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2005 PROFILE

GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



**OVER 2 MILLION** PASSENGERS  
**AND 79 MILLION POUNDS OF** CARGO  
PASSED THROUGH THE GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
**DURING 2004.**

And included in those numbers, it's highly likely there were several people and numerous items that figure prominently in your life. They could be out-of-town family members who you stay close to through regular visits. Entertainers or exhibits making tour stops in West Michigan. Your company's products on their way to world markets. Or just some delicacy you enjoy at a favorite eatery. That's how the Airport (GRR) — a facility that sits on over five square miles of real estate — actually makes West Michigan bigger. Better connected. More cosmopolitan. And more economically vibrant. From its commerce to its culture to its diverse community, our region manages to continue taking giant strides. And very often that progress comes by way of GRR.



# DEAR FRIENDS

## OF THE GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT:

Nowadays, practically everyone is connected to just about everyone else. These links add to our daily lives in many important ways. People are able to move around more without becoming “distant.” Businesses benefit from ever-expanding markets. We can easily experience and learn to appreciate other cultures. Yes, it has become a small world after all.

For folks across West Michigan, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR) is increasingly the place where these connections are made. As stewards of this vital hub, our responsibility is to make these comings and goings even more convenient, efficient and trouble free. We’ve done a lot of things in the past year to make this happen and we continue to work on many others that will take us through 2005 and beyond. The purpose of this Profile is to share these highlights with you, so you can take full advantage of this Airport and know that all of us at GRR are committed to serving you.

One of the Airport’s top enhancements of 2004 took place on the ground. We completed a major landscaping project, transforming the main Airport drive into an ecological sampling of West Michigan — as well as a beautiful gateway for the region. We also put the design work for a future parking ramp back in gear. Embraced new daily nonstop service from Grand Rapids to the City of Brotherly Love (Philadelphia). Set new records for passenger and cargo volumes through GRR. And much more.

The year ahead promises to be just as eventful as we start to make changes directed by the Airport’s Master Plan Update, which is hot off the press. The Master Plan foresees how GRR will accommodate increased demand through the year 2023. That’s quite a vision, considering both passenger traffic and cargo are expected to double during that time. Meanwhile, we’re committed to keeping our fiscal feet on the ground. Because while the Airport contributes richly to West Michigan’s way of life, it doesn’t cost taxpayers one dime. Indeed, all of our day-to-day operations and ongoing capital development are paid for with Airport-generated revenue.

Thank you for your tremendous support of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. Your patronage of GRR is truly what makes it fly, and we know that in many respects it works the other way too. That’s why we’re constantly striving to make GRR the very best it can be — for all of West Michigan.

Sincerely,



JOHN VAN LAAR, CHAIRMAN  
Kent County Aeronautics Board



JAMES A. KOSLOSKY, A.A.E., DIRECTOR  
Kent County Department of Aeronautics

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**THE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS FLYING THROUGH GRR CLIMBED TO AN ALL-TIME HIGH IN 2004.**

For the first time ever, more than two million passengers arrived at or departed from GRR on commercial flights in a single calendar year. The ceremonial two millionth passenger, Tari Wright of Plainwell, Michigan, was recognized at the Airport on December 15 with a special celebration where she received several prizes, including a \$500 flight voucher and other travel-related gifts. Of course, air traffic kept on flowing through GRR during the busy holiday season. And by the close of business on New Year's Eve, a grand total of 2,150,125 travelers had passed through our gates in 2004.

**THE AMOUNT OF AIR CARGO SHIPPED THROUGH GRR SET A NEW RECORD IN 2004, WEIGHING IN AT 79,536,540 POUNDS FOR THE YEAR.**

This figure crushes the previous annual record, set in 1997, by nearly three million pounds. The bulk of all this heavy lifting is done by the cargo carriers that transport everything from heavy equipment parts and pallets of tulip bulbs to one-ounce business documents and precious letters to overseas soldiers. In fact, the U.S. Mail makes up a significant portion of shipments in and out of the Airport. And major carriers as well as regional airlines lend a hand to help carry the load. It's a good thing, since the 2004 cargo record surpassed the 2003 total by 7.8% and tipped the scales at nearly 109 tons per day.



US AIRWAYS' ADDITION OF NEW NONSTOP SERVICE TO PHILADELPHIA BRINGS **THE NUMBER OF NONSTOP DESTINATIONS TO 14.**

In addition, the 10 carriers serving the Airport offer single-connection service every day to several hundred destinations across the country and around the world, with some 140 departures and arrivals daily at GRR. All of which simply means that you can get to virtually anywhere on Earth (that has an airport) in relatively short order from here — and that it's just as easy for people from around the globe to get to West Michigan.

