



# Villeneuve Airport



STRATEGIC PLAN  
2024 - 2028



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**Open for Business**

**Open for Collaboration**

**Open for Investment**

***Open Air***

The open skies around Villeneuve Airport are full of possibility. The Edmonton Metropolitan Region's premier hub of general aviation frees up space for new pilots to learn, for new businesses to flourish in the air and on the ground, and for spectacular aerial displays that inspire tens of thousands of onlookers year after year.

From 2024-2028, Edmonton Airports will keep working with its partners to open up even more opportunities at ZVL – for the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, for Alberta's aviation sector, for the next generation of professional pilots and for economic and community development.

# Executive Summary

Villeneuve Airport (ZVL) was built by Transport Canada in 1976 as a satellite airport for the purpose of general aviation activities, including flight training and recreational aircraft activity in the region. It is located in Sturgeon County, approximately 18 kilometres northwest of the City of Edmonton, and has been owned and operated by Edmonton Airports since 2000. Since that time, Edmonton Airports and regional partners have worked together to develop ZVL as a strategic aviation asset for the region, which also functions as a reliever airport for Edmonton International Airport (YEG).

ZVL has numerous strengths (i.e., two runways and taxiways, NAV Canada control tower, instrument landing system) which make it an important component of the region's aviation offerings and a unique airport within Alberta. Sturgeon County is a rapidly growing, diverse region and offers modern multi-modal transportation infrastructure that connects to the region and international hubs. Edmonton Airports and its regional partners are committed to collaboratively advancing ZVL in its role as the premier general aviation airport and flight training facility in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.

The Villeneuve Airport Strategic Plan: 2024-2028 is an update to the previous strategic plan (2019-2023). It will guide Edmonton Airports over the next five years as it safely, securely, and efficiently operates and invests in ZVL, furthering ZVL's contributions to regional economic and community development.

Valuable input and support were received from regional municipal partners, regional economic development groups, and onsite airport owners and operators throughout the development of the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. Edmonton Airports, in collaboration with these partners, will support the fulfillment of four key strategic objectives:

- Improve financial sustainability
- Grow general aviation traffic
- Grow flight training
- Increase non-aeronautical revenue

Achieving these objectives will increase ZVL's impact as an economic development and diversification engine for the regions surrounding it.

Operating ZVL requires significant operating and capital investments. These investments are justified by direct and indirect financial gains (increase in related regional business and employment) created by ZVL. ZVL also provides value and cost savings by mitigating potential delays and disruptions to commercial air traffic at Edmonton International Airport (YEG). Edmonton Airports will continue to work closely with government and industry partners over the next five years to invest in and further develop services and infrastructure that will catalyze regional growth and enhance ZVL's value to the region.

The success of this strategic plan is also contingent upon the health of the regional economy. General aviation is particularly susceptible and sensitive to personal and household disposable income, consumer confidence and employment rates. As such, these factors play a significant role in the sustainability and growth of ZVL.

**Edmonton Airports will  
continue to work closely with  
government and industry  
partners over the next five years  
to further ZVL's contributions  
to regional economic and  
community development.**







# Edmonton Airports Overview

## EDMONTON AIRPORTS: HISTORY AND GOVERNANCE

Edmonton Regional Airports Authority (Edmonton Airports) is a provincially incorporated, financially independent, not-for-profit corporation. Edmonton Airports operates Edmonton International Airport (YEG) on behalf of its owner, Transport Canada, and owns and operates Villeneuve Airport (ZVL) in Alberta, Canada. All profits are reinvested into the airports to support the long-term success of their operations and to drive growth in the community.

## EDMONTON AIRPORTS: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Edmonton Airports' guiding principles represent a commitment to long-term communally beneficial aviation growth that reflects the needs and interests of regional stakeholders.

