

# West Star Expansion Executive Summary

## Expansion Project

The directors of the Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority (Airport Authority) board are considering a proposal to accommodate the expansion of West Star Aviation, Inc. (West Star). The expansion project includes building a new 45,500 square-foot hangar and the lease of an additional 48,900 square feet of existing airport space. The proposal was drafted in response to a competitive bid process initiated by West Star.

## Economic Benefit

In addition to a new \$8 million hangar, up to 150 new jobs could potentially be created over the project's 5-year build out, including 40 in the first year, at an average annual salary of \$52,000. The first year payroll increase is estimated to be over \$6 million, moving up slowly over the build out period, to as much as \$100 million annually. Additional impact figures compiled by the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP) indicate that over that same time period, the economic impact could be as much as \$76 million in direct and indirect benefit to the local area, \$279 million to Mesa County, and \$273 million to the state of Colorado. Over 1,000 West Star customers are forecast to be drawn to the area annually, staying here as their service work is being performed.

## Public-Private Partnership

The expansion was motivated by West Star's decision to enter the global general aviation market, which required additional paint and completions capacity. A business analysis determined that more than one of its base operations would be suitable for the expansion, and so a competitive bid process with the host cities was initiated. The Airport Authority collaborated with the Colorado Aeronautical Board and GJEP to craft a proposal in response to their needs. West Star awarded the bid to the Grand Junction airport pending final approval by its board of directors.

## West Star Aviation Background

The Grand Junction Regional Airport has been home to West Star Aviation since 1952, during which time West Star has become one of the top aircraft maintenance facilities in the world. The company has facilities in six United States airports: Grand Junction, CO (GJT); Aspen, CO (ASE); East Alton, IL (ALN); Dallas, TX (DAL); Columbia, SC (CAE); and Chesterfield, MO (SUS).

