



2025

SAFFORD REGIONAL AIRPORT

Economic Development Profile



AVIATION
INNOVATION IN THE
DESERT SOUTHWEST

SAFFORD REGIONAL AIRPORT

Located in Southeastern Arizona, Safford Regional Airport (KSAD) is a non-hub commercial service airport with a rich tradition of aviation innovation and business growth. SAD is located 5 miles northeast of Safford and 120 NM from Phoenix. SAD is conveniently located with easy access to major markets in Phoenix, Tucson, Albuquerque, and California. The airport is currently home to more than 200 jobs, 7 businesses, a wildfire air tanker base, daily airline service, ARFF station, and boasts over 500 acres of property available for development.



Quick Facts



Owned and Operated by
the City of Safford

Runways Measuring 6,007 FT and
4,802 FT

Airport Business Park with utility and
road access (230 acres)

Over 400 Acres of property available for
aircraft storage.

Built-to-suit hangar options

Uncontrolled Airspace
allows for easy access.

Easy access to Phoenix and Tucson at
a quarter of the cost

Business Attraction & Expansion Sectors

- ✓ Air Ambulance
- ✓ Aircraft Management Company
- ✓ Private Aircraft Operation
- ✓ Helicopter Parts Development and Manufacturing
- ✓ Aircraft Storage
- ✓ Corporate Flight Departments
- ✓ Aircraft Manufacturers
- ✓ Small Aircraft Maintenance
- ✓ Non-Aeronautical / Off-Airport R&D and Manufacturing
- ✓ Aircraft Recycling



Expanding Aircraft Storage

- ✓ Regardless of economic upturns and downturns, aviation companies will always require storage space for their fleets.
- ✓ SAD is prepared to meet those needs with over 400 acres of space for aircraft storage.
- ✓ Based on existing runway infrastructure, SAD is ideal for the storage of Regional Jets and Single Aisle Jets such as the Boeing 737 or Airbus A320
- ✓ All available storage space has runway and/or taxiway access.
- ✓ The city is willing to prepare leased areas for storage to include grading, minor compaction, and ground sterilant application.
- ✓ All ground on the airport has a high clay and rock content, naturally lending itself to aircraft storage with minimal compaction required.
- ✓ All of the available space is also set up for proper drainage and experiences minimal erosion.





Approximately 230 acres of undeveloped land.

- ✓ Available for aeronautical or non-aeronautical development.
- ✓ Zoning: Public Facility with industrial use permitted.
- ✓ Graham County Electric Cooperative Electric, City of Safford Water, pending site improvements.
- ✓ Adjacent to Safford Regional Airport, Freeport MacMoRan Mining Safford Operations
- ✓ Long-term leases with negotiable terms.

Doing Business in Arizona

- ✓ Operating costs up to 40% lower than California
- ✓ Low total payroll cost: including workers compensation and unemployment insurance
- ✓ No sales tax on manufacturing equipment
- ✓ No inventory tax
- ✓ Right-to-work state
- ✓ Low unionization and minimal regulation



Utilities and Infrastructure

Electric Power - Electrical power is provided by Graham County Electric Co-Op. The City of Safford is also examining options for renewable energy at the airport.

Water/Wastewater - The City of Safford provides robust water infrastructure at the airport. In addition to existing water capacity in the area, the City of Safford recently added a 250,000-gallon water storage tank to provide water pressure and supply for fire suppression at the airport.

Fiber Optic Telecommunications Network - Redundant telecom fiber is in place with Cox, CenturyLink, and Zayo as service providers.



Potential State Incentives

Businesses locating or expanding to Safford may be eligible for special state and/or local incentives and programs.

Qualified Facilities Tax Credit:

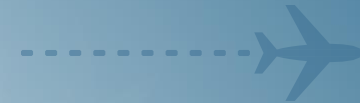
Offers refundable income tax credits up to \$20,000 per qualifying net new job to eligible manufacturing companies that invest in one or more qualifying facilities.

Quality Jobs Tax Credit:

Provides up to \$9,000 of income or premium tax credits over a three-year period for each net new job to the state and concurrent qualifying capital expenditures.

