, and employee satisfaction. The National Business Aircraft Association's Business Aviation Fact Book 2014 reports that business aviation annually contributes \$150 billion to U.S. economic output nationwide.
- **Sport Activity:** Gliders, powered parachutes, skydiving, certain light fixed-wing aircraft, and other types of sport aircraft offer pilots some of the easiest, most cost-effective, and accessible ways to fly.

# Regional Forecasts

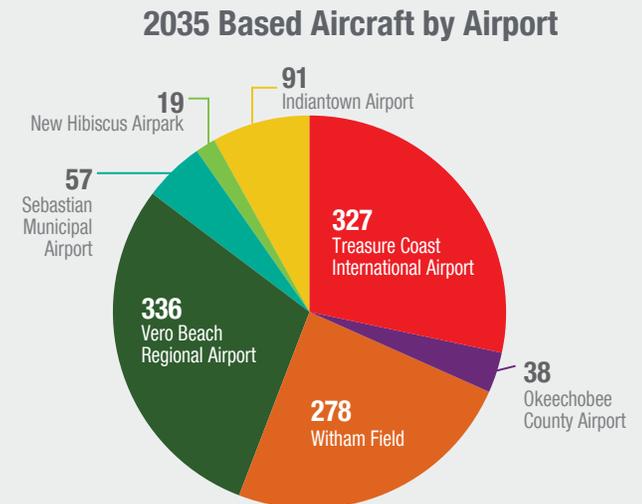
Aviation forecasts describe the anticipated levels of aviation demand over the planning horizon based on numerous factors, including historical activity, population trends, state and FAA activity forecasts, and regional aviation drivers.<sup>1</sup> This forecasting process provides a meaningful framework to guide development to meet future system needs, evaluate the system's capacity to accommodate long-term aviation demand, and plan for future airside and landside facilities.



General aviation (GA) operations in the Treasure Coast Region are projected to increase at an annual growth rate of 1.99 percent over the forecast horizon to exceed the statewide annual growth rate of 1.13 percent over this same time period.



Based aircraft in the Treasure Coast Region are projected to increase at an annual growth rate of 2.28 percent over the forecast horizon to significantly exceed the statewide annual growth rate of 1.49 percent over this same time period.



<sup>1</sup> Note: Operations forecasts only reflect GA activity. Commercial operations were excluded from this evaluation, as drivers of commercial activity at airports can vary significantly, often due to factors that are beyond an airport's control. Examples include airline consolidation, route restructuring, and fleet modification.

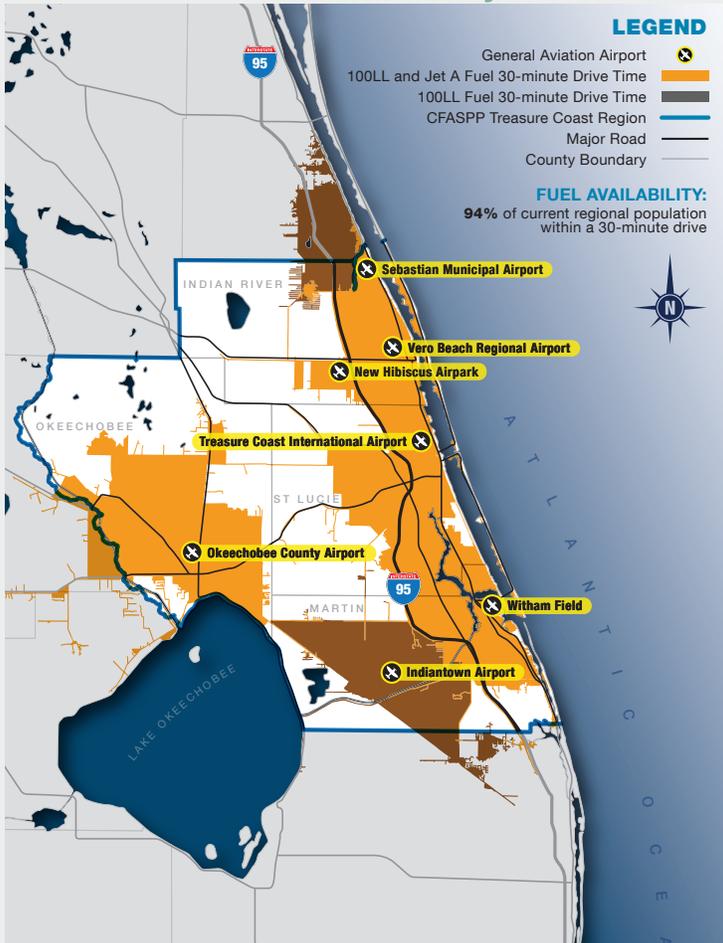
<sup>2</sup> 2014 was used as the base year in the FASP because it was the last full year of data available when the analysis was initiated in 2015. Sources: FAA Terminal Area Forecast and 5010 Airport Master Records.

