



Indianapolis International Airport

MAJOR MILESTONES BY DECADE

Since it opened in 1931, Indianapolis International Airport (IND) has adapted and grown to meet the challenges of the commercial aviation industry. Along the way, it has also played an important role in the economic growth and stability enjoyed by the City of Indianapolis and the surrounding metropolitan area.

1920s–1930s

- Cox Field, later named Stout Field, served as the city's primary airport for most of the 1920s. Development of what is now Indianapolis International Airport began in 1928, when a site selection committee, working with the Chamber of Commerce, chose a 947-acre site seven miles west and south of the city center.
- Dedicated in 1931, the city's Municipal Airport was the ninth in the nation to be rated A-I-A by the U.S. Department of Commerce, making it certified to manage the largest transport planes, such as the Force Tri-Motor, on the market at that time.
- The passenger terminal, built for \$150,000, opened to serve the public and was initially served by two airlines (one flying east and west; one flying north and south) that carried both passengers and air mail.

1940s–1950s

- Through the beginning of World War II, IND grew at a moderate pace, serving as a base for the Civil Pilot Training Program and as a test site for Allison P-51 engines in the early 1940s. It was renamed Weir Cook Airport in 1944.
- After the end of the war, the aviation industry grew rapidly. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Civil Aeronautics Administration established the Technical Development Center in Indianapolis, which helped develop navigation aids including very high-frequency omnidirectional radio ranges (VORs), improved radar and runway lights, and the transponder. The airport's first Air Route Traffic Control Center opened.
- A new, two-level terminal built to replace the original 1931 building opened in 1956 for a cost of \$1,900,000. It would be enlarged, expanded, and renovated many times through the years.

1960s–1970s

- New demands on the airport, including the need for longer runways, developed with the introduction of jet aircraft in the early 1960s. The Indianapolis Airport Authority (IAA) was established in 1962 to govern Indianapolis International Airport, four reliever airports, and the Downtown Heliport.
- During this decade, the airport's primary runway was extended to 10,000 feet and the terminal was expanded to accommodate 11 jet gates. A six-story administration building was constructed in 1970 and the airport grew to encompass 1,300 acres.
- Growth in the 1970s was guided by: (1) A 1975 master plan addressing future development, including plans for two new parallel runways as well as a midfield terminal building and (2) An airport systems plan defining the role of all central Indiana airports in an eight-county area.
- By the mid-1970s, increases in air traffic resulted in the construction of a temporary 3,700 foot parallel general aviation runway and a new 120-foot tall air traffic control tower. A new six-gate unit Concourse D was built and connected to the existing terminal by an expanded roadway system.
- A dedicated International Arrivals Building (IAB) opened in 1976 and the airport was renamed Indianapolis International Airport. A large airfield maintenance facility opened, as did an Airport Safety Facility, and additional land (2,000 acres) was acquired for future development, more than doubling the airport's size.

1980s–1990s

- The number of passenger carriers serving Indianapolis grew from six to 22. Cargo operations also grew and construction was completed on two large cargo facilities. The airport achieved designation as a Foreign Trade Zone.
- With the addition of a ten-gate Concourse C and expansion of an existing concourse, the terminal now included a total of 36 gates, plus ticket counters, baggage make-up, and baggage claim areas. A five-level, 1,800 space Parking Garage was built and 1,000 more parking spaces were added to the surface lot in time for the 1987 Pan Am Games.
- Hometown airline American Trans Air emerged, building a new hangar and maintenance base at IND and locating their corporate headquarters and reservation center in a new facility on the airport's northwest side. By 1989, IAA owned 4,500 acres of land.
- Two new runways (10,000 and 11,200 feet in length) separated by 4,850 feet were dedicated. An update to the airport's initial 1987 Part 150 noise study resulted in

changes to the Noise Compatibility Plan. A Habitat Conservation Plan was adopted to provide environmental mitigation for the Indiana Bat and wetland restoration resulting from the runway developments and the planned relocation of I-70 for the Midfield Project.

- IAA embarked on a program to attract new business, including a 32-acre campus for U.S. Air, a 43-acre U.S. Postal Services Express Mail Hub facility, and a 350-acre, \$1 billion heavy maintenance center for United Airlines. Additional retail shops and an expanded food court were added to the passenger terminal.

2000–present

- Continued expansions in passenger and cargo service began straining airport systems and in early 2001, the city announced a new \$800 million midfield terminal would be built. The project would be funded through user rates and charges and not local property tax revenue.
- St. Louis-based Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum, Inc., was selected as the Master Design firm; the primary construction managers, Indianapolis-based Hunt Construction Group and Turner Construction Company were announced.
- Terrorist group attacks Pentagon and World Trade Center towers in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001. More planes are diverted to IND than any other U.S. airport as nation's air space is closed. IND is first U.S. airport cleared to reopen on Sept. 13.
- Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) broke ground to relocate a portion of I-70 in conjunction with the midfield project in 2002. The \$187 million project includes a dedicated I-70 interchange to serve the new airport and a new Six Points Road I-70 interchange.
- In the summer of 2003, construction of a new 348-foot control tower began and site preparation work on the midfield terminal was scheduled for fall of that same year. Construction on a new FAA Air Traffic Control Tower and Terminal Radar Approach Control (ATCT/TRACON) in 2003; the facility opened in 2006.
- Ground for the new airport terminal, parking garage, and other support facilities was broken in 2005. Construction of the new airport was substantially complete by the fall of 2008. It opened for its first full day of business Nov. 12, 2008.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

- **1928:** Following an Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce site selection process, Mayor L. Ert Slack and committee took the first step in acquiring a new airport.
- **1931:** Indianapolis Municipal Airport is dedicated at 2500 S. High School Road.

