

PORT OF HOOD RIVER

Status report from Oregon ports to the House Interim Committee on Transportation Policy



The **Port of Hood River** has owned and operated the Ken Jernstedt Airfield (“Airfield”) since 1976. Nestled in a wide valley two miles south of Hood River, the Airfield is a Basic Utility, Stage II Airport named for a celebrated WWII Fighting Tigers pilot who later became a local and state politician.

The Airport serves approximately 15,000 flight operations annually, and provides storage for approximately 100 aircraft stored in three-dozen T-hangar spaces, or tied down on the tarmac. The Airport’s Fixed Base Operator (FBO), TacAero, offers self-serve fuel, flight school, private lessons, sight-seeing flights, aircraft rentals and mechanic services.

Air transportation in the region promotes important Port of Hood River goals related to economic development and enhancement of quality of life. At 638 feet elevation, the Ken Jernstedt Airfield also provides essential services to the surrounding area as a base for emergency response in fire fighting, search and rescue operations, and urgent medical care.

In 2016, the Port received a \$1.36M ConnectOregon VI grant to fund a major renovation and expansion of the Airfield north apron for a new staging area; preparation of utilities and shovel-ready pad sites; and construction of a new av-gas/jet fuel facility to accommodate the needs of local air attack fire fighting and emergency search and rescue response personnel, local aviation technology companies, visitors, and residents. This project is now nearing completion and has provided the ramp, apron, fuel facility, utilities, and shovel-ready pad sites necessary to leverage available private investments to maximum benefit for the airport, the community, neighboring communities, and the current and future users of the Airfield. These improvements will provide immediate safety and capacity improvements, specifically for forest fire and emergency search and rescue response. The Port now expects to partner with local private businesses to create a new, vastly improved FBO facility featuring a new maintenance hangar with bunkhouses and training facilities as well as enhanced airport security.