### Accessibility Analysis

A functional airport system that meets the state’s safety, economic, and accessibility objectives must be accessible from the ground as people travel to airports, as well as from the air for pilots seeking particular airport characteristics. The FASP Update 2035 conducted an analysis to determine the percent of Florida’s population that can access different types of airports within a 30-minute drive time or within 30 actual miles by air to demonstrate how well Florida’s residents are served by the state aviation system. This analysis shows there is no need for additional airports in Florida, rather that the existing system should be leveraged.

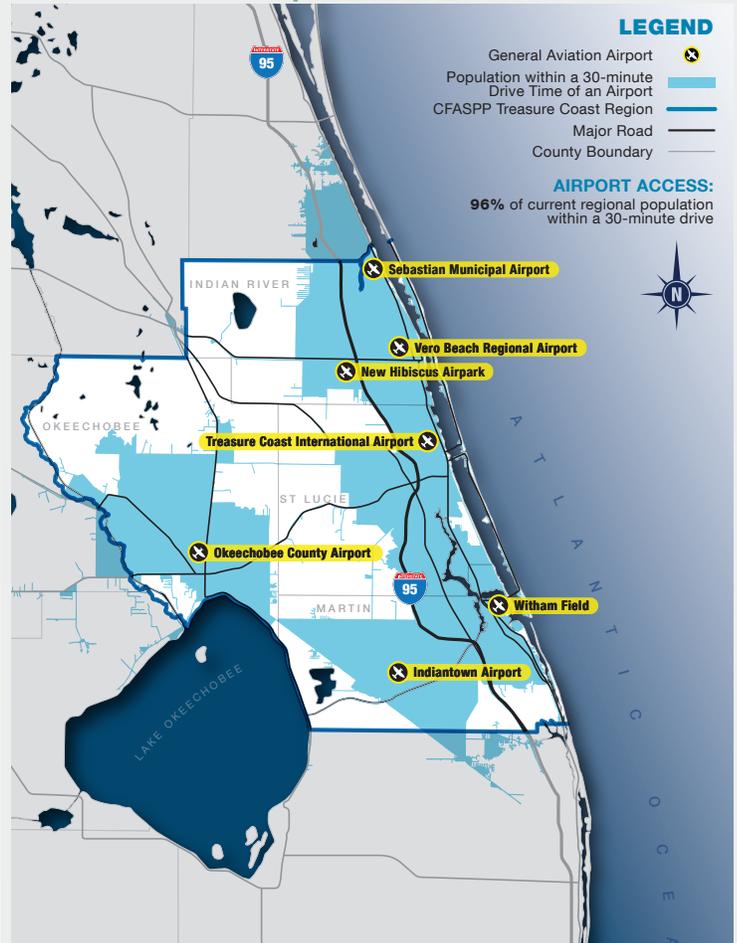
The FAA uses a 30-minute criterion to determine the airports that are eligible for inclusion in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems. More information is available at [www.faa.gov/airports/planning\\_capacity/npias](http://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/npias). This same threshold is often used by businesses that operate general aviation aircraft as a decision-making factor when seeking locations to build or relocate their facilities.

