



HANCOCK COUNTY PORT AND HARBOR COMMISSION

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN REPORT



Prepared by the International
Association of Maritime and Port
Executives

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INTRODUCTION

The IAMPE provides management advisory services to its members, which include many ports and port organizations throughout North America, including the Hancock County Port and Harbor Commission (HCPHC). After several meetings with HCPHC, the IAMPE proposed an expanded scope of work to be completed regarding a Strategic Action Plan for the Commission, its staff and assets. The scope for the project was proposed to meet the objectives below:

1. Undertake a physical inspection of the site and conduct a photo survey of all Hancock County Commission Transportation Assets.
2. Review existing plan and study documents.
3. Meet with staff, stakeholders and Commission members to discuss the organization of the Hancock County Port Commission and potential opportunities.
4. Undertake a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis
5. Show findings and make basic recommendations based on those findings.
6. Provide a Strategic Action Plan for Commissioner approval.

BACKGROUND

The Hancock County Port and Harbor Commission (HCPHC) is an Economic Development Agency (EDA) that operates the Port Bienville Industrial Park (PBIP), Port of Bienville on the Pearl River, Port Bienville Shortline Railroad (PBVR), and the Stennis International Airport (HAS). The HCPHC would like to increase the utilization of each of these assets for the economic benefit of the county and surrounding region, and engaged IAMPE to assist with the development of a strategic action plan.

HCPHC staff provided us with a tour of all of the facilities, and we had a chance to meet with the agency's staff, key business partners, and HCPHC Commissioners. Using the data so gathered, we prepared a SWOT analysis, strategic action plan, and general recommendations for the HCPHC to further its objective of increased transportation asset utilization.

SITE OVERVIEW – PORT FACILITY AND INDUSTRIAL PARK

HCPHC operates the Port Bienville Industrial Park (PBIP), which includes Port Bienville on the Pearl River.

PBIP is situated on 3,600 acres of land, some of which exists in flood zones and is potentially unsuitable for development. The park has 1,000 acres available for development with various flood plains and wetlands within the property's boundaries. PBIP has several anchor tenants, including Sobic, Jindal, SNF Petrochemie, DAK America, and Calgon. Products produced or processed on site include automotive materials, fabricated steel pipe, polymers, PET Resins, and personal equipment. PBIP provides multimodal warehouse and transload capabilities for handling of bulk and neo-bulk cargoes.

PBIP has good rail, road, and waterway access. It is located near major roadways which include Interstate 10, 12, and 59 and U.S. Highways 90 and 49. PBIP is 50 miles east of the Port of New Orleans and 30 miles west of the Port of Gulfport.



Figure 1 PBIP and Port (Source: HCPHC)

PBIP is serviced by the Port Bienville Shortline Railroad (PBVR), a Class III railroad, with a rail capacity consisting of 17 miles of track on site and an approximate storage capacity of 605 rail cars. The track can accommodate standard 286,000-pound loaded railcars. The railroad provides transload service, railcar storage and switching, railcar loading/unloading, cleaning, weighing, maintenance, repair, and painting. PBVR handled over 15,000 rail cars in 2022, and the rail activity generates the most favorable returns of any of HCPHC's transportation assets. The PBVR has a well-positioned rail connection to CSX 40 miles away at Ansley, Mississippi. CSX's transportation network encompasses about 20,000 route miles of track in 23 states, the District of Columbia, and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The transportation network serves some of the largest population centers in the nation, as well as major markets in the eastern United States, and has access to over 70 ocean, river, and lake port terminals along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes, and the St. Lawrence Seaway. CSX also has access to Pacific ports through alliances with western railroads. CSX moves approximately 1,900 rail cars daily on its system, handling a wide range of products.¹



Figure 2 Industrial Park Rail/Road Network (Source: HCPHC)

¹ Source: CSX Transportation 2022 Annual Report

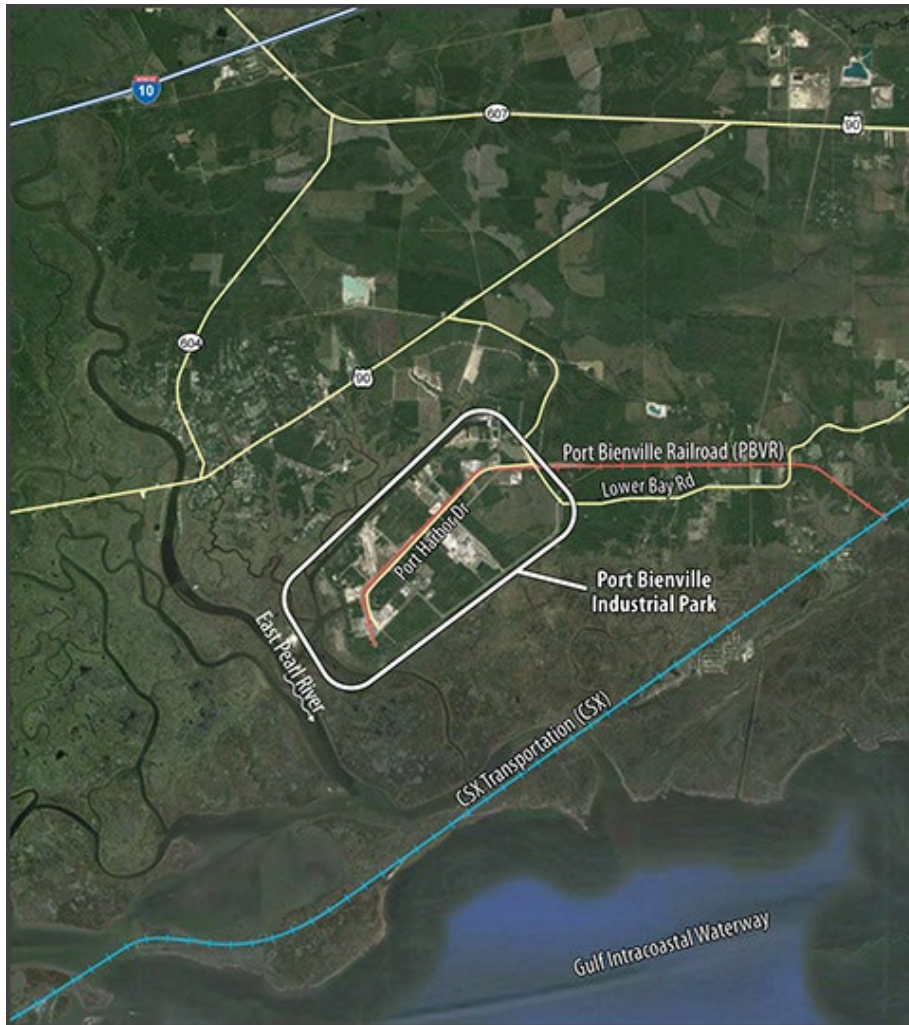


Figure 3 Port Bienville Industrial Park Geographic Location (Source: HCPHC)

The Port facility within the industrial park is on the Pearl River, approximately 40 miles to the Gulf of Mexico and 30 miles to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway near mile marker 24 on the Mulatto Bayou. The average water depth in the river is approximately 10 feet at low tide. CSX has a swing bridge at mile marker 1.0 on the river with a closed vertical clearance of 14' and horizontal clearance of 87', which does not restrict the port's access for barges, towboats, and small vessels with drafts appropriate to the river depth. The berth at cargo dock A (former Linea Dock) has a draft alongside of approximately 12.5 feet, appropriate for most inland barges and some small vessels. The pier consists of two docks, one facing on the pearl River with a length of 380 feet, and a second dock perpendicular to the river of 540 feet. The port has a 100-ton Manitowoc crawler crane for heavy lift services.