- **1944:** Weir Cook Municipal adopted as name of airport.
- **1945:** City Board of Aviation Commissioners is established by state legislature.
- **1946:** A temporary addition was made to the terminal building.
- **1948:** Study to determine expansion needs for airport facilities began.
- **1951:** The Board of Aviation Commissioners approved the plan for development of a new Weir Cook Municipal Airport.
- **1954:** A hangar and office building were completed; ground was broken for new passenger terminal.
- **1956:** Operations at the new Weir Cook Municipal Airport terminal begin Aug. 1.
- **1962:** Indianapolis Airport Authority (IAA) is created to govern Indianapolis International Airport, four regional airports, and the Downtown Heliport; four-member board is appointed by the Mayor of Indianapolis and Marion County Commissioners. Runway 13/31 is built at length of 6,000 feet.
- **1968:** Passenger terminal is expanded with the construction a concourse, heptagon, and a new roadway.
- **1970:** Administration/Post Office building complete; IND enplanes 1,000,000 passengers for the first time.
- **1972:** Construction of FAA control tower designed by I.M. Pei complete.
- **1974:** Construction of a new concourse and upper level roadway extension is completed.
- **1975:** The Indianapolis Airport Authority adopts a master plan for airport development.
- **1976:** International Arrivals Building dedicated; Weir Cook Airport renamed Indianapolis International Airport.
- **1981:** 50th anniversary of Indianapolis International Airport is celebrated; Foreign Trade Zone facility is completed and dedicated.
- **1986:** Federal Express (FedEx) hub construction complete; ground is broken for UP expansion.

- **1987:** Parking Garage opens and concourse C dedicated.
- **1988:** FedEx hub opens; American Trans Air maintenance hangar opens; airport's first noise study is complete.
- **1989:** U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Hub relocates to Indianapolis.
- **1990:** New runway 5R/23L opens; airport adopts update to 1975 master plan.
- **1991:** U.S. Air maintenance hangar opens; IND's first Ground Transportation Center opens; airport designated as site for new permanent U.S. Postal Eagle Network Hub Sort Facility; United Airlines selects Indianapolis for a maintenance center, which will become known as the Indianapolis Maintenance Center (IMC).
- **1992:** National Weather Service new forecast office opens on Hanna Avenue; ground is broken for IMC; capital improvement program including announced.
- **1993:** New runway 5L/32R construction begins; U.S. Postal Services' Eagle Hub opens; Aviation Technology Center jointly operated by Vincennes University and Purdue University opens.
- **1994:** Federal Express announces major hub expansion; United Airlines Maintenance center dedication; competition for private airport managed company announced.
- **1995:** Federal Express acquires maintenance hangar from US Air; IAA awards ten-year management contract to BAA Indianapolis, LLC.
- **1996:** New runway 5L/23R opens; annual volume exceeds seven million passengers.
- **1997:** 12,800 square feet retail complex, including food court, opens in terminal.
- **1998:** Federal Express expansion is complete; \$8 million passenger terminal renovation project begins.
- **1999:** IAA begins a project definition process to estimate the costs of a new midfield complex (for the new airport) by setting out general design values; Indianapolis becomes the fastest growing cargo airport in the world.
- **2000:** Federal Express expands aircraft apron and employee parking.
- **2001:** IAA begins a search for a master design firm to provide comprehensive design services for the new airport.
- **2002:** Master design firm named; nine firms, two of which are primary, selected perform construction manager duties for the midfield project; Indiana Department

of Transportation (INDOT) breaks ground to relocate a portion of I-70 in conjunction with new airport construction.

- **2003:** Federal Aviation Administration and Indianapolis Airport Authority break ground on construction of a new Air Traffic Control Tower and Terminal Radar Approach Control (ATCT/TRACON) building; representatives from architectural firm unveil the new airport design.
- **2004:** INDOT completes I-70 relocation and interchange construction; annual passenger volume exceeds 8 million passengers.
- **2005:** Indianapolis Airport Authority Board expands to eight voting members, including representatives from City of Indianapolis and Marion, Hamilton, and Hendricks counties; IAA and city officials break ground for the new airport.
- **2006:** Air Traffic Control Tower and TRACON open in April; Federal Express announces major hub expansion.
- **2007:** IAA board votes and passes ordinance making all airport-owned properties smoke free by January of 2008.
- **2008:** The new Indianapolis International Airport and Col. H. Weir Cook Terminal Building opens Nov. 12 for first full day of business.