### **NOBLE CAUSE**

Uniting people for a world of new possibilities

### **VISION**

More flights to more places

### **MISSION**

Driving our region's economic prosperity through aviation and commercial development

### **ESG COMMITMENT**

All our actions will drive our mission to responsibly generate economic prosperity for our region through authentic environmental, social, and governance leadership

### **VALUES**

- Safety and security first
- Own the outcome
- Doing the right things right
- Invested in our talent
- Dedicated to sustainability

# Villeneuve Airport Overview

## VILLENEUVE AIRPORT: BRIEF HISTORY

ZVL was built by Transport Canada in 1976 as a satellite airport for general aviation activities, including flight training and recreational aircraft activity. The NAV Canada air traffic control tower was built in 1982. Under the National Airports Policy, the federal government sold ZVL to Edmonton Airports in 2000; Edmonton Airports has owned and operated ZVL ever since, and has invested in its continued maintenance, expansion, and development as a strategic regional asset.

In 2013, Edmonton Airports worked with the City of Edmonton and Sturgeon County to ease the transition of aviation business and services to ZVL following the closure of City Centre Airport in Edmonton. These efforts allowed for an expansion of key facility infrastructure at ZVL and encouraged provincial investment.

## VILLENEUVE AIRPORT: TODAY

The original purpose set for ZVL by Transport Canada remains true today; it is a general aviation, recreational flying and training facility that does not offer regular scheduled passenger or cargo services. Situated on 574 Ha of land, with two runways, 29 hangars, and approximately 80,000 annual aircraft movements (fixed wing and rotary) in 2019, ZVL is the largest and busiest general aviation airport in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. Other notable features and services attributable to ZVL include:

- Transport Canada certified aerodrome
- NAV Canada air traffic control tower
- Two runways and taxiways
- Instrument Landing System (ILS)
- Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) airport of entry/CANPASS program designation
- Alberta Health Services designated air ambulance (medevac) alternate airport
- Annual Alberta International Airshow host airport

This combination of features and services is unique among Alberta's general aviation airports. As such, Edmonton Airports recognizes and promotes the role of ZVL accordingly:

## **Villeneuve Airport is the premier general aviation airport and flight training facility in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.**

ZVL is and will remain an important part of the region's aviation offerings, and a strategic asset in Edmonton Airports' short and long-term planning.

# Villeneuve Airport Strategic Value



ZVL is a strategic asset for the region, providing general aviation services, creating economic development opportunities and reducing infrastructure and commercial aviation pressure at YEG.

## **Economic Development for the Region**

Edmonton Airports is committed to regional economic prosperity. The most recent economic impact study (2023) found that ZVL contributes an annual total economic output of approximately \$74.6 million (including direct, indirect and induced output) and a total of 292 full-time-equivalent jobs. Continued growth and stakeholder aligned investment in ZVL will continue to grow this impact.

## **Supporting Optimization of YEG Commercial Air Traffic**

As a general aviation reliever airport, ZVL creates value in savings (time and money) for Edmonton International Airport and its commercial airlines by reducing the volume of general aviation traffic at YEG. If the general aviation and flight training traffic movements at ZVL needed to be accommodated at YEG, this would negatively impact airfield and airspace demand and cause significant operational delays to commercial traffic. Additionally, capital intensive airfield infrastructure improvements (i.e., dual taxiways, high speed exit taxiways) would be required at YEG to maintain current levels of service for commercial airlines.

## **Ensuring Successful Provincial Air Ambulance Operations**

ZVL also offers operational value to the Government of Alberta (Alberta Health Services) and its air ambulance operations as the designated air ambulance (medevac) alternate airport to YEG. A medevac alternate airport is required in the event that air ambulance flights cannot land at YEG due to inclement weather or an unforeseeable disruptive event.

## **Alberta International Airshow: Showcasing Careers in Aviation**

ZVL is the host airport for the annual Alberta International Airshow, an independently run, not-for-profit weekend event that attracted 12,500 visitors per day in 2023. The event features historic aircraft as well as professional aerial performances such as the Canadian Forces Snowbirds and the CF-18 Demo Team. The airshow generates approximately \$3.2 million in economic activity annually.