Arizona Innovation Challenge:

Arizona's leading technology commercialization competition - one of the most competitive and largest competitions in the nation.



R&D Tax Credit:

Provides income tax credits for increased R&D activities conducted in the state. Additional tax credits are available for R&D executed in collaboration with state universities.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP):

Dedicated to helping Arizona manufacturers achieve their business goals. AZMEP is leading the Supplier Scouting program in Arizona, linking manufacturers to potential business opportunities.

DOD SkillBridge:

The DOD invests tens of thousands of dollars in job training for prior service members. Through the SkillBridge program, businesses can tap into the expertise of former military personnel by sponsoring internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

Potential City of Safford Incentives



Businesses locating or expanding to Saffo may be eligible for special state and/or local incentives and programs.

Lease Credits:

The Airport is able to offer commercial lessees access to lease credits for capital improvements that are mutually beneficial to the airport and the lessee, such as utility extensions, taxiway or road infrastructure, or aprons.

Lease Processing Times

From the day a Letter of Intent is submitted to the Airport, leases typically are approved in under 45 days.

Building Permit Processing

The City prides itself on its small-town charm and ease of permit processing. The Planning and Zoning Department has an Open Door Policy to help expedite permitting.



Workforce Development

Safford and surrounding communities benefit from a strong partnership with Eastern Arizona College, a publicly funded community college located in Thatcher, AZ. EAC is committed to answering the workforce needs of the community, including the airport.

Abundant

Safford and surrounding communities are rapidly growing. Eastern Arizona College works with area businesses to develop training and degree programs suited to their needs.

Affordable

As a right to work state, Arizona has one of the lowest unionization rates in the nation. Additionally, Arizona employers, on average, pay the 11th lowest unemployment insurance premium taxes.

Accessible

With a low cost of living, Safford presents an opportunity for employers to attract talent to the area without being forced to pay the wages required in larger metropolitan areas.



Workforce Resources

The City of Safford co-operates with Arizona@Work and Eastern Arizona College for employers to find quality employees, training resources, jobs, and assistance all in one spot.



**EASTERN
ARIZONA
COLLEGE**



A proud partner of the [americanjobcenter](#) network



Small Business Development

The EAC Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is part of a national and statewide network of small business assistance providers. Our main goal is to give local small businesses the tools and training to be successful. We are funded by Eastern Arizona College with assistance from a grant provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

To learn more, visit the EAC SBDC website via the QR code.



EASTERN
ARIZONA
COLLEGE

Economic Development Summary

Safford Regional Airport is located in south-eastern Arizona, and ideal weather and low operating costs makes Safford a strategic destination for aerospace-related businesses. The airport is committed to supporting the growth of new and existing businesses through continued city investment in the airport and lease credits for mutually beneficial improvements.

- ✓ 18,000 annual aircraft operations
- ✓ Over 500 acres of available land for lease
- ✓ Current jobs on airport: 200
- ✓ Current businesses on airport: 7
- ✓ Approximately \$4 million federal and state grant funds awarded to the airport annually
- ✓ Annual economic benefit = \$7.4 million



New & Expanding Businesses

JETCRAFTERS 



PONDEROSA AVIATION



Airport Development Process

New Construction



Step 1

Submit Letter of Intent

Client submits Letter of Intent (LOI) confirming their intent for the parcel and providing a summary of funding sources for the project.



Step 2

Notice of Intent to Lease

Airport publish the Notice of Intent to Lease. Per A.R.S. 28-8425 Airport will publish Notice of Intent to Lease for a minimum of 30 days.



Step 3

Layout and Explanation

Client submits response to Notice of Intent to Lease in the form of a complete Lease Application in accordance with the Airport Leasing Policy.



Step 4

Sign Lease & Submit Survey

If selected through the Notice of Intent to Lease process Client and City enter into lease negotiations and sign a Master Tenant Lease.

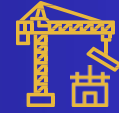
These negotiations include any applicable lease credits for improvements.



Step 5

Design Review

Airport reviews development plans for compliance with Airport Planned Area Development Design Standards.



