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# City of San Diego Clears Runway for Brown Field Airport's Future

## AIRPORT MASTER PLAN LOOKS TO STIMULATE LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH, PRIORITIZE SAFETY AND MEET AVIATION DEMAND

SAN DIEGO – To guide long-term development plans for the City of San Diego's Brown Field Airport, including how it will meet future aviation demand, bring the airport to updated safety standards and provide for growth opportunities, the San Diego City Council unanimously approved the [Brown Field Airport Master Plan](#) on Tuesday, Sept. 30. The Airport's last master plan to be adopted was adopted more than four decades ago, in 1980.

The Master Plan outlines a 20-year development roadmap, with phased infrastructure developments and improvements, including runways, taxiways, and aircraft parking and hangars. It considers new and changing long-term uses for the airport, addresses improvements necessary to comply with newer federal aviation regulations, improves airport safety and capacity and enables significant economic development. It also considers historic preservation strategies by examining the adaptive reuse of the historic terminal building.

**"This Master Plan is long overdue, and the adoption marks a pivotal moment for Brown Field Airport and our region,"** said Economic Development Deputy Director and Chief of Airports Jorge Rubio, A.A.E. **"With the adoption of this Master Plan, we're finally laying the groundwork for a future that meets modern aviation needs, enhances safety and unlocks major economic opportunities. This plan isn't just about infrastructure – it's about creating thousands of good-paying jobs, supporting cross-border commerce and ensuring Brown Field continues to serve as a vital hub for decades to come."**

Community input was key to developing the Master Plan, through a process that included technical studies and was shaped by extensive stakeholder feedback gathered through a series of public workshops and Advisory Committee meetings. This inclusive process allowed the City to gather input from airport users, tenants, neighbors, community organizations and regional agencies. Part of the work also included a Program Environmental Impact Report, which was also certified by the City Council on Tuesday.

The Master Plan adoption comes as Brown Field Airport is going through the largest general aviation airport redevelopment project on the West Coast. Under a lease agreement with the City, San Diego Airpark, LLC, is constructing state-of-the-art aviation, commercial and industrial facilities. It will include a terminal building that will house a new general aviation customs inspection facility for visiting aircraft. The San Diego Airpark development is part of the Brown Field Airport Master Plan and is expected to create approximately 2,500 new jobs at the Airport, with a \$1.5 billion economic impact on the San Diego region.

The Master Plan will also serve as a guiding document for implementing the Airports Division's Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP), which outlines \$18.9 million in Brown Field Airport infrastructure projects over the next five years.

Funding will be provided by a combination of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program grants, the Airports Enterprise Fund and California Department of Transportation grants, with the majority coming from the FAA. Just last week, [the City secured nearly \\$4 million from the FAA](#) to go toward infrastructure improvements at Brown Field Airport and the City's Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport. The ACIP requires no funding from the City's General Fund.

Established in 1918 as East Field, Brown Field Airport was originally used to train military pilots during both World Wars. It was then renamed in honor of Commander Melville S. Brown, and in 1962, the Navy transferred ownership of Brown Field to the City of San Diego at no cost, with the condition that it remain an airport for the use and benefit of the public.

Located in Otay Mesa near the U.S.–Mexico border, Brown Field handles more than 90,000 take-offs and landings annually and plays a critical role in cross-border trade, law enforcement aviation, military operations, wildlife firefighting, and business and recreational flying.

The City is currently working on the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan, which is anticipated to go to full Council within the next few months.



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