The airshow also promotes awareness of the aviation industry, highlights the region's role in the logistics and transportation sectors, and includes a career fair where attendees can learn about opportunities in aviation and aviation-adjacent fields. This career fair and industry showcase sold out in 2023. Transport Canada currently predicts a shortage of 42,000 workers in the air transport industry by 2025, and 55,000 workers by 2035; events like the airshow at ZVL can help by encouraging young people to consider careers in aviation.

## **Responding to the Increasing Demand for Professional Pilots**

With two runways and taxiways, a NAV Canada control tower, and an ILS runway approach navigation system, ZVL airfield infrastructure is ideal for supporting pilot training from recreational to professional (commercial and airline) pilots. ZVL flight training services include both fixed wing (glider and powered) and rotary wing aircraft types, to address demands for various pilot rating types across the entire aviation industry.

# Villeneuve Airport Strategic Planning

## SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT

Since taking ownership of ZVL in 2000, Edmonton Airports has successfully implemented numerous initiatives and investments to further develop and grow general aviation at the airport. Collaboration with stakeholders (regional governments, onsite owners and operators) was a key factor in the success of the initiatives and investments highlighted in the following timeline, and will continue to drive the development of ZVL.

Of particular significance was Edmonton Airports' extensive efforts in 2013 and 2014 to assist and accommodate various Edmonton City Centre Airport tenants, operations and services transitioning to ZVL after the 2013 closure of City Centre Airport.



# Major Airport Developments and Investments Since 2000

## 2000

Edmonton Airports purchases ZVL from Transport Canada and takes over operations

## 2005

Runway 16/34 and main apron rehabilitation

## 2010

Phase 1 hangar lot development initiated (taxi lane, roadway and utilities construction)

## 2014

CBSA customs operations and services relocated from City Centre Airport to ZVL allowing for "airport of entry" designation and services at the airport (customs services for CANPASS program members, and for general aviation flights with 15 or fewer travellers)

Storm water management facility constructed.

## 2002

Construction of airport terminal building (trailer)

