



Economic Impact Study
Edgar G Obie Airport
2026



MONTANA
Department of Transportation



ZENITH
ECONOMICS

Edgar G Obie Airport Impact

Edgar G Obie Airport is a public-use general aviation airport located one mile west of Chinook, in Blaine County in north-central Montana along the Hi-Line corridor. The airfield features a primary runway of 4,000 feet in excellent condition and handles approximately 3,500 annual general aviation operations. The airport is home to Obie Flying Service, which provides self-service fuel, minor maintenance, and flight instruction. Airport activities include recreational flying, agricultural spraying, emergency medical transport, aerial photography and surveying, and aerial inspections. Located just two blocks from downtown Chinook, the airport serves the surrounding agricultural community along U.S. Highway 2.



Total Economic Impact on Montana



Economic Impact
\$51 Thousand



Payroll
\$13 Thousand

Qualitative Impacts

In addition to generating substantial economic impacts, this airport supports a variety of harder to quantify “Qualitative Impacts” that support critical statewide safety and enterprise. The 2026 Montana Statewide Economic Impact of Airports Study documents the following non-inclusive list of qualitative impacts associated with the airport:



Aerial Firefighting
Supports Wildland Firefighting Operations



Recreation and Education
Provides Pilot Training, Aviation Education, and access to recreational flying



Emergency Medical Aviation
Supports Air Ambulance Operations



Agriculture Support
Supports Agriculture through Aerial Application and other activities



Aerial Surveying & Photography
Supports aerial surveying, inspections, and photography

Source: Montana Statewide Economic Impact of Airports.

Montana Airports Support Our State



Jobs
39,400



Economic Impact
\$6.4 Billion



Payroll
\$2.4 Billion

Montana's airport system functions as a critical component of the state's transportation and economic infrastructure, enabling connectivity across a large and geographically dispersed landscape. Through scheduled commercial service and general aviation activity, airports provide access between Montana communities and regional, national, and international markets, supporting passenger travel, freight movement, and time-sensitive operations that cannot be efficiently served by surface transportation alone.

Beyond mobility, Montana's airports support a broad range of economic activity that contributes to employment, income generation, and business operations throughout the state. Aviation-related enterprises, on-airport and nearby businesses, visitor spending associated with air travel, and ongoing investment in airport facilities collectively generate economic activity at the local, regional, and statewide levels. These effects extend across multiple sectors, including tourism, healthcare, construction, professional services, and natural resource industries.

To document both the economic contributions and broader community functions of the state's aviation system, the Montana Department of Transportation undertook a comprehensive, statewide evaluation of Montana's airports. The **2026 Montana Statewide Economic Impact of Aviation** study examines the full scope of airport-related activity, including aviation and non-aviation businesses, visitor spending, capital investment, and secondary economic effects, while also identifying the specific roles individual airports play in supporting residents, businesses, and critical services across Montana.

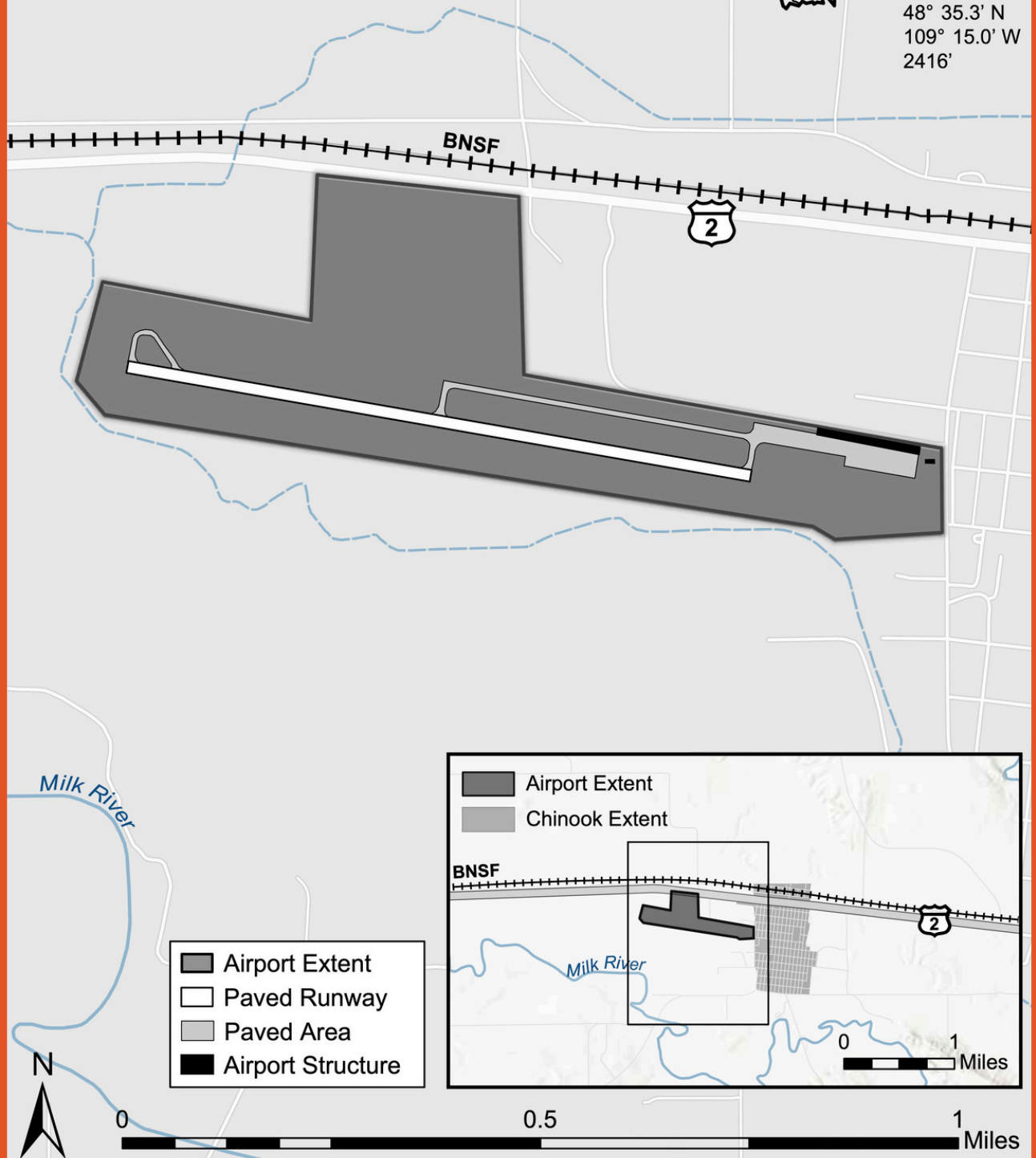


Edgar G. Obie Airport (S71)

Chinook, MT



48° 35.3' N
109° 15.0' W
2416'



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