Step 6

Permit/Construction

Building permits are reviewed and issued by the City.

Construction may begin as soon as the lease and building permit are approved.

Lessees can expect a wait of less than 30 days for lease and permit approval.



Connect with the Safford Regional Airport Team



Cameron Atkins

Airport Manager



(928) 432-4326



catkins@saffordaz.gov



Fllysafford.com



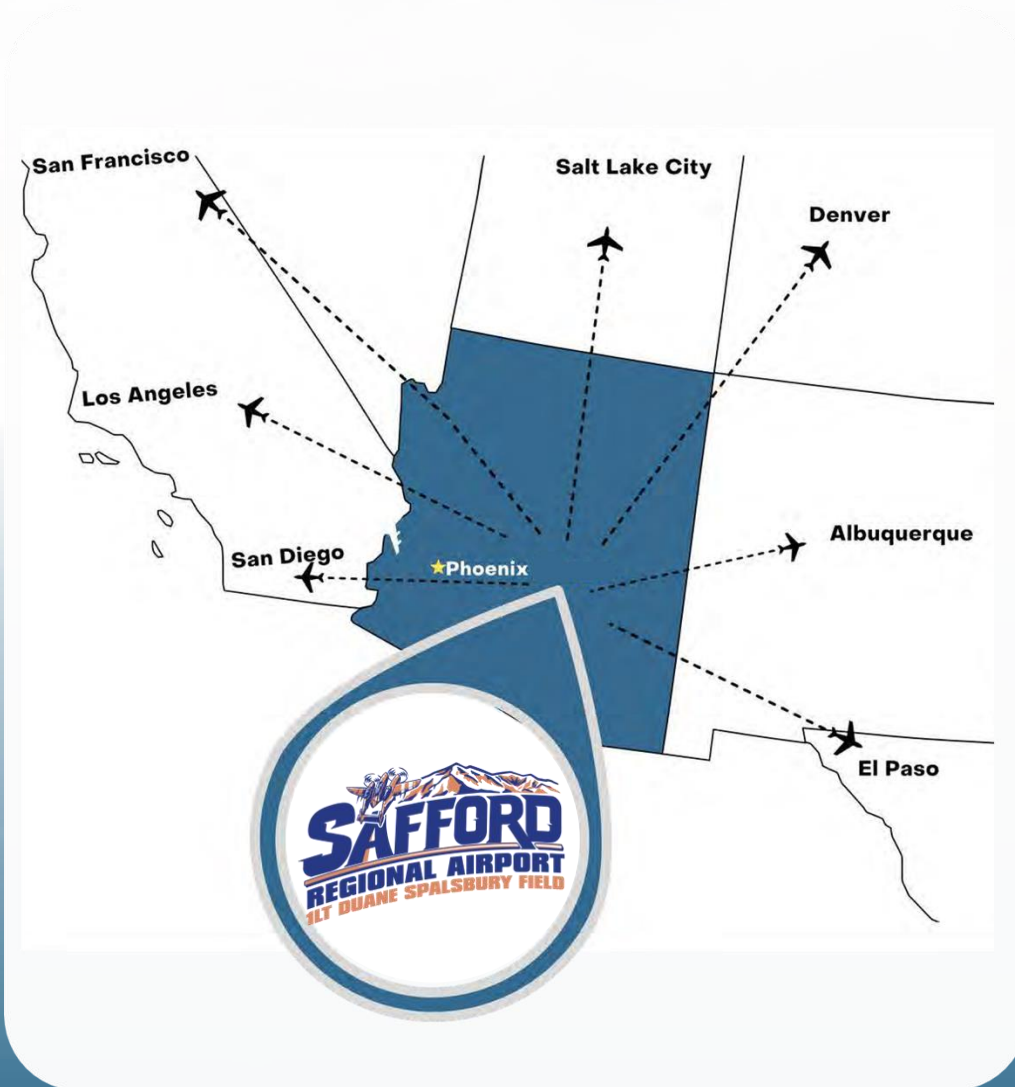
@KSADAZ



Safford Regional Airport



Safford Regional Airport



Quick Links

Scan the QR code to connect to our online resources.

