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Gov. Beshear Awards \$5 Million to Barkley Regional Airport for New Terminal

Funding improves access to airport, constructs new passenger terminal

PADUCAH, Ky. (Feb. 24, 2020) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear visited the Barkley Regional Airport to announce a \$5 million state contribution to support the building of a new airport terminal that will improve access, enhance the customer service experience and encourage future growth in western Kentucky.

State and local officials, as well as representatives from the business community, gathered to celebrate progress on this transformational project that has been termed the region's "airport for our future," which will replace and revamp the existing facilities. This funding moves the long-awaited project forward, taking it one step closer to construction.

"Airports serve as our state's 'front door' and replacing the almost 70-year-old terminal will make our state more attractive to Kentuckians, visitors and prospective businesses for years to come," said **Gov. Beshear**. "The new airport will truly open up western Kentucky to the world and help us to build that bigger, brighter future for all our families. When we work together there is nothing we cannot accomplish."

The \$5 million award from the Kentucky Department of Aviation combined with \$20 million in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding will go toward the project to build a new 30,000 square foot terminal building to accommodate more modern and efficient utilities, ADA compliant bathrooms and security upgrades. The project will also provide expanded parking lots, a new entrance road to the facility and a new terminal apron.

"Aviation is a key contributor to Kentucky jobs and the investment to get this project off the ground will benefit a region already poised for business and growth," said **Transportation Secretary Jim Gray**.

Airport Board Chairman George Bray celebrated the announcement.

"We are extremely grateful and appreciative of Gov. Beshear and his administration for this strong level of support for our new terminal project," **said Bray**. "It shows that he understands that Barkley Regional Airport is indeed the 'airport for our future' as a region. We at the airport believe this new terminal will be the spark of many great things that lie ahead both on and around the airport, and throughout the region."

After beginning as a military surplus airport to facilitate B-17 Bomber Crew Training in 1941, the airport serviced its first commercial flight in 1946. The airport is named for former Vice President Alben Barkley who was still alive when the current terminal was built. Local officials have been working to secure funding for the new terminal for more than 10 years.

The Barkley Regional Airport is one of six commercial airports in the state and provides twice-daily service to Chicago O'Hare on United Express Airlines operated by Sky West Airlines. Replacing the outdated terminal eliminates space limitations hindering further growth, like accommodating additional airlines, larger aircraft, indoor retail vendors and future opportunities.

"This is great news for the Barkley Regional Airport and the region," said **Sen. Danny Carroll** of Paducah. "Funding to support additional projects that grow our economy will have a noticeable impact on our community, and I look forward to the completion of this project."

Support for the new terminal project also came from advocates in the business community who understand the economic development potential of modern infrastructure. Chamber President Sandra Wilson expressed her gratitude for the funding.

"The Chamber develops priorities for state legislation," said **Wilson**. "Securing funding for the Barkley Airport project was one of our top priorities because it is so important to our region. We are thrilled this is happening for us and really appreciate the support of Gov. Beshear in making it happen."

The project opens up opportunities to provide both short-term and long-term employment benefits, including construction jobs and jobs in aerospace, tourism, air cargo and more.

"This is good news for our community. This new project will be a tremendous help to our economic development efforts," said **Rep. Steven Rudy** of Paducah. "The Senate Majority Floor Leader has acquired the federal monies necessary to match our state's commitment to this project, making this a great example of the good we can do when we put Kentucky first."

"This project will benefit so many of the men and women of our district, and, frankly, this entire region," said **Rep. Randy Bridges** of Paducah. "Investing in our infrastructure – including our regional airport – is so critical to our success."

"We have been working closely with the Federal Aviation Administration to obtain funding to build a new airport terminal," said **City of Paducah Mayor Brandi Harless**. "The support from Gov. Beshear and the state government makes our project possible. We believe when one part

of the state does well, the entire state does well. This regional economic development project will help all of far western Kentucky.”

“Gov. Beshear has pledged to be a strong partner with our community to enhance our airport and support our economic development efforts,” said **McCracken County Judge-Executive Craig Clymer**. “Today, he made good on his promise.”

The project is expected to break ground in the spring of 2021 and be completed by the end of 2023.

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