**GENERAL AVIATION** AT GRR CONTINUED ITS STEADY CLIMB IN 2004 AND LOOKS TO KEEP **FLYING HIGH IN 2005** AND BEYOND.

This important sector includes all non-commercial and non-military flights in and out of the Airport — everything from the dozens of privately owned business jets with hangars here; to out-of-town aircraft using the services of fixed base operators Northern Air and Rapid Air; to emergency runs by West Michigan's premier flying emergency room, better known as Aero Med. The Airport pays a great deal of attention to all the GA operators, trying to see to it that their needs are well met and their issues quickly addressed. Which helps explain why GA at GRR in 2004 was up over 10% compared to the year before, with more than 55,000 GA flights departing or arriving last year.





THE AIRPORT SAID **THANKS TO THOUSANDS** OF TRAVELERS IN 2004 WITH OUR SECOND PASSENGER APPRECIATION DAYS.

And once again, patrons were appreciated with more than kind words. Beginning April 1 — the opening day of the busiest week of the year at GRR — the Airport's Grand Hall was transformed into a tropical oasis of food and fun. Everyone traveling through the Airport during the next three days was offered free snacks and goodies including beach balls and coloring books, as well as the chance to enter a paper-airplane-flying contest and a prize drawing for free airline vouchers. The booth was staffed by more than 20 volunteers from the Department of Aeronautics (who we'd also like to thank). Finally, we want to tip our cap to Northwest Airlines, Comair/Delta Connection, U.S. Customs & Border Protection and HMSHost (the Airport's food and beverage provider), all of whom pitched in with generous donations and support for this event.

DESIGN WORK FOR A **PARKING RAMP** AT GRR IS **MOVING FORWARD** AGAIN.

Proposals to build a multilevel parking ramp at GRR date back more than five years, but security concerns raised by 9/11 put the brakes on the project. Today, the ramp is back in gear, driven by two prime motivators: the need for substantially more parking at GRR in the near future, and a desire to offer covered parking as an additional customer amenity. Designs for an approximately 3,000-space structure will be presented to the Kent County Aeronautics Board in 2005, with construction slated for 2006-07 if the plan is approved.

THE AIRPORT REALLY **PERKED UP CONCESSIONS** WITH THE ADDITION OF STARBUCKS® COFFEE IN SPRING 2004.

The new Starbucks counter is located in the Grand Hall's food court and is open daily from 4:30 a.m. till 8:00 p.m. Just follow your nose, or look for the counter with a bunch of very wide-eyed people. "Coffee is the hottest-selling concession at the Airport," says HMSHost general manager Wayne Cole. "And we expect java's supremacy to grow further thanks to Starbucks' extremely popular (and highly aromatic) brews." The Starbucks at GRR offers its entire beverage menu including espresso drinks, brewed coffee and Frappucino® frozen drinks, along with a wide assortment of signature baked goods and souvenir merchandise. Stop in on the way to your next flight.

**NEW LANDSCAPING** ALONG THE AIRPORT'S MAIN DRIVE ENSURES YOUR TRIP WILL BE **SCENIC** EVEN BEFORE YOU EXIT THE CAR.

Completed in fall 2004, the design was created by nationally renowned landscape architecture firm JJR of Ann Arbor, based on extensive input from a citizen steering committee. Highlights of the project include: hundreds of new plantings of native trees, flowers, shrubs and grasses to recreate West Michigan's fields, forests and dunes; roadway improvements including ingress/egress lanes and traffic-calming pavers; wave-like retaining walls and earth sculpting in the boulevard's median that mimic our area's geography and screen out parking areas; new road signs and lighting to coordinate with the overall design; several entranceway and exit enhancements ranging from a restyled Airport entrance sign, to new cherry trees, begonia and tulip beds, to a new Airport exit sign welcoming travelers to "Michigan's West Coast."



**THE AIRPORT IS STEPPING UP ITS AIR SERVICE MARKETING IN 2005, WORKING TO RETAIN AND ENHANCE PASSENGER SERVICE — TO AND FROM ALL THE RIGHT PLACES.**

Our goal is to balance the interests of air travelers and airlines so as many people as possible can get to where they want to go, and the airlines can be profitable in the process. Building relationships, with both the airlines that serve us now as well as ones that might in the future, is the straightest path to securing the right routes with the right aircraft at the right fares. That's why GRR has increased its attention and funding for this crucial function. It's also why we're partnering with organizations such as The Right Place, Inc., area chambers of commerce, the Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention and Visitors Bureau and local travel agencies to assemble data, build community support and put together cases for expanded airline service. All of this takes a lot of work and results don't come overnight. But we know we're headed in the right direction, with the right resources, and that we can get there from here.