#### Fuel Availability



Jet A fuel is used in turbine engines primarily flown by commercial service airlines and many business-class aircraft, while 100LL is used in piston engines commonly flown by general aviation operators. The type and availability of fuel drives the aircraft that use and activities that can occur at an airport.

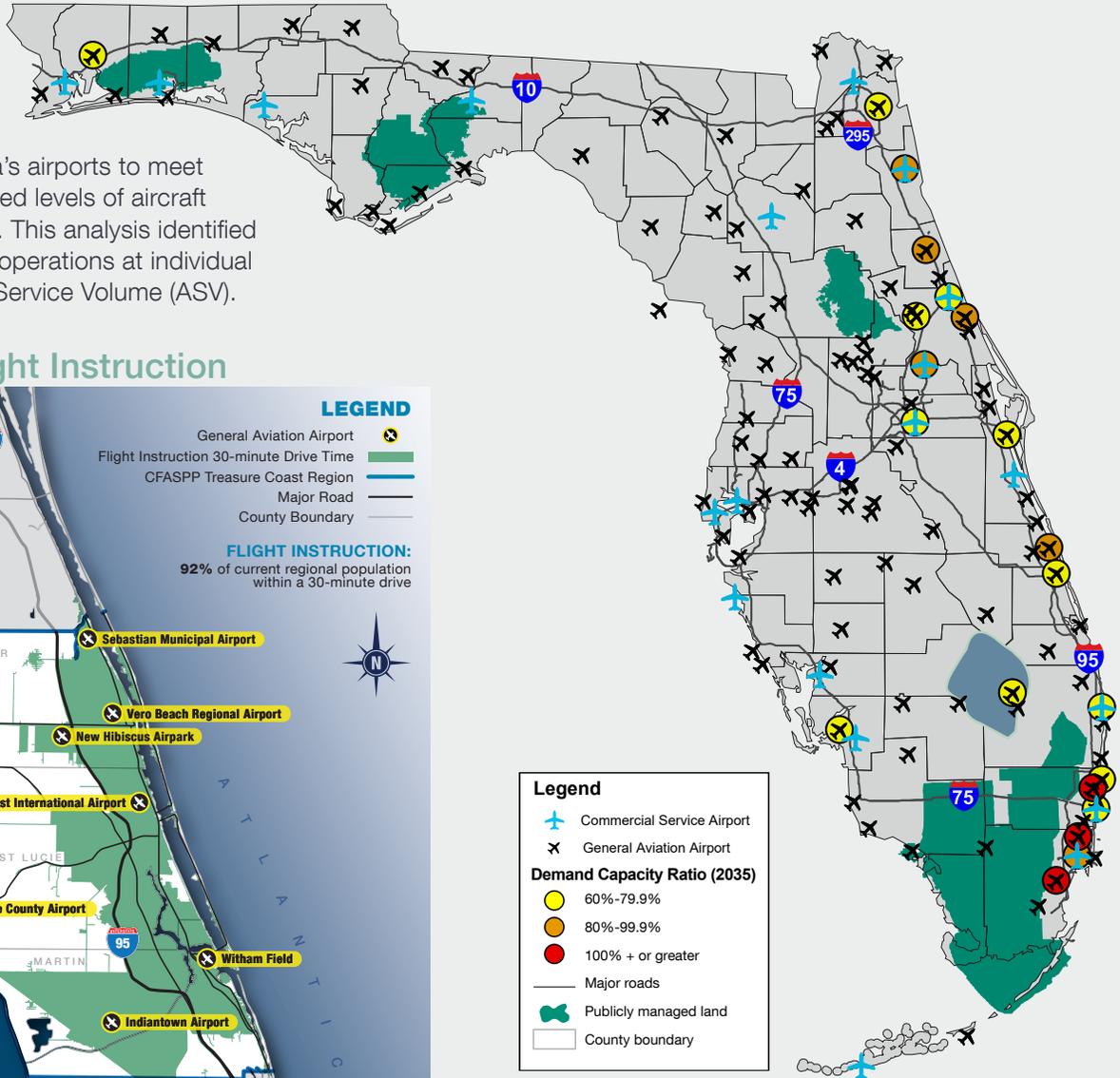
#### Airport Access



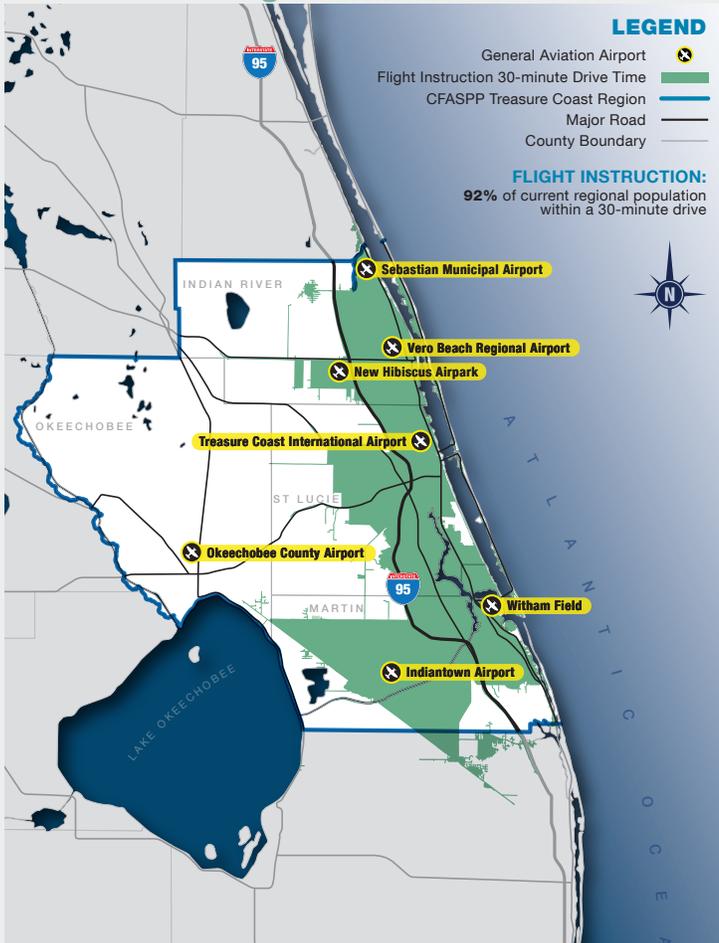
In addition to providing air transportation for people and goods, airports provide quality-of-life benefits such as access to specialized or emergency medical care, law enforcement, and aerial firefighting services. Airport access is particularly important for rural areas without the ability to obtain these and other services in their local communities.

# Capacity Analysis

As part of the regional aviation forecasting effort, the FASP 2035 Update assessed the ability of Florida's airports to meet current and projected levels of aircraft operations in 2035. This analysis identified the ratio of aircraft operations at individual airports to Annual Service Volume (ASV).



## Flight Instruction



*The international aviation community is currently facing a severe pilot shortage, an issue that is anticipated to reach critical levels over the planning horizon. Access to quality flight instruction ensures the next generation of aviators can safely navigate our skies.*

**Legend**

- Commercial Service Airport
- General Aviation Airport

**Demand Capacity Ratio (2035)**

- 60%-79.9%
- 80%-99.9%
- 100% + or greater

- Major roads
- Publicly managed land
- County boundary

The capacity evaluation specifically assessed each airport's ASV, an indicator of relative operating airfield capacity that accounts for differences in various operating conditions that would be encountered over a year's time. Some examples of these conditions include runway use, airfield configuration, aircraft mix, and weather conditions.

