

Air Transportation

The Dane County Regional Airport (DCRA) is owned by Dane County with oversight by the Dane County Airport Commission. The Commission is appointed by the Dane County Executive and consists of nine members with five selected from the Dane County Board of Supervisors and four citizen members.

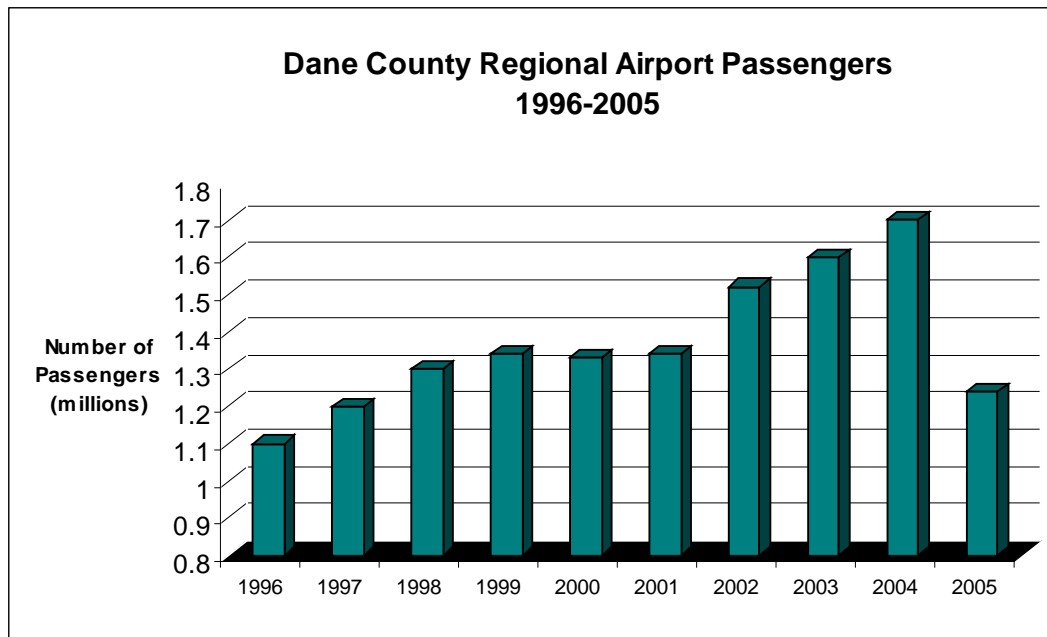
The DCRA is located on the City of Madison's North side between CTH CV (Packers Avenue) USH 51 (N. Stoughton Road). The airport is accessed primarily from CTH CV via International Lane. The airport can also be accessed from USH 51 via Anderson Street, which intersects International Lane. There is potential in the future for an additional more direct access point off CTH CV via Government Road.

Metro bus service to the airport was improved in January 2004. Direct weekday service is now provided from the North Transfer Point with 30-minute peak and 60-minute off-peak frequencies. Service runs from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on weekdays. There is currently no weekend service.

The DCRA is a vital link to the national air transportation system for residents and businesses of the county and south central Wisconsin. It is the second largest airport in the state, providing service to commercial air passenger and air cargo carriers, and for general aviation and the military. The airport is served by eleven (11) commercial air carriers with over 100 scheduled flights per day, and two air freight airlines. Major non-stop destinations are Chicago (O'Hare), Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Detroit, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Denver, Cleveland, Memphis, Newark, Las Vegas, Washington, D.C., Dallas/Ft. Worth, Atlanta, and New York-LaGuardia Airport. There are around 115,000 annual aircraft landings and takeoffs (60% general aviation, 34% commercial, 6% military).

In 2005, the airport had 1.24 million passengers, a 27% decrease from the record setting passenger total in 2004 of 1.7 million. The number of passengers had been steadily increasing prior to the drop in 2005, growing 55% between 1996 and 2004. See Figure 37.

FIGURE 37



Construction work on a major terminal expansion and remodeling project was completed in 2005, increasing the passenger terminal's square footage from 126,000 in 2001 to 278,000. The increased space has been used to expand the airlines' operations and commuter areas, add a baggage claim carousel, and accommodate a new commuter security checkpoint. The airport will be expanding the parking ramp in 2007. The expansion will be phased, but will ultimately double the capacity of the ramp.

The terminal and parking ramp expansion projects were among the recommendations of a 20-Year Land-side Master Plan completed in 1999. The Master Plan also recommended realigning the inbound lanes of the International Lane approach to the main terminal in order to allow more surface parking and two-tier traffic at the front of the terminal in the future (with arrivals on the second level and departures on the ground level). The International Lane realignment project has been implemented.

The airport has a Part 150 Noise Abatement Plan and has completed most of the recommendations in that plan, including construction of a new runway (3/21). The main north-south runway (18/36) was reconstructed in 2000. The airport is in the process of implementing a project to provide required safety areas to the north for the main runway (18/36) and to the northwest for Runway 13/31. The project involves the relocation further west and north of CTH CV, the airport perimeter road, Starkweather Creek, and the Soo Line Railroad. Runway 13/31 will be extended around 600 feet to the northwest.



In addition to the DCRA, the county is served by the Middleton Municipal Airport-Morey Field and Blackhawk Airfield in the Village of Cottage Grove. Both are general aviation airports serving smaller aircraft used for business and charter flying and for personal reasons. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has designated both as reliever airports for the DCRA. The role of reliever airports is to reduce congestion at commercial service airports by providing general aviation pilots with alternative landing areas.

Reconstruction of Morey Field was completed in 2005. The airport now has a 4,000 x 100 foot runway, a turf crosswind runway, and a new terminal building. It is located along Airport Road, just west of the USH 12 interchange. The Blackhawk Airport is threatened due to development pressure and its future is in doubt.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) adopted the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020* in 2000. The system-level plan provides a framework for identifying the number, location, and type of aviation facilities required to serve the state's aviation needs over the next twenty years. According to the plan, the number of commercial air passengers at the DCRA is expected to increase 58% from 2000 to 2020. It was determined that the DCRA and other commercial air passenger airports can accommodate this increase in passengers through modest increases in service frequencies and in aircraft seating capacities.

A detailed analysis of current and forecast levels of general aviation activity in the Dane County region was also conducted as part of WisDOT's Airport System Plan. The plan recommends that DCRA continue to implement improvements called for in its Master Plan and construct a new parallel general aviation runway. The plan also recommends that Morey Airport in Middleton be maintained and improved to fulfill its role as a reliever airport to the DCRA.