**THERE'S 75% MORE TO LOVE FOR FANS OF THE AIRPORT'S EXPRESS SHUTTLE PARKING LOT.**

Based on gate counts and all the positive comment cards we receive, we know a lot of folks have enjoyed this discounted, long-term parking option since it opened in 2002 on the north side of Oostema Boulevard, just inside the Airport entrance. In fact, during peak times this lot was often full or nearly so. To give you more of a good thing, we finished an expansion of the Express Shuttle Parking Lot in November 2004, adding 750 new spaces to the 1,000 that were already there. Express Shuttle buses continue to whisk passengers right from their parking spaces to the terminal and back. And we still give customers the seventh day free when they park in the Express Shuttle Lot for the week.

**THE OPENING OF THE SOUTH BELTLINE (A.K.A., STATE ROAD M-6) HAS MADE GETTING TO THE AIRPORT A LOT EASIER FOR MUCH OF WEST MICHIGAN.**

In fact, whether you're on the way to GRR or on your way home from a trip, the new highway can shave nerve-wracking miles and precious minutes off your drive. M-6 conveniently skirts congested urban streets to offer easier access to the Airport as well as to the growing business district just south of Grand Rapids' city limits. Coming from the east, west or south, or from downtown Grand Rapids for that matter, the new South Beltline provides a nifty shortcut.

**THE AIRPORT'S MASTER PLAN UPDATE, JUST ACCEPTED BY THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, LOOKS AHEAD TO GRR IN 20 YEARS AND ENVISIONS HOW BEST TO GET THERE.**

Our FAA-approved forecasts anticipate the Airport will handle twice as many passengers and nearly double the cargo by 2023, up to four million passengers and 150 million pounds annually. To accommodate this growth, the Master Plan Update calls for: adding passenger terminal capacity including additional aircraft gates and expansion of ticketing, baggage claim and lobby areas; expanding vehicle parking capacity by adding to existing surface lots and constructing a new parking ramp; relocating the rental car service centers; enlarging the Air Cargo and Trade Center facilities as needed; and making improvements to the airfield including aircraft apron expansion. Timing is the real key to all of these projects. We strive to get additional capacity in place as close as possible to when it's needed. Properly paced expansion means fiscally responsible growth, since the additional revenue generated by increased Airport traffic allows us to pay for a good portion of these improvements as we go.



ONCE AGAIN THE AIRPORT PASSED ITS **ANNUAL FAA CERTIFICATION**  
AND SAFETY INSPECTION WITH **FLYING COLORS.**

In fact, 2004 was the fourth year in the past five that GRR aced this critical test with zero discrepancies. During the inspection, not a single thing was found that required improvement, repair, modification or even rechecking. The FAA requires every major airport to be thoroughly inspected each year, checking everything from runway lighting and pavement conditions to aircraft rescue fire fighting operations and perimeter fencing. Our perfect score reflects GRR's 100% commitment to safety and is a credit to the hard work by hundreds of people employed here.

DURING 2004, THE AIRPORT WORKED WITH KEY TENANTS TO **RAISE FUNDS**  
AND **LIFT SPIRITS** THROUGH A TRIO OF SUCCESSFUL CHARITY EVENTS.

With Northern Air, we helped make wishes come true for 15 West Michigan children with life-threatening illnesses via the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Michigan's annual "When Wishes Take Flight Gala." The Airport also co-hosted the Wings of Mercy CareAffaire with Northern Jet Management, raising about \$45,000 to provide air transportation for people who need treatment at distant facilities but who cannot afford the travel expenses. Finally, we saddled up with Alticor at their corporate hangar for the American Cancer Society's Cattle Baron's Ball, helping round up over \$240,000 for the cause.

FOR **DOZENS OF STUDENTS** FROM KENT CAREER/TECHNICAL CENTER  
THE AIRPORT IS **A REAL-WORLD CLASSROOM.**

And whether these young people aim to become aircraft mechanics or pilots or pursue some other aviation-related career, there's no better place to learn than right here. The Tech Center — a Kent Intermediate School District program — teaches much of its Aviation Maintenance Technology curriculum on site at GRR. The Airport pitches in by giving students access to its facilities and the opportunity to learn from the professionals here. After all, some of these students may very well be working here in a few years. So we're glad we have the opportunity to help show them how to do it right.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

THE GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (GFOA) HAS RECOGNIZED THE KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AERONAUTICS FOR THE 11TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR BY AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING *for the Department's Annual Financial Report*. This award is presented to those government agencies whose financial reporting meets the high standards established by the GFOA.