Figure 2 New Dock Area (Source: IAMPE)



Figure 3 Pearl River Estuary (Source: NOAA) and Barge Dock A (Source: IAMPE)

In 2022, HCPHC began construction of a new maritime dock and extension of the railroad facility at PBIP. The \$8.8 million project included a 600-foot bulkhead with a 40-foot apron which can accommodate three barges for loading and unloading. It also included a 250-foot crushed stone laydown yard extension from the apron for operations and storage. Attached to the project were two rail track extensions and improved access roads. The project was funded by a \$7.4 million RESTORE Act grant in 2017 with an additional \$510,000 in funding coming from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality's GOMESA program and a contribution by the HCPHC of \$870,000.



Figure 4 New 600-Foot Barge Dock, Rail and Upland Yard (Source HCPHC)



Figure 5 Port Near Dock Warehousing (Source: IAMPE)

PBIP houses Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) #92 and there are two buildings with 60,000 square feet and 36,000 square feet of warehouse space on site near dock A that are owned by HCPHC. On 4 January 2022, the Commission acquired a 72,000-square-foot former manufacturing facility and warehouse located at the industrial park. The former manufacturing facility includes approximately 10 acres and consists of a heavy-duty concrete slab served by eight overhead cranes. There is 67,200 square feet of industrial space along with two separate 2,400-square-foot office suites and an additional 2,400-square-foot storage area. Adjacent to the building is a 10-ton gantry crane, 70 feet wide with 560 feet of rail. HCPHC was also recently awarded \$2 million to create a 30,000-square-foot warehouse with a docking bay at PBIP.



Figure 6 New Warehouse Acquired in 2022 (Source: HCPHC)

SITE OVERVIEW - STENNIS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (HSA)

Stennis International Airport (FAA code “HSA”) is a general aviation and military use airport equipped with an 8,497-foot runway, oriented north and south (18/36 Magnetic) with rigid asphalt pavement (PCN 62 /F/B/X/T). The airport is located on 591 acres of property with an elevation of 23 feet above sea level. The 150-foot-wide runway is equipped with runway, ramp, and taxiway lighting but is not CAT 3 equipped. Originally built as a U.S. Army auxiliary training school for pilots, it was opened to civil aviation in 1970. The airport is regulated under CFR Part 139, and is a Class IV airport with Index A aircraft rescue firefighting (ARFF) capacity. The airport is 12 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico, and is located on the eastern side of Stennis Space Center’s 125,000-acre facility.

The Stennis Airport is equipped with 138,000 square feet of hanger space and has approximately 2,437 acres of developable open space and several buildings with rentable space available. Million Air is the only on-site Fixed Base Operator (FBO) and collects most fees on behalf of HCPHC. HSA provides fueling, aircraft maintenance, and houses a flight school training facility. HSA is used extensively by the military for training programs for their pilots. HSA does not have scheduled air service for passengers or freight.



Figure 7 HSA Terminal, Hangars, and Ramp (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 8 Stennis International Airport (Source: Google Earth)

HSA has some space constraints but also has room for expansion. HSA does not have space for a crosswind runway available. The airport is expanding its facilities with a 12,000 SF Corporate Hangar, a 26,000 SF Restore Hangar, and a 100,000 SF hangar with additional expandability. Overall, the airport has adequate property for expansion and flight line space for additional GA hangars and service providers.

HSA has developed a niche in aircraft testing and training not normally found at busier airports. The airport is looking to establish a flight simulated training center at Stennis International Airport which will allow military personnel to train with simulation specific to their aircraft. There is military maintenance on sight as well as staging and storage for military aircraft. The airport is not used for deployment

purposes although there is adequate space for development of equipment storage and runway handling of larger military aircraft. According to the US Air Force, the airport could handle a Boeing C-17 Globemaster, an aircraft that can transport an M1 Abrams main battle tank, other armored vehicles, trucks, and trailers, along with palletized cargo.



Figure 9 Stennis Airport Open Properties (Source: HCPHC)

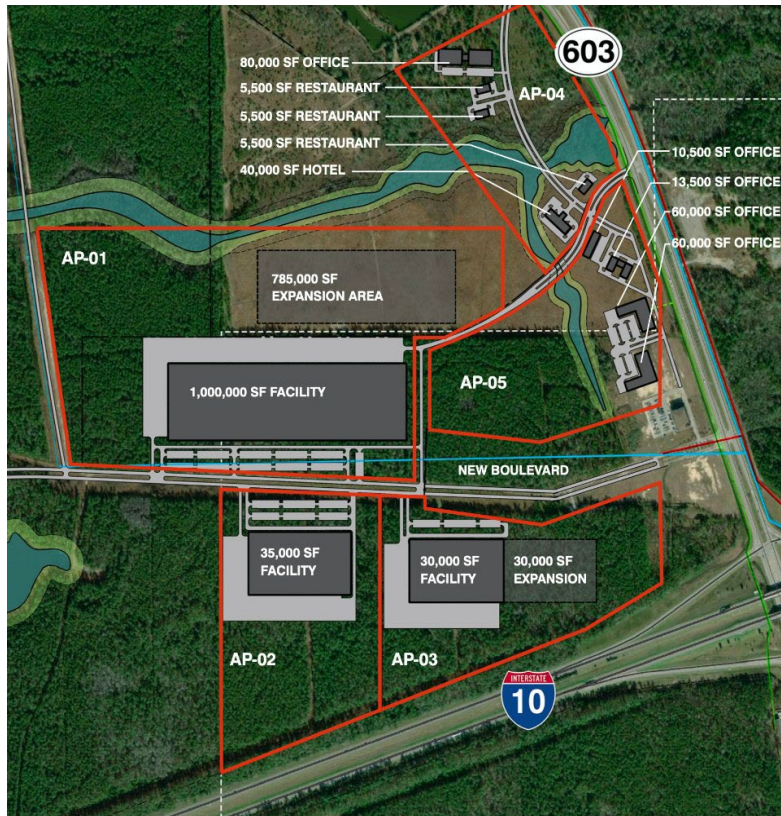


Figure 10 Airport Properties (Source: HCPHC)



Figure 11 Airport Flightline Rental Properties Available (Source: HCPHC)

HCPHC STAFF VISION

The IAMPE undertook a staff visioning meeting with HCPHC staff. All Strategic Processes begin with a methodical approach to determining what is practical, which begins with an understanding of shared organizational vision. What was apparent from the visioning session was the strong desire on the part of all the staff to create and achieve a vision for the organization as well as staff's commitment to the success of the process. The discussion included staff perspectives which are summarized here in no particular order:

- Growth, Knowing our potential partners;
- Build on existing customer base;
- Full utilization of Port Bienville;
- Increased use of port and airport;
- Better partner relationships;
- Increased commercial air operations at airport;
- Increased rail storage capacity;
- Better dock utilization;
- Increased maritime traffic;
- Fuller utilization of empty warehouse space;
- Development of west side of airport;
- Full build out of Tech Park;
- More sustainable infrastructure/less maintenance;
- Increased profitability at airport;
- Resolve port's lack of identity;
- Identification of realistic port market;
- Balance of staff time between port and airport (airport controlling most of staff time);
- Adequate staff to handle all requirements for operations, maintenance, capital improvements, and business development;
- Better structured job descriptions;
- Port and airport financial self-sustainability;
- Under-utilized new infrastructure;
- Incorporation of NASA into the Commission's vision;
- Commitment to and follow through of Commission's vision;
- Identification of rail connection opportunities other than CSX;
- Marketing of airpark for industrial/warehouse use;
- Targeted business development;
- NASA Buffer zone development;
- Participation in Marine highway program;
- Internal staff efficiency;
- Getting wins;
- Increased site development;
- Expanded utility capacity at port;
- Industrial Park site readiness; and
- Increase/Improve air cargo movement to truck through Stennis Space Center.

