



Economic Impact Study
**Wheatland County at Harlowton
Airport**
2026



MONTANA
Department of Transportation



ZENITH
ECONOMICS

Wheatland County at Harlowton Airport Impact

Wheatland County Airport at Harlowton is a public-use general aviation airport located in Harlowton, Wheatland County in central Montana. The airfield features a 4,200-foot runway and handles approximately 2,300 annual operations. The unattended facility supports flight training, emergency medical transport, environmental patrol, aerial photography and surveying, and aerial inspections, and hosts an occasional airshow. The airport provides a critical link for medical evacuations and aerial services in this rural community, serving as a local access point for the surrounding agricultural region.



Total Economic Impact on Montana



Jobs
6



Economic Impact
\$841 Thousand



Payroll
\$256 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:



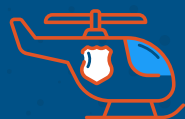
Aerial Surveying & Photography
Supports aerial surveying, inspections, and photography



Flight Training & Education
Provides Pilot Training, Career Training, and Aviation Education



Emergency Medical Aviation
Supports Air Ambulance Operations



Environmental Patrol
Supports Environmental Monitoring and Patrol Operations

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.



Wheatland County Airport (HWQ)

Harlowton, MT



46° 26.9' N
109° 51.2' W
4312'



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