## 2006

Runway 08/26 and Taxiway B rehabilitation

## 2013

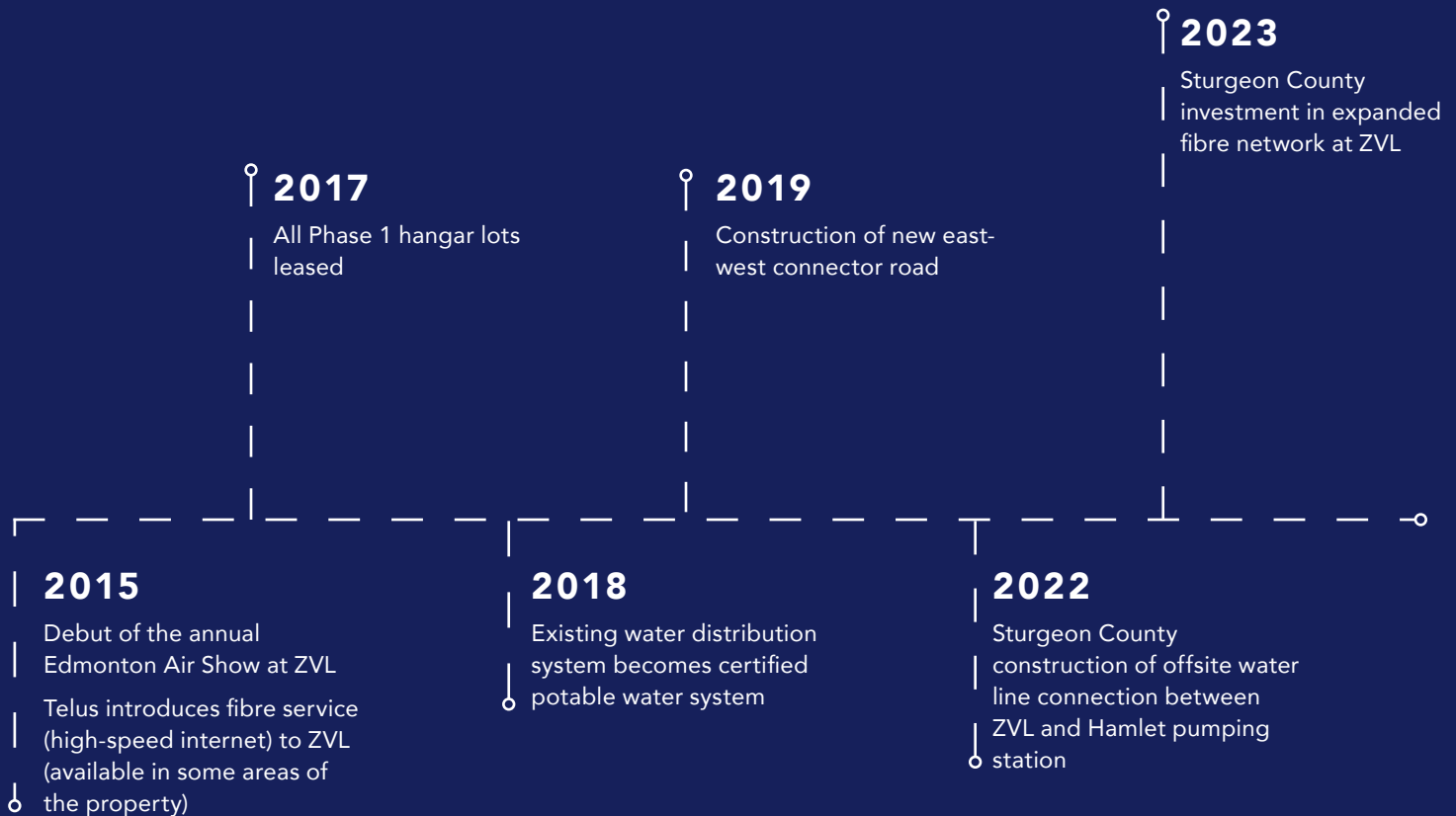
Runway 08/26 extended from to 3500 feet to 5000 feet in length, including Taxiway B extension (funded by Province of Alberta)

Instrument landing system (ILS) at end of Runway 26 constructed (funded by Province of Alberta) allowing for aircraft landings during low-visibility weather conditions

City of Edmonton closes the Edmonton City Centre Airport at the end of November.

Numerous tenants, including a flight school, relocate to ZVL.





Along with the infrastructure investments and improvements noted above, Edmonton Airports has made numerous operational improvements at ZVL since 2000, including:

- Increased full-time and seasonal Edmonton Airports staffing
- Increased EA management and board onsite presence (e.g., tours, site visits, meetings)
- Implementation of Canadian Runway Friction Index (CRFI) runway testing during winter months, required for operation of turbo-jet powered or turbo-propeller powered aeroplanes on paved runways
- Maintenance equipment improvements
- Ongoing collaborative fire and emergency training and planning with local municipal Fire Services

# Strategic Planning Initiation



This document is an update to the 2019-2023 Villeneuve Airport Strategic Plan, and takes into account the high-level direction set for ZVL in the 2018-2022 Edmonton Airports Strategic Plan. Although numerous successful initiatives from the previous Strategic Plan were realized, COVID-19 caused significant disruption during that plan's timeframe and many strategic initiatives have been brought forward into this plan for 2024-2028. Strategic objectives for the upcoming years were selected in response to the changing environment and the impacts of the pandemic.

This plan was informed by consultation with both internal and external stakeholders. Through workshops and group discussion, Edmonton Airports engaged with representatives from municipal governments, economic development groups, the ZVL owners and operators' group, and operational partners (e.g., NAV Canada).