The staff was also asked what the biggest challenges they had faced, or efforts made that were less than successful. These included:

- Employee turnover;
- Inconsistent leadership;
- Commissioner turnover;
- Low success rate on opportunities;
- Need for better teamwork;
- Lack of focus;
- No standardization of rates/charges and policies for negotiations;
- Clear job responsibilities;
- Demands related to economic development beyond the Commission's assets; and
- Chasing unrealistic opportunities.

A visioning meeting was also held with HCPHC Commissioners who expressed a universal desire to expand property utilization and continue to focus on economic development for the entire county. There was a strong desire on the part of the Commissioners to see growth and development of the Commission's assets as well as the county's. The importance of asset utilization and creation of jobs as well as the quality of life was also apparent. There was also an understanding of the benefits of a Strategic Action Plan and how it could be utilized to achieve Commission and staff goals.

FINDINGS – OVERVIEW

HCPHC has undertaken several studies to quantify use of the assets of the facilities under its control. These include a Port Master Plan in 2010 by URS, a Financial Study by Strategic Rail Finance plan in 2017 and 2021, a Dock Market Study in 2021 prepared by PLG, and several site and engineering studies and grant applications. There were also several studies done for the airport and its potential development, including a study in 2018 for the Stennis Spaceport and the Hancock County Aviation and Aerospace Cluster Optimization Plan. In addition, there was an Environmental Impact review completed for the Mississippi Department of Transportation for submittal to the Federal Railroad Administration in 2013. Overall, HCPHC has shown a good deal of due diligence in assessing its needs and focusing on development.

PBIP is well positioned to serve as an intermodal hub and industrial park for the State of Mississippi and the Gulf region. PBIP has extensive land, good road and rail connections, waterway access, anchor tenants and all the properties and infrastructure are well maintained and capable of more industrial activity. Compared to many other ports in the Gulf region, Bienville and its facilities have the potential for significant growth.

HAS is in excellent condition, has been well maintained and is underutilized for general aviation or other commercial activities. It is well positioned for expansion and potential use for additional training. At a meeting of aviation interests, it was noted that lack of hotel space at the airport hindered growth in expanded training. Most of the current training is single-day oriented. Attendees also noted workforce development issues, the need for additional hanger space and interest in NASA's future plans for their property which is adjacent to the airport.

In general, HCPHC assets are in excellent condition, are diversified, have expandability, good intermodal connectivity, and excellent business development potential. The IAMPE survey and meetings noted no “fatal flaws” and the Commission appears to be in a good position to utilize its assets and political support to benefit the State and the overall region. The staff is highly qualified and motivated to pursue growth for the organization.

FINDINGS – GOVERNANCE

HCPHC is not organized as a traditional port authority: it is organized as an economic development agency (EDA). There are crucial differences in the objectives and means that EDAs and port authorities employ to achieve their goals; however general economic development efforts are best bifurcated from freight transportation management. Often, transportation management must be undertaken with a mind to bottom-line economic realities and generating tangible and sustainable return on freight investments. Economic development typically has a broader charter: serving the general economic good of a community can take many forms and can be done with a mind to effecting change over a longer period and fostering economic growth across multiple sectors. That said, strong transportation and logistics availability often serves to improve the economic development of a region. An intentional approach to managing its transportation assets and development will be required for HCPHC to capitalize on the opportunities available to it. This will necessitate HCPHC’s operation under more of a “port authority” paradigm than an EDA paradigm.

The other primary issue as identified by staff is the unstructured approach to business development and asset management. Staff were often tasked with a wide range of responsibilities to sometimes cross purposes. There was also unbalanced focus on one business sector over another which had often slowed the progress of the organization overall and utilized financial resources in an unbalanced manner. With the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer, the organization is undergoing a transformation through reorganization and use of structured job responsibilities.

The staff And Commissioners had definitive priorities which were based on current existing conditions and perceived needs:

1. Expanded staff with definitive job descriptions
2. Continued site development
3. Addition of comprehensive business development effort
4. NASA opportunities
5. Expansion of port activity
6. Airport maintenance, repair, and development
7. Tech Park development
8. Hanger capacity development
9. Attraction of industrial customers and tenants
10. Expansion of rail on site
11. More equal funding allocation
12. New tenants for Industrial Port

These objectives were consistent throughout the process and form the basis of a vision for the Commission along with the incorporated desires of the Commissioners.

OPPORTUNITIES – WATERBORNE FREIGHT

In conversations with potential regional partners, IAMPE has found that there is potential promise in exploring partnership with other regional seaports as a regional transshipment hub. PBIP's excellent intermodal connectivity, industrial park facilities, transship capabilities, strategic positioning, and available upland make it uniquely situated to capture transshipment business. The IAMPE has been involved in several port development projects on the Gulf Coast from Texas to Florida.

The prospect of transshipment partnership with a seaport has been explored before: HCPHC had an analysis done on the feasibility of a freight link with New Orleans, whereby freight would move via rail to/from Bienville and connect to New Orleans via truck. HCPHC's consultant created a comparison of trucking costs to/from Bienville vs. direct trucking costs and dray costs from other inland ports, and the study showed some promising competitive edge by using Bienville. However, interest from New Orleans at the time was tepid, and it was difficult to get an incentive rate from CSX (the rail carrier that services Bienville). This model may function with a different port, such as Gulfport, MS.

An opportunity may exist to collaborate with the Port of Gulfport, MS as an inland port partner. A recent study conducted by the port of Gulfport cited a need for an inland port partner, as well as warehousing and a better connection to CSX (Gulfport is serviced by KCS). While KCS and CSX do interchange with one another, it is currently at a considerable cost and adds substantial transit time. Bienville may have an opportunity to partner with Gulfport to find a way to mitigate the current difficulties in the rail interchange, and to serve as freight links to one another to the benefit of both ports. Of particular interest were some of the conversations we had with several stakeholders including the current stevedore on site, Stevedoring Services of America (SSA). SSA also provides stevedoring and terminal operating services in both the Port of Gulfport, Mississippi and PBIP. SSA is a potential candidate for leasing and operating the port facilities at PBIP under contract.

A regional transshipment link to another port would create eligibility for Marine Highway Project (MHP) designation and associated grant funding. The Marine Highway program has recently been expanded to include bulk cargoes and geographically to include Mexico and Canada. Since HCPHC has handled freight from Mexico in the past, a future freight connection to Mexico might be eligible for MHP designation.

Bienville has existing barge traffic and an operating stevedore, SSA. At some ports, joint business development efforts between port authorities and stevedores can be particularly effective at attracting new business: no such effort currently exists in Bienville. The Port has substantial capacity to service more freight throughput by barge, rail, and truck. One commodity that presents an existing opportunity is PET products. Bienville currently handles PET products with raw material railed or trucked in from Mexico. The PET products are developed at the port, and then moved via CSX rail to the Midwest and West Coast, taking advantage of the FTZ at PBIP. There appears to be an opportunity to expand the volume of this freight.

