



**100**  
YEARS

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## **MKE AIRPORT CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF FLIGHT IN 2026**

*This year marks the milestone centennial for Milwaukee's hometown airport.*

**MILWAUKEE (February 25, 2026)** – [Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport \(MKE\)](#) will officially reach its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on October 5, 2026, and ahead of this milestone, MKE Airport invites the community to celebrate all year long. Since 1926, MKE has served Milwaukee with nonstop flights, nonstop innovation, nonstop employment, and nonstop adventures. Through the decades, our commitment to our travelers and our team has helped us go further than anyone would have imagined.

“Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport is a cornerstone of our community, and a driver of economic vitality for Milwaukee County. For 100 years, MKE has connected our residents to opportunities across the globe while welcoming visitors who contribute to the cultural and economic fabric of our region. The Airport supports thousands of jobs, strengthens local businesses, and serves as a gateway that showcases the best of Milwaukee to the world,” said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley. “As we celebrate this historic milestone, we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring MKE continues to thrive as a source of pride and progress for generations to come.”

With 100 years and over 300 million passengers, there are countless stories to tell and many moments that have helped shape MKE's history. As we look to the future, MKE remains dedicated to providing best-in-class service, up-to-date facilities, and an easy travel experience.

“Reaching our 100th anniversary is more than a milestone. It's a celebration of our community's vision, innovation, and tenacity. From humble grass runways in 1926 to becoming the gateway connecting millions of travelers today, MKE has always embodied Wisconsin's pioneering spirit. We're incredibly proud to celebrate a century of tourism, economic opportunity, and global connection,” said Airport Director Brian Dranzik.

In honor of this milestone, MKE Airport will be represented at several community events throughout 2026 leading up to a public centennial celebration in October when we reach our official 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. MKE has launched our [official centennial website](#), which details the airport's history and highlights key facts and events.

### **Key Milestones in MKE's History**

- **October 5, 1926:** Milwaukee County purchases private airfield Hamilton Airport and renames it Milwaukee County Airport.
- **July 1940:** A new two-story passenger terminal building opens on Layton Avenue.
- **March 1941:** The Airport is renamed General Mitchell Field.

- **July 1955:** The passenger terminal moves to a new midfield location on Howell Avenue with the completion of a three-concourse, two-level structure with 23 gates.
- **September 1985:** An expanded and renovated main terminal opens. In June 1986 the Airport is renamed General Mitchell International Airport.
- **December 1990:** The “hammerhead” section of Concourse D with 16 additional gates is added.
- **December 2002:** New Rental Car Center opens, providing an enhanced experience to visitors.
- **July 2007:** The “hammerhead” section of Concourse C opens with 8 new gates.
- **June 2015:** Complete renovation of the Baggage Claim Facility is completed.
- **February 2019:** The Airport is renamed Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport.
- **2021-2022:** MKE is twice recognized as one of the best airports in the world by Airports Council International.
- **February 2025:** Ground is broken on a new 337,000 square-foot air cargo facility.
- **September 2025:** MKE kicks off redevelopment of Concourse E
- **October 5, 2026:** MKE Airport celebrates 100 years of connecting Milwaukee to the world.

*Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport offers nonstop flights to 30+ destinations coast-to-coast, and more than 200 international destinations are available with one easy connection. MKE is served by Alaska, American, Delta, Frontier, JetBlue, Southwest, Sun Country, and United. The complete list of nonstop cities can be found at [flymke.com](http://flymke.com).*

*MKE is owned by Milwaukee County and operated by the Department of Transportation, Airport Division, under the policy direction of the Milwaukee County Executive and the County Board of Supervisors. The Airport is entirely funded by user fees; no property tax dollars are used for the Airport’s capital improvements or for its day-to-day operation.*

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