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

In collaboration with its partners, Edmonton Airports has identified the following as areas of opportunity in ZVL's growth. They represent ways in which ZVL can respond to emerging needs and trends in the region and achieve its full potential as a strategic aviation asset.

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to large population centres in Edmonton Metropolitan Region</li> <li>• Unconstrained 5,000 by 100 ft runway &amp; Instrument Landing System (ILS)</li> <li>• Local NAV Canada Tower Services</li> <li>• Uncongested airspace and proximity to flight training areas</li> <li>• Available land</li> <li>• Supportive owner (Edmonton Airports)</li> <li>• Supportive host municipality (Sturgeon County)</li> <li>• Proximity to regional highway network</li> <li>• Airport Point of Entry (CANPASS)</li> <li>• Alignment with regional economic development interests</li> <li>• Dedicated onsite airport operations and maintenance staff</li> <li>• Onsite utilities (water, sanitary sewer, power, gas, communications)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a flight training centre of excellence to support the development of professional pilots</li> <li>• Innovation/technology/aviation/aerospace management training</li> <li>• Full service FBO/enhanced MRO</li> <li>• Hangar development</li> <li>• New charter/Hot Shot cargo services to Northern Alberta</li> <li>• Small aircraft manufacturing &amp; sales</li> <li>• Non-aeronautical development</li> <li>• Collaborative regional partners (Villeneuve Landing Network) and a strong regional economic vision</li> <li>• Regional agricultural services and innovation</li> <li>• Approved "Villeneuve Airport Area – Area Structure Plan" (VAA-ASP)</li> </ul>
Weaknesses	Threats & Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utility servicing (onsite fire water supply, regional sanitary infrastructure)</li> <li>• Cost intensive infrastructure and operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic impacts on general aviation traffic and flight training</li> <li>• Piston aircraft do not yield large revenues to airport</li> <li>• Multiple stakeholder groups with diverse interests</li> <li>• Aging airport infrastructure requiring significant capital investment</li> </ul>

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The financial plan for Villeneuve Airport was reviewed in light of the financial parameters identified in the Edmonton Airports Strategic Plan. With successful regional collaboration and investment, Edmonton Airports will work towards reducing the ZVL operating loss through increased non-aeronautical revenues and decreased operating expenses. Capital expenses will increase as Edmonton Airports continues to invest in this regional asset. Given the considerable expenditures involved, Edmonton Airports will need continued regional and provincial support and investment to realize financial sustainability and growth plans for ZVL.

## **TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS**

Similar to general aviation traffic throughout Canada, there was a rise in total air traffic movements from 2016 to 2020, followed by a downward trend and slow recovery due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every aspect of aviation was affected by the pandemic. As people were asked to stay home, the number of passengers and flights decreased, and airports and navigation service providers lost significant revenue. Flight training was also deemed “non-essential” for a period of time in many countries, including Canada, contributing to this slow recovery.