The FAA recommends planning for capacity improvements when the ratio of aircraft operations to ASV reaches 60 percent, and implementation of these improvements should occur when this ratio reaches 80 percent.

# Statewide Recommendations

## Goal 1



### Provide safe, efficient, secure, and convenient service to Florida’s citizens, businesses, and visitors.

- Preserve existing infrastructure or replace when necessary.
- Conduct a more detailed capacity study, looking specifically in FDOT Districts Four, Five, and Six.
- Monitor Future Airport Capacity Task (FACT) studies as they are developed.
- Prioritize funding for projects that address state licensing standards per Rule 14-60, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).
- Compile Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) ownership data.
- Promote state funding for projects that address state and federal standards for protection and compatibility, including compatible land uses within RPZs.
- Coordinate with state and local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) on airport emergency power needs.
- Develop a roadmap for addressing airport wildlife hazards at a statewide level for non-Part 139 airports.
- Track the implementation of projects to correct the identified taxiway deficiencies.
- Develop facility, infrastructure, and service guidelines for lower activity general aviation airports.
- Update the FDOT General Aviation Security Assessments.

## Goal 2



### Contribute to operational efficiency, economic growth, and competitiveness while remaining sensitive to Florida’s natural environment.

- Coordinate with local, regional, and state business and tourism partners to support and encourage economic growth; communicate the benefits of the aviation industry; and foster social responsibility.
- Develop a study to identify business suitability and leverage opportunities at airports, including commercial air service enhancements.
- Coordinate with Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other modal partners to support and improve intermodal connectivity.
- Continue to maintain a database of current master plans and Airport Layout Plans (ALPs) and develop a database to track sustainability and business plans on file.
- Support efforts related to Florida’s aviation education, flight training, and workforce development.
- Recommend modifications to existing SIS airport criteria to better leverage the economic competitiveness and strategic nature of Florida’s airports.
- Continue to update and communicate the FDOT *Airport Sustainability Guidebook*.

**Support and enhance the national position of leadership and prominence held by Florida’s aviation industry.**

- Monitor and promote the return on investment (ROI) of state funds invested in Florida’s airports.
- Continue to update the *Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study* in conjunction with the FASP.

**Goal 3**



**Protect airspace and promote compatible land uses around public airports.**

- Provide continuous training on the latest requirements of Chapter 333, Florida Statutes (F.S.), Airport Zoning.
- Provide resource materials for developing and implementing zoning ordinances, land use compatibility, and airport protection.
- Develop a web-based statewide land use compatibility tool that includes unmanned aircraft systems information.
- Develop a statewide database of eALP files provided by airports during the master planning process.

**Goal 4**



**Foster technological innovation and support implementation of new technologies.**

- Develop an implementation plan for maximizing NextGen approach procedures at Florida airports.
- Continue to work with and support partners in the space industry to advance NextGen technologies.
- Monitor technological advances that could impact airport development needs.

**Goal 5**



**Promote support for aviation from business, government, and the public.**

- Leverage Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) information to develop Florida-specific resources and tools to gain support from businesses, public, and government representatives.
- Continue to fund and provide statewide Pavement Condition Index (PCI) inspections and training.
- Improve Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) management and coordination to better manage financial resources for the Joint Automated Capital Improvement Program (JACIP).

**Goal 6**



**Foster Florida’s reputation as a military- and aerospace- friendly state.**

- Ensure that military personnel are invited and encouraged to participate in planning processes, such as the *Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study*, FASP, CFASPP planning efforts, and airport master plans.
- Coordinate and support the efforts of the U.S. military in Florida through FDOT/EOC coordination.

**Goal 7**



# FLORIDA AVIATION SYSTEM PLAN 2035



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AVIATION AND SPACEPORTS OFFICE  
[www.fdot.gov/aviation](http://www.fdot.gov/aviation)