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES SELECTED JIM KOSLOSKY, A.A.E., AERONAUTICS DIRECTOR OF THE GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, AS THE ASSOCIATION'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT FOR 2004.

HOSPITALITY SALES AND MARKETING ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL AWARDED A GOLD ADRIAN AWARD TO THE KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AERONAUTICS FOR ITS 2004 GRR AIRPORT PROFILE. *The Adrian Awards* recognize the best of travel and hospitality industry marketing and communications via an annual, juried creative competition that last year drew more than 1,500 entries from over 40 countries.

GRR'S AIRCRAFT RESCUE FIRE FIGHTING UNIT WAS RECOGNIZED WITH THE FAA'S "GOOD FRIEND AWARD" FOR PROVIDING MEDICAL RESPONSE TRAINING TO FAA EMPLOYEES.



## AIRPORT MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

THE MISSION OF THE KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AERONAUTICS is to provide safe, efficient, environmentally sensitive and economically self-sustaining air transportation facilities, which are responsive to regional needs.

THE KENT COUNTY AERONAUTICS BOARD is a six-member body appointed by the Kent County Board of Commissioners with responsibility for setting policy and providing general oversight of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. The Aeronautics Board comprises three Kent County Commissioners and three citizen members, each serving staggered three-year terms. Kent County Aeronautics Board meetings take place monthly and are open to the public. A full schedule and details of upcoming meetings may be found at [flygrandrapids.org](http://flygrandrapids.org).

THE AIRPORT IS MANAGED AND OPERATED by the Aeronautics Director, Deputy Director, a four-person management team heading the Airport's four primary functional areas and a 120-member Department of Aeronautics staff.

### AERONAUTICS BOARD

JOHN VAN LAAR  
Chairman

KENNETH J. KUIPERS\*  
Vice Chairman (Board term expired 12/31/04)

THOMAS G. O'HARE  
Vice Chairman

DEAN A. AGEE\*

JOSEPH D. JONES

DANIEL M. KOORNDYK\*

RICHARD A. VANDER MOLEN\*  
(Board term commenced 1/1/05)

\*County Commissioner

### AERONAUTICS DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE STAFF

JAMES A. KOSLOSKY, A.A.E.  
Aeronautics Director

PHILLIP E. JOHNSON, A.A.E.  
Deputy Aeronautics Director

BRIAN PICARDAT, A.A.E.  
Finance and Administration Director

ROBERT W. BENSTEIN, A.A.E.  
Public Safety and Operations Director

THOMAS R. ECKLUND, P.E.  
Facilities Director

BRUCE L. SCHEDLBAUER, APR  
Marketing and Communications Manager



The Kent County Aeronautics Board would like to recognize Chairman John Van Laar for his 30 consecutive years of service to the Board and express our gratitude for his dedicated leadership and extraordinary commitment to the Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

### THE GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS A SELF-SUPPORTING PUBLIC ENTERPRISE.

It receives no general tax revenues for day-to-day operations or ongoing capital development. Airport operations and improvements actually generate net revenue, rather than consume valuable tax dollars.

### FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

	2004*	2003	2002
<b>OPERATING REVENUE</b>			
Airline Payments	\$10,262,050	\$10,108,692	\$ 9,675,018
General Aviation	1,409,199	1,365,239	1,286,586
Concessions	765,055	596,532	548,263
Air Cargo	2,310,711	2,222,150	2,133,488
Ground Transportation	9,652,477	8,913,937	8,369,956
Other	480,897	633,680	495,462
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$24,880,389</b>	<b>\$23,840,230</b>	<b>\$22,508,773</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
Personnel Costs	\$ 7,018,478	\$ 6,507,669	\$ 6,001,950
Supplies	523,476	612,039	797,972
Contractual	6,046,897	6,082,009	5,582,018
Depreciation	9,716,002	9,647,394	9,667,655
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$23,304,853</b>	<b>\$22,849,111</b>	<b>\$22,049,595</b>
<b>NET INCOME FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$1,575,536</b>	<b>\$991,119</b>	<b>\$459,178</b>

\* Unaudited figures. A comprehensive Annual Financial Report, including audited figures for 2004, will be available from the Kent County Department of Aeronautics as of June 2005.





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