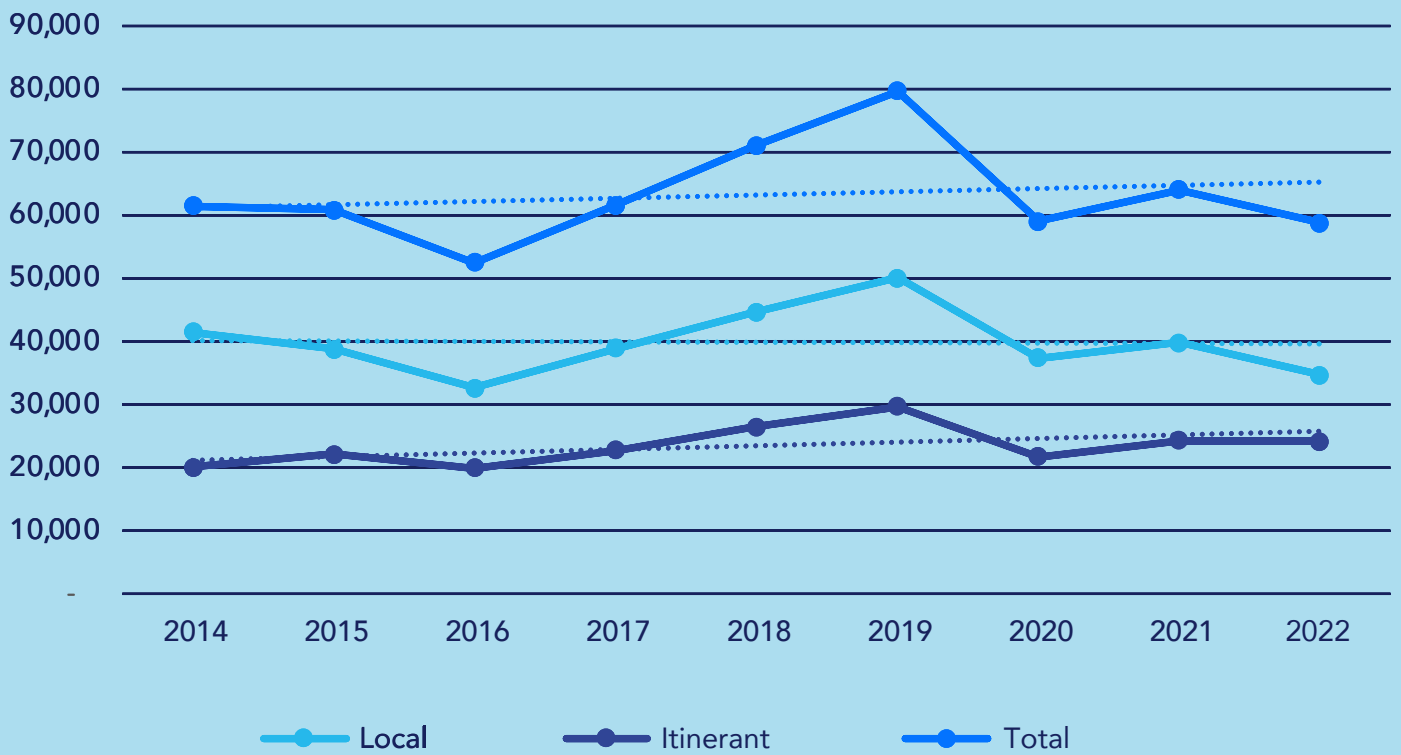
## **NATIONAL PILOT SHORTAGE**

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, demand for professional pilots in Canada and around the world far exceeds supply. This pilot shortage negatively impacts Alberta and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, as seen through recent reduction in commercial air services offered by major Canadian airlines. ZVL is uniquely equipped to excel as a flagship facility and central hub for flight training in Alberta, and could play a vital role in reversing the pilot shortage if this capacity is developed further.

## **LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

ZVL has an abundance of available land with easy access to the regional highway network system, as well as major population centres. The airport’s owner (Edmonton Airports) and host community (Sturgeon County) are aligned in their economic development goals and support the development of new infrastructure, services and businesses (e.g., light industrial and agricultural operations, small aircraft manufacturing and sales) that will contribute to the local and regional economy.

## ZVL Annual Aircraft Movements (2014-2022)





## EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENTS

### Municipal and Economic Development Engagement

Valuable discussion with municipal and economic development leaders from the Edmonton Metropolitan Region allowed Edmonton Airports to further consider opportunities for growth, identifying top items of interest for collaborative organization and funding.

AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE	AIRPORT SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main apron expansion</li> <li>• Lot servicing</li> <li>• Water reservoir capacity expansion</li> <li>• Regional sanitary sewer upgrades</li> <li>• Storm water facilities upgrades</li> <li>• Taxiway improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food services (food truck)</li> <li>• Car rental services</li> <li>• Full-service Fixed Base Operator (FBO)</li> <li>• Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul center (MRO)</li> <li>• Light industrial developments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued quarterly owners and operators meetings</li> <li>• Continued collaboration with regional partners (Villeneuve Landing Network)</li> <li>• Expanded Alberta International Airshow agenda</li> <li>• Continued regional emergency services collaboration and support</li> </ul>

### Villeneuve Airport Owners and Operators Engagement

Edmonton Airports solicited feedback from ZVL owners and operators specifically related to strategic planning through an online survey and through the regular quarterly ZVL owners and operators' business update meetings. The key themes related to current onsite constraints and concerns are:

- Airfield infrastructure constraints, including lack of main apron space for itinerant aircraft, and desire for mid-runway taxiway on runway 08-26 to increase airfield capacity
- Airport amenities (lack of car rental services; lack of food services)
- Collaboration (increased/enhanced collaboration with owner and operator stakeholders)

# 2024-2028 Strategic Objectives & Initiatives

Taking all of the context above into consideration, Edmonton Airports has selected four strategic objectives for ZVL in 2024-2028:

- Improve financial sustainability
- Grow general aviation traffic
- Grow flight training
- Increase non-aeronautical revenue

Considering the assessment of the airport facility, and the various engagement sessions, Edmonton Airports identified a broad range of potential next steps in airport development. Feedback from regional partners and onsite owners and operators was reviewed and considered alongside the corporate mission and purpose to then identify initiatives most relevant for Edmonton Airports business.

The following sections describe the objectives in detail and outline potential initiatives that will allow Edmonton Airports to succeed in achieving the objectives.



## IMPROVE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

It is quite common for general aviation airports to operate at a financial loss; their operation is often justified by the indirect financial gains they create and their broader economic and community impact, as is the case with ZVL. However, in accordance with the Government of Alberta's Regional Airports Authorities Act, Edmonton Airports is committed to operating ZVL as efficiently as possible.

Edmonton Airports has adopted the strategic objective of improving financial sustainability for ZVL, with an emphasis on reducing the operating loss.

In the time frame for this strategic plan, Edmonton Airports aims to achieve an overall five-year reduction of annual operating loss primarily through stakeholder project funding.

### Initiatives

- Ongoing collaborative efforts with Sturgeon County and Villeneuve Landing Network (VLN) to position ZVL as a regional priority asset and leverage it for regional economic growth
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and alignment on collaborative project funding
- Review of airport rates and fees

### Success Measure

- Overall trend in reduction of operating losses from 2024-2028 (five-year trending increase in EBITDA [earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization] supported by collaboration and investment from regional partners).

## GROW GENERAL AVIATION TRAFFIC

The Regional Airports Authorities Act requires Edmonton Airports to operate ZVL in a safe, secure and efficient manner, as well as strive to advance economic and community development in the region of the airport.

Edmonton Airports has identified the strategic objective of growing general aviation traffic as a way to advance economic and community development. Growth in general aviation traffic at ZVL will attract people and resources to the area, not just through the aviation traffic, but also through the associated support services and amenities.

### Initiatives

- Continued upgrading of core aviation infrastructure (e.g., main apron expansion, taxiway improvements)
- Support growth of maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) businesses
- Encourage growth of a full-service fixed base operator (FBO)
- Establish onsite amenities (food services, car rental services, lodging services)

### Success Measure

- Five year increasing trend in aviation traffic movements; specifically itinerant movements





## GROW FLIGHT TRAINING

One of the purposes of Edmonton Airports, as specified in the Regional Airports Authorities Act, is to advance economic development, including by means of expanding the aviation industry. A key facet of sustaining and expanding the aviation industry is the ability to meet the demand for aircraft pilots.

Transport Canada constructed ZVL in 1976 with the intent of it being a regional flight training resource. Edmonton Airports recognizes the inherent strengths that ZVL offers in terms of the facility and surrounding environment. Edmonton Airports maintains the strategic objective to grow flight training over the next five years and beyond, to support and expand the commercial aviation industry.