Water-dependent manufacturing is also a realistic opportunity. Water dependent manufacturing is manufacturing that requires raw or input materials and/or finished product to arrive or depart by on-water conveyance. Examples of water-dependent manufacturing include a wood pellet mill that manufactures wood pellets for export or a wind turbine component manufacturing plant where components are more easily shipped to a marshalling port where they can be assembled for delivery to wind farms.

With respect to the biomass export opportunity, a recent study by the USDA concluded that forest biomass from the Southeast of the US for wood pellet production in 2030 would amount to between 74 and 95 million dry tons per year and by 2050 they could range between 85 and 162 million dry tons per year, using a conversion factor of 2 green tons per 1 ton of wood pellets depending on the price per ton. Exports of these pellets would primarily be to the UK and European Union for energy production.

Bienville has good access to the region’s biomass “wood basket” via truck, rail, and water. There are several pellet mills currently exporting to Europe in the region, suggesting that the market is established and that freight flows might be optimized by moving through Bienville. The development of a wood pellet manufacturing plant on port property represents an opportunity for a water-dependent complementary use at the port.

In addition, there may exist an opportunity with respect to Wind Turbine Component manufacturing. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) of the US Department of the Interior recently sought public comment on two new proposed Wind Energy Areas (WEA) off the coasts of Louisiana and Texas. While these lease areas are some distance from Bienville, billions of dollars are being spent by the federal and state governments and through public/private partnerships to upgrade or build entirely new terminals in the northeastern United States to support this industry, for example. Manufacturing of components can be done at some distance from the lease areas and then transported by barge to staging and assembly, or marshalling, ports.

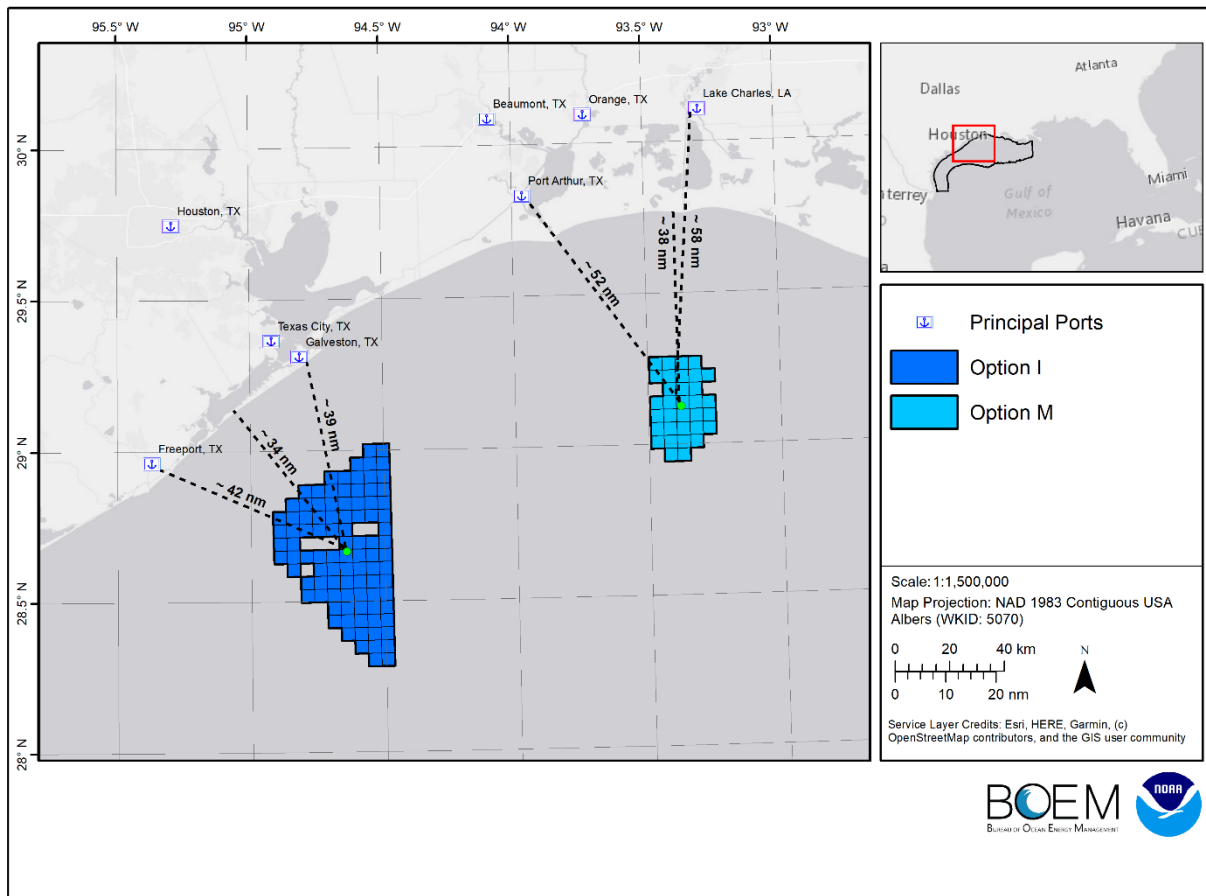


Figure 12 BOEM Offshore Wind Energy Areas in Gulf of Mexico (Source: BOEM).

OPPORTUNITIES – INDUSTRIAL PARK

PBIP has a great deal of available land, good inland waterway access, rail infrastructure connected to the national railroad system, and highway access. Many intermodal facilities are constrained by available upland and/or intermodal freight transportation options; PBIP has no such constraints. In addition to available land and good transportation options, there is available warehousing and new dock facilities on the waterfront. The property is in a geographically central area on the Gulf Coast. All in all, PBIP is well-poised to capture additional tenants and opportunities.

Further expansion of rail storage, as is currently underway, will provide increased capacity for industrial freight activities. The rail storage effort has been underway for some time: in 2013, HCPHC submitted an Environmental Impact Review completed by CDM Smith for the Mississippi Department of Transportation. In May of 2020, the Federal Railroad Administration signed the combined Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the Record of Decision (ROD) for The Port Bienville Railroad Project. In 2021, the Mississippi Congressional Delegation announced a “\$4.14 million for the Port Bienville Railroad (PBVR) Intermodal Yard Project involving an additional railcar storage yard to add 130 spaces and construct a siding. The new storage yard would increase PBVR capacity by 25 percent and reduce congestion for tenants across the park. The project would generate significant storage fee revenue and provide additional capacity to grow and attract new tenants and enhance regional partnerships and opportunities. The federal funding also came with a \$2.52 million local match to complete the project, for a total of \$6.66 million in hard infrastructure improvements.”²

PBVR has applied for \$12 million from the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program for a new railcar storage yard just outside of the park on the south side of the existing storage yard. This will provide rail car storage for 220 cars. In addition, HCPHC is in the process of a submitted \$6 million grant from the U.S. Federal Maritime Administration (MARAD) to construct 7 new tracks including ladder tracks that will provide rail car storage for 150 additional cars new Sites 1 and 6.

The Industrial Park with its extensive land holdings is well positioned to expand business activities. Successful ports nationwide have emphasized their ability to handle a wide range of transportation and storage requirements. Intermodal transportation hubs, like PBIP, require a focused, strategic transportation development approach to grow. By way of example, the Port of Savannah, GA is one of the fastest growing ports in the U.S. and the largest export port in the Eastern United States. Their approach focused on the development of their industrial parks, transportation infrastructure coupled with tax incentives, workforce development, and a focused strategic approach to development. Nearly 75% of the shippers that use the Savannah facilities are outside of the State of Georgia due to their access related to road, rail, and waterway efficiency.³

HCPHC’s industrial property provides the most significant opportunity for the growth of the port and expansion of property development. The growth of the PBIP will serve to benefit the PBVR, the port, the airport, and the economic growth of the region. The road, rail, and waterway assets position the HCPHC to be able to provide an excellent inland industrial and transportation hub in the State of Mississippi and the Gulf region.

² Magnolia Tribune, December 23, 2021.

³ Source: Georgia Port Authority

HCPHC has identified a desire to entice companies to locate at PBIP and utilize its associated transportation assets. Factors that influence attracting business to a location include:

- Existing Workforce Skills
- State and Local Tax Framework
- Transportation Infrastructure and Access
- Utility Infrastructure
- Land and Building Prices and Supply
- Ease of Permitting and Regulatory Procedures
- Flexibility of Incentive Programs
- Labor Flexibility-Right to Work State
- Availability of Incentives
- Access to Higher and Technical Education Resources

Corporations indicate that training programs and quality of life are two factors that have seen a jump in importance over the 35-year course of a recent corporate survey⁴. With regard to site selection factors, the same survey clearly shows the availability of skilled labor as the number 1 criteria with a 91.4 percent importance rating. Training programs have become increasingly important to companies (with a 50.9 percent importance rating in 1986 to 63.3 percent in 2022). Labor costs dropped to 84.2 percent from being the top factor with 96.6 percent importance rating 35 years ago.⁵

Survey results indicate that site “certification” is not a main decision factor for companies — 69 percent of the respondents say that a pre-certified site is of no importance or equal to other parameters. Certifications include international and domestic processes related to “Green Ports” or quality of workspace environments. Although still important, survey numbers for highway accessibility *and* accessibility to major airports have dropped over 35 years, which means that rural areas are becoming more popular in which to locate new facilities. Larger projects are choosing smaller cities with a good quality of life standard to attract employees rather than metropolitan areas. The quality-of-life factor saw a huge increase in importance — going from a 60.4 percent importance rating 35 years ago to 84.8 percent today. Nowadays many companies list quality of life as a main decision parameter besides labor, utilities, transportation, and incentives.⁶

The development of a successful intermodal transportation hub is predicated on both the availability of assets and successful business development management. This is particularly true for smaller ports (who may need to educate and entice regional businesses to utilize the port). Whereas large urban ports may be able to rely on a steady stream of freight throughput, smaller and more rural ports must be proactive, nimble, and flexible to attract and retain freight.⁷

Bienville can take advantage of these preferences by corporate entities. The Commission should utilize a Strategic Action Plan with incorporated Business Development Plan and dedicated staff personnel to pursue growth and development of the Commission’s assets. Effective planning and execution is critical to the development of the Commission’s assets. While many ports and airports will undertake multiple studies including master plans and markets studies, oftentimes these studies fail to produce an

⁴ 35th Annual Survey of Corporate Executives Commentary: Site Selection Priorities and Plans Over the Short and Long Term, 2023.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid.

actionable plan that the organization commits to following. Planning, and sticking to a plan, is the most effective way to address staying focused on successful development. The plan also has to be one that is embraced by the Commission and executed by staff who are given adequate resources and personnel to meet the objectives of the plan. These plans are based on the following:

- Best utilization of current assets
- Potential/realistic opportunities based on good data development as part of a dedicated Business Development effort
- Realistic and comprehensive planning
- Reasonable and consistent investment
- Incorporated stakeholder relationships
- Customer satisfaction
- Competitive and price sensitive in the origin and destination pathways related to existing and potential throughput cargo
- Targeted marketing and effective tracking as part of a dedicated Business Development effort
- Always incorporates a long-term strategy

OPPORTUNITIES - STENNIS AIRPORT

The airport has adequate land for infrastructure expansion and land for lengthening the runway to the south to over 9,000 linear feet. The airport, while adequate for FBO operations and its training and maintenance business segments is underutilized overall. There is interest in the future plans of NASA as well as the potential for expanded aircraft housing and servicing. As the Gulfport-Biloxi Airport continues its passenger growth, there remains an opportunity for growth in the niche market Stennis Airport is already in.

HSA competes, to some degree, with the nearest commercial airport: Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport (GPT), a larger airport with more throughput. GPT handles 800,000 passengers annually, is serviced by five air carriers on scheduled services, has numerous charter flights, and Million Air serves as the Fixed Base Operator. GPT hosts the Mississippi Gulf Coast Aerospace Center and is comprised of 241 developable acres adjacent to the airport's 9,000 ft runway. GPT has completed a 46,000 square foot cold and dry storage facility with irradiation and fumigation capabilities. The cargo facility includes 20,000 square feet of chiller space, 20,000 square feet of cargo sorting and distribution space, and 6,000 square feet of office space. GPT is included within FTZ #92.⁸

Given its proximity to GPT, HSA's opportunities exist in the cultivation of its current lines of business, including the expansion of the FBO operation related to recreational and business activities in the region. The area remains a popular seasonal tourist destination and gambling, fishing, and other recreational activities often increase traffic at large and small local airports.

Expanding the training activities from mostly day-based programs to more comprehensive multiday programs represent an opportunity for HSA. These training activities could include military-based training on various aircraft as well as potential training for commercial airline pilots. A recent study estimates that despite efforts to close the gap, airlines in North America will face a shortage of nearly 30,000 pilots by 2032. The supply of new pilots will grow, but not enough to offset a continuing wave of

⁸ Source: Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport

retirements, the study says.⁹ This will have a significant impact of commercial airline services for passengers and freight.

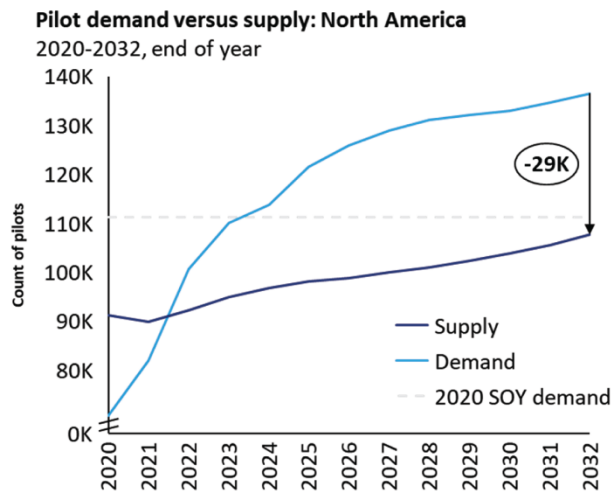


Figure 13 Estimated U.S. Pilot Shortage by 2032 (Source: Oliver Wyman)

Consideration can be given to developing a flight training center for both commercial and military pilots. The most significant hinderance is housing, which would need to be located near HSA. The attraction of a commercial hotel chain is unlikely, so the approach might be a joint partnership between the federal government and the state to develop a full-mission training center with simulator capability, housing, and hotel services. This could also include a partnership with the commercial airline industry.

The Commission also looked into the possibility of developing a Spaceport in conjunction with NASA's future plans. This appears to be a viable but longer-range opportunity and is dependent upon NASA's future plans for their facilities which are undetermined at this time. The aforementioned aviation and aerospace cluster study also identified potential for a UAV R&D, testing, and manufacturing facility at the airport.

Scheduled air service is less viable and is unlikely given the close proximity of the Gulfport-Biloxi Airport. There may be opportunities for charter services, corporate air service, and air cargo. Air cargo facilities currently exist in Jackson and Gulfport; however, the expansion of PBIP properties will likely increase demand for air freight at HSA. The attraction of a freight facility tied into an operating hub-and-spoke freight system, with air service and use of warehouse facilities for vans and small trucks, would be a potential opportunity.

ANALYSIS – PORT AND INDUSTRIAL PARK GROWTH

In the port, maritime, and aviation industries, growth and successful development is based on professional and personal relationships. Regular meetings and an obvious presence among partners, stakeholders, and those whose business you hope to attract is essential. Publishing information produced on a regular basis that highlights facilities, new tenants, and other interesting developments helps to keep the port at the forefront of customer and public perception.

⁹ Oliver Wyman: US Faces Pilot Shortage, February 2023

Transportation is not always a catalyst for growth but given the assets of the Hancock County Commission, it is apparent that business development and growth at the port and airport are directly tied to the development of the Industrial Park and further development of the airport. Business and property development is the lynchpin for additional activity at the rest of the County's facilities. The transportation elements and the large expanse of property make the Commission's assets an attractive alternative to other regional facilities that are becoming congested and limit expandability. That focus, as previously mentioned, is dependent upon the way the assets and the organization are managed.

To facilitate new development and growth, we recommend that Bienville focus on the items listed below in their Strategic Action Plan.

1. Freight Volumes and Terminal Operator – until cargo activity can be generated on a consistent basis, an RFP for an operator is not likely to yield much value for Bienville. The Port should work with the current stevedore (SSA) to undertake an effort to locate and reposition cargo to the Port with the goal of achieving consistent freight throughput. Once achieved, we recommend a short-term operating arrangement with the existing stevedore (SSA) to stabilize and maintain freight traffic. Once such traffic is well-established, an RFP for an operator may be valuable.
2. Property - a more precise and specific plan of the industrial park should be developed showing key boundaries, flood plains, buffer zones, utility corridors, and site access. The plan should be coupled with a comprehensive lease policy approved by the Commission. The plan should also contemplate the potential expansion of rail capacity based on the potential for new business development.
3. Immediate Opportunities - Various studies and public database information has provided some insights on opportunities that can be pursued by HCPHC through a modified organizational approach to business development. These include:
 - a. Warehousing - there is an identified need for warehousing in the region through various recent studies.
 - b. PET Products - this is already a key commodity for the Port and demand is expanding which can increase Port throughput and open new geographic opportunities.
 - c. Fertilizer - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.
 - d. Aggregate - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.
 - e. Minerals - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.
 - f. Aluminum and processed metals - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.
 - g. Steel and steel products (rolled and plate) -already a commodity in the Port that can be expanded.
 - h. Lumber and other forest products - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.
 - i. Agri-products - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.

- j. Perishable cargoes - identified as an opportunity in various regional studies.
- k. Inland Port and Distribution - the need for inland port facilities was identified in various port and regional plans. Increasing cargo opportunities, as well as industrial park development, have been identified as critical to the economy of the state of Mississippi. Several Gulf Coast ports are limited in land area and do not have sufficient upland for freight. The development of an inland port that would address the potential for an inland port hub to various coastal ports, both large and small, would be a significant addition to the region's capability given the increasing shift of cargo from West Coast ports to Gulf and East Coast ports. Connections and interchange capability should be explored with CSX, CP/KCS, and other railroads to develop expanded market reach into midland and coastal areas.
- l. Port Partnerships - Gulfport and Bienville may have the opportunity to provide Gulfport with connections to a competing rail line and open Bienville to international markets. The concept would be to move commodities on rail to destinations connected to CSX. The Port needs to gather data regarding CSX O/D opportunities particularly into South and Central America which could be moved by rail via Bienville, and transferred to and from barge. These cargoes would in turn connect to Gulfport and their multiple international cargo carriers that serve those markets. SSA handles cargo in both ports. Gathering the following information would be useful to a potential partnership: rail rates, O/D data, barge rates Bienville to/from Gulfport, potential service schedules, operator willingness, transload logistics, and available containers and equipment. Bienville could develop the data necessary to propose a plan to the carriers.

In addition to Gulfport, we recommend that Bienville open similar discussions with the Ports of Morgan City, LA; Plaquemines, LA; the Port of South Louisiana; and similar Lower Mississippi facility operators to discuss potential partnerships that would qualify Bienville and a partner port for a Marine Highway Project designation.

ANALYSIS – STENNIS AIRPORT GROWTH

1. FBO Expansion - The need for Fixed Based Operations (FBO) should remain a key business sector at the airport. Additional hanger space and continued provision of fueling and aircraft maintenance are critical to FBO success. As Corporate activity increases in the region, the servicing and fueling of corporate aircraft could present a new opportunity for the airport.
2. Aviation Training - The airport already has a strong niche for training private and military pilots. This could be expanded with the development of multiuse accommodation. The airport should approach federal and state agencies, with the support of their Congressional Delegation, and potentially a commercial carrier, to fund and build training facility accommodations near the airport. This could be contracted to a commercial operator or hotel chain for management. Coupled with this would be the expansion of a training facility to accommodate a full-mission aircraft simulation center for commercial and military pilots. This could be coupled with investment from a commercial airline carrier.
3. Spaceport - The proximity of the NASA facility opens unique opportunities for the airport. However, with NASA planning remaining less than tangible at this time, this represents, at best, a long-term opportunity. NASA's efforts should be monitored closely and if an opportunity for collaborative

activities emerges, the Commission should be prepared to add this to their planning and development activities.

4. Charter Service - Small passenger charters are a likely opportunity for the airport. This would depend on the airport promoting itself as an alternative to Gulfport-Biloxi Airport for activities related to recreational or business interests. The image of the airport as an alternative to other regional airports should be promoted as part of the business development plan.

5. Air Cargo - The handling of air cargo is based on origin and destination volume. Most cargo of this type is either consumer-based in large population centers or driven by the need for parts and equipment at manufacturing and processing plants. The latter demand would grow as development of the Industrial Park expands.

6. Education - This year, the Pearl River Community College (PRCC) started construction on the nearly \$10 million Hancock Aviation Aerospace Workforce Academy which is adjacent to Stennis International Airport and the Hancock High School Career & Technical Center. The 36,000 square foot training center will include an 18,000 square foot hangar to provide skilled workforce development for aviation and aerospace industries. The PRCC Hancock Aviation Aerospace Workforce Academy will be designed to be multi-functional focused on training, research, and new technologies related to aviation. This addresses the need for workforce development and could also supplement the need for accommodation at the airport for students related to military and commercial training.

SWOT ANALYSIS

As part of the initial steps of this report, the IAMPE conducted a “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats” (SWOT) analysis based on review of existing studies, project work in other port areas in the Gulf, and stakeholder interviews. The SWOT analysis can be summarized as follows:

STRENGTHS

1. Well-positioned intermodal facilities
2. Extensive land for property and industrial development
3. Service by a major Class 1 Railroad
4. Good anchor tenants
5. Good waterway access
6. New, expanded, and rebuilt docks with large and open aprons and wharf area
7. Extensive rail network and rail capacity
8. Well-maintained and functional airport with development opportunities
9. Capacity for larger cargo and military aircraft
10. Good highway connections including major roadways
11. Proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
12. Warehousing on site with room for new warehouse development
13. Expanding airport facilities including hangar and ramp space potential
14. Dedicated staff
15. Reliable revenue stream from rail operations and existing industrial tenants
16. Solid anchor tenants at the industrial park and airport
17. Strategic location
18. The Commission has good public support and receives State and Federal funding

19. Motivated corps of personnel working to grow the port and airport
20. The existing docks have been rebuilt post-Katrina and are all in very good condition
21. The waterways have been dredged to 12.5 feet, adequate for barges
22. There is an experienced stevedore on site at the port
23. The Port has a barge operator on site

WEAKNESSES

1. Portion of property within flood plan
2. Restrictions due to buffer zone
3. Minimal marine activity
4. Minimal commercial aviation activity
5. Underutilized warehouse and rental space
6. Airport investment critical but out of balance with other Commission activities
7. Managed by an economic development agency with mixed goals
8. Organizational issues related to job focus
9. Lack of precise strategic action plan
10. Served by a single railroad
11. Significant distance from a major metropolitan center/market
12. No strategic partnerships with other ports
13. Heavily dependent on a single revenue stream (rail)
14. Lack of customer database related to tenant or customer development
15. Lack of scheduled air service at airport
16. Staffing levels and job responsibilities are in need of re-evaluation
17. Lack of partitioned site plans for development
18. Lack of specific vision and direction
19. No business development by the stevedore
20. No standardized contracts/leases
21. HSA's proximity to GPT limits certain growth opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Competitive position to connect to hub ports
2. Potential partnership with Gulfport
3. Expanded trade with Mexican freight
4. Ample capacity at the dock to handle additional freight
5. The Port has the potential for making cargo connections to multiple Gulf of Mexico ports
6. Significant need for warehousing to serve regional storage and distribution needs which Bienville can meet
7. Potential for handling construction material, aggregates, fertilizer, agricultural, and forest products
8. Development of industrial park with new anchor tenants
9. Potential for water-dependent manufacturing
10. Capability to expand aviation training
11. Increased opportunities with military activities

THREATS

1. Over-dependance on limited income stream
2. Loss of an anchor tenant would present financial hardship for HCPHC
3. Lack of vision and direction is likely to lead to stagnation or decline
4. Lack of cooperation from competing rail lines (CSX & CP/KCS)
5. Imminent need to translate business development efforts into additional tenants and/or freight volumes
6. Structure of the organization and management goals

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staffing and Organization

HCPHC has what can be best termed as “outstanding but underutilized” assets with excellent growth potential. As a transportation hub outside of a major metropolitan area, HCPHC’s opportunities must be earned by effective business development. HCPHC’s organization as an EDA could serve to hamper and/or dilute its efforts to grow its transportation business, if not effectively managed via clear vision, adequate staffing, cogent roles and job descriptions, and decisive leadership.

The most effective way to facilitate business development is through planning and adequate staff resources to undertake that planning. Development cannot be accomplished through “perceived” opportunities: data must be gathered, analyzed, and utilized to guide decision making. The team employed by the Commission should be directed through focused leadership and the staff should be allowed to undertake their responsibilities without being encumbered by significant bureaucratic processes or excessive demands by the governing board. To the credit of the new Executive Director/CEO, a number of staff changes have already been implemented. The proposed organization chart exhibits positive changes from an earlier administration. The next step of the CEO will be the review and revision of job descriptions for all of the management staff.

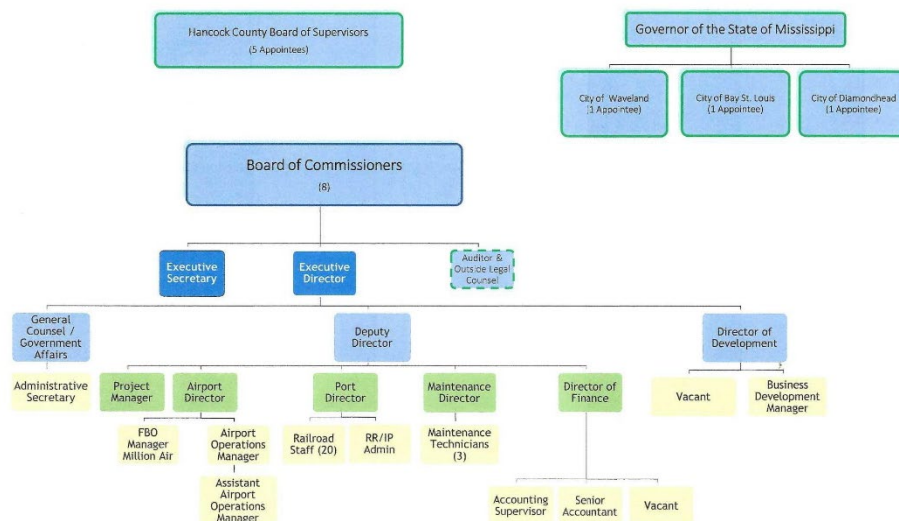


Figure 14 2023 Proposed Organization Chart (Source: HCPHC)

For the future, the immediate recommendations are presented for the organization:

1. **Organization and Planning** - The Commission should approve a specific Strategic Action Plan with clear, achievable objectives and milestones. The Commissioners can use these milestones to track progress against HCPHC's goals.
2. **Visibility** - A dynamic marketing effort should be undertaken to enhance the visibility of the HCPHC's assets. Potential customers will not take advantage of Port Bienville's services if they are not aware of them. Resources, both personnel and funding, should be prioritized and focused on taking the capabilities of the PBIP, HSA, PBVR, and the port to specifically targeted shipper, manufacturing, and transportation business development targets to make them aware of HCPHC's assets and capabilities.
3. **Business Development** – Increased utilization of the HCPHC's transportation assets requires an intentional, results-driven business development effort applicable to all transportation assets (without giving preference to one mode or asset over another). Responsibility for this effort must be clearly assigned, and tools and resources allocated to the effort.

To support this effort, we recommend that HCPHC adjust its structure to expand its Development Office staff in order to support data research and Origin and Destination (O/D) analysis; identification of potential customers and business development opportunities for the port, airport, rail facilities, and industrial park; and institute a Customer Relationship Management system.

4. **Customer Relationship Management System** - The most essential element of business development is the gathering of good information to seek out potential business opportunities that are realistic and attainable. Information is typically gathered and fed into a Customer Relationship Management system in order to keep the information organized. An example of the types of information to gather in a customer/stakeholder interview is attached as Appendix A of this document. Bienville would also benefit from the development of a dynamic data collection system so that decision makers are able to target and act upon the most likely development opportunities. To undertake this, a simple database system needs to be cultivated that is "owned" by the business development director and shared and used by the entire management team. Any number of commercial off-the-shelf Customer Relationship Management software systems can be used for this purpose, or even a simple spreadsheet or database. Examples of CRM software systems are attached as Appendix B of this document.
5. **Origin and Destination Data** - Winning over shippers typically requires an understanding of their bottom line end-to-end shipping cost and how utilization of your transportation asset will affect that cost. An Origin and Destination (O/D) analysis is a tool to estimate these costs, and can be used to support business development efforts.

Target	Commodity	Dray Cost	Terminal Cost	Carrier Cost	Terminal Cost	Misc. Fees	Dray Cost	Final Cost
Acme	Pellets	\$100 Box	\$250	\$6,000	\$300	\$800	\$200	\$7,650
Boxrite	Retail	\$900 Box	\$300	\$8000	\$290	\$600	\$100	\$10,190
Morton	Salt	\$800 TL	\$1.50 MT	\$5.00 MT				
Smiths	Bauxite	\$750 TL	\$1.50 MT	\$5.00 MT				
US Steel	Steel Plate	\$600 TL	\$250	\$6,000		\$400		
Gerson	Auto Parts	\$600 Box	\$250	\$4,000		\$800		
A&P	Reefer	\$450 Box	\$275	\$7,200		\$900		

Figure 15 Sample Origin and Destination Data Format

Populating an O/D analysis accurately requires good source information. Necessary information can typically be gathered from current business stakeholders in the Port. Regular meetings with business personnel and tenants with whom the Port already has relationships with is a critical function of business development: in most cases, it may be more valuable than attending conferences or trade shows.

To supplement such data, business information from public or commercial sources may need to be gathered. These sources include:

- Shippers and current users (the best source of information)
- Previous and current available studies
- Common carriers
- Local Business Interests
- Facilities (FBO, Terminal Operators, Stevedores)
- Truckers and Railroads
- Military movement commands
- Warehousing and Distribution Firms
- Trade Associations
 - American Association of Airport Executives
 - Inland Rivers, Ports, and Terminals Association
 - American Association of Port Authorities
 - American Association of Railroads
 - American Short Line and Railroad Association
- Government and Commercial Data
- State Economic Development Agencies
- US Department of Commerce Import/Export Data
- US Customs Data
- US Army Corps of Engineers Waterways Data
- US Coast Guard
- TRB Freight Activity Forecasts
- UN Conference Trade & Development (UNCTAD)
- State Economic Development Agencies
- Commercial-PIERS, Drewry, FreightCalculator.com, Colliers, Logistics Management, World-freightrates.com
- Intermodal Association of North America
- Publications: Maritime Executive, Maritime Professional

Data must be captured on a regular basis and databases updated regularly. Often this includes a dedicated individual in the organization whose primary task is the development of information for each business segment. Ultimately, an effective business development effort is going to be guided by these questions:

1. Who are the potential businesses and companies that might use our infrastructure?
2. Who is moving cargo and what are they moving?
3. How are they moving cargo (O/D)?
4. What is it costing them? How does the cost break down?
5. What are their service needs?
6. What are their challenges?
7. How can HCPHC meet their needs?
8. Who are the most promising business development targets?
9. How will you benefit them?
10. How can you make your costs and services attractive?

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

A Strategic Action Plan is a plan comprised of measurable steps tied to a concrete timeline. The development of a Strategic Action Plan is an investment plan for ports and facilities, a means of getting stakeholders involved, gets everyone on the same page, measures success or failure, creates a long-term vision with short steps, looks at goals holistically, identifies a high-level view of objectives and sets the path for the organization. The process of developing a Strategic Action Plan includes:

1. Develop Strategic Concepts and Initial Vision
2. Undertake a SWOT Analysis
3. Develop a conditional survey of facilities & equipment
4. Collect data from current and past studies
5. Review historic trends for the port and region
6. Compare the historic trends to potential and prospective business
7. Create realistic goals based on data
8. Develop business and customer databases and a Business Development Plan
9. Develop infrastructure plans
10. Identify funding sources: federal, state, and/or other agencies
11. Prepare a Strategic Action Plan, get Commissioner approval, and implement the Plan
12. Engage the public and other necessary stakeholders
13. Undertake a property master planning process as necessary
14. Retain experienced consultant(s) and tools for those areas where outside expertise is needed.

It is important to note that a Strategic Action Plan is different than a Master Plan. Master Plans deal with the layout and utilization of property and infrastructure, as well as property investment. It is integrated into the Strategic Action Plan as part of capital improvements and financing.

A Strategic Action Plan is approved by the Commissioners as a policy document for staff to execute. It is a dynamic document which means it can be changed as often as necessary, updated when required, and

utilized as a management tool for staff to set goals and objectives. It is tied to a timeline which can be adjusted as necessary since the goals of the agency can be vague and are often dependent on actions of those outside of the organization, such as permitting and grants.

The collection of data is crucial to an effective Strategic Action Plan. Data prioritizes the efforts of staff, particularly when limited personnel are available. With good data in hand, staff can develop key databases necessary to identify and pursue potential business targets. Likewise, good data identifies the most probable business opportunities, prioritizes efforts, and focuses the use of financial and personnel resources.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The Strategic Action Plan should be presented to the Hancock County Port and Harbor Commissioners and approved at their earliest convenience. It should be emphasized that the plan is a dynamic document, is used as part the management process, is a tracking method for efforts and should be adjusted regularly as necessary to meet changing circumstances.

What follows is recommended strategic action priorities in five areas of focus and subtasks for HCPHC management to implement as an action plan after HCPHC approval.

A. Business Development

1. Develop a Customer Relationship Management System that covers business development prospects in all industrial areas including maritime, transportation, rail, manufacturing, defense, aviation, etc.
2. Implement an integrated business development effort for all HCPHC assets including other economic development efforts with targeted sectors
3. Dedicate and properly staff Economic Development efforts to manage database development and origin/destination analysis of existing industry and opportunities to identify targets
4. Work with existing regional terminal operators such as SSA Marine or Ports Americas to identify new or existing industry opportunities with mutually beneficial development goals
5. Update list of targeted potential customers and development opportunities that are probable new business partners. Develop new outreach efforts and setup meetings as practical. (Defense, Aerospace, UAS, Aviation, Polymers, Chemicals, Transportation, Warehousing, Manufacturing, etc.)
6. Develop and adopt leasing policies for all HCPHC property
7. Meet with Port of Gulfport and other potential port partners to develop a partnership related to marine cargo movement for inbound and outbound cargo as a strategic inland port
8. Strengthen outreach to federal and state agencies, state legislative and federal delegation and the Governor's office with regular communications
9. Redevelop relationships with military partners and interests to explore expanded opportunities at Stennis Airport and Port Bienville such as CNMOC, SBT22, NAVSCIATTS, USCG, AIR FORCE, etc.
10. Explore business development opportunities in Mexico, Central America, Carribean, South American Markets with a domestic port partner and CSX.

B. External Partnerships

1. Strengthen key partnerships such as MS Power, NASA, MSET, Coast Electric, MDA, Associations, etc.
2. Advocate and improve Hancock County FEMA designation, floodmaps, etc.
3. Work with existing industries and Foreign Trade Zone 92 on new participation in Hancock County
4. Strengthen workforce programs and messaging with PRCC, CTAP, etc.
5. Work with Retail Strategies and MS Power on retail and commercial recruitment in key corridors
6. Work with City partners on creation of Redevelopment Authorities
7. Hancock County serve as lead on new study about future recommendations for NASA Stennis Space Center management model and strategic investments.
8. Schedule annual FAM Tour with Site Consultants
9. Commence a public relations effort, including public meetings, stakeholder meetings, and legislative briefings on Commission efforts.

C. Site Development

1. Develop updated site maps for Industrial Park and Stennis Airport with boundaries, utilities, access, power, etc.
2. Develop master plan with updated costs for each site at Port Bienville and Stennis Airport such as utility improvements, road improvements, mitigation, etc.
3. Develop plan for Site 1 and Site 8 at Stennis Airport including NASA/USACE Buffer zone application approval
4. Complete Dept. of Marine Resources Designation under the Coastal Master Plan as Special Management Area to expedite permitting and requirements
5. Complete USACE Sect. 214 Agreement to expedite permitting timelines for infrastructure or development projects
6. Develop Mega Site at Site 5 at Port Bienville and complete all due diligence using MDA Site Development grant or other resources
7. Develop Single Client Mitigation Bank