### Initiatives

- Continued support of existing flight training operations at ZVL
- Explore opportunities with commercial airlines and existing major flight schools
- Explore growth opportunities and facilitate awareness of local post-secondary institution aviation programs including flight training

### Success Measure

- Five year increasing trend in aviation traffic movements; specifically local movements

## INCREASE NON-AERONAUTICAL REVENUE

Increasing non-aeronautical revenue will support the objective of improving the airport's financial sustainability and further advance regional economic and community development.

Non-aeronautical revenue at ZVL primarily comes from real estate lease revenue for hangar lots. Over the next five years, Edmonton Airports will invest in site servicing as opportunities arise, not just for new hangar lots, but also for potential light industrial developments that are compatible with airport land use.

### Initiatives

- Hangar lot development
- Collaboration with regional municipalities and partners on non-aeronautical developments at ZVL aligned with the regional economic vision and the Villeneuve Airport Area – Area Structure Plan
- Enhancing fire protection capabilities
- Storm water management upgrades

### Success Measure

- Overall five-year increase in revenue generated from land leases and ancillary non-aeronautical revenue opportunities





# Collaborative Initiatives & Shared Benefits

ZVL is a regional asset that benefits the community. Together with municipal and business partners, and onsite owners and operators, Edmonton Airports has identified communally beneficial initiatives that support the fulfillment of the strategic objectives for ZVL and support the economic development goals of the region. Further working sessions with partner municipalities will provide opportunities to discuss:

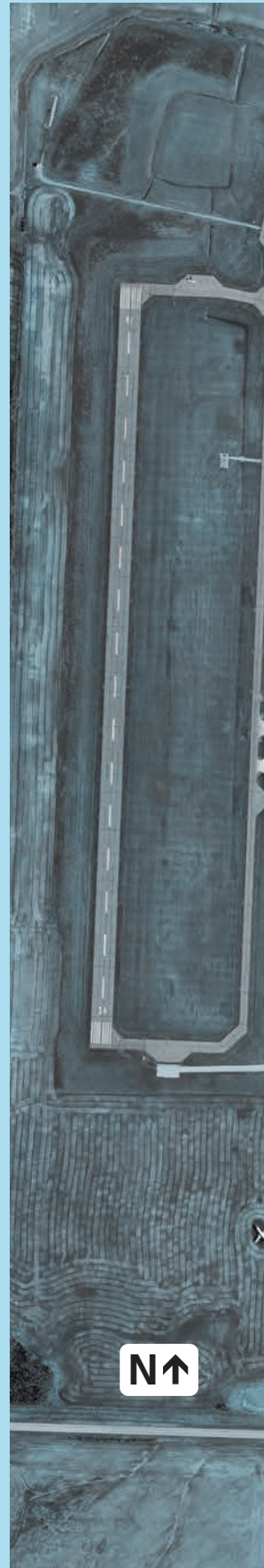
- **Core airport infrastructure and services,**
- **Expanding auxiliary services and developments,**
- **Public outreach and improved engagement.**

Edmonton Airports will use this Strategic Plan as a base for ongoing discussions with regional and onsite partners.

# 2028 Villeneuve Airport Strategic Vision

## STRATEGIC PLANNING OUTCOMES

Through continued investment in ZVL, Edmonton Airports, along with regional partners, will be able to grow this key regional strategic asset together.







**MAIN APRON  
EXPANSION**

**PHASE II  
HANGAR LOT  
DEVELOPMENT**

**WATER RESERVOIR**  
• Capacity Expansion

**STORM WATER  
MANAGEMENT  
FACILITY EXPANSION**

**OTHER POTENTIAL INITIATIVES:**

- Food Services
- Car Rental Services
- FBO Services
- MRO Services

**POTENTIAL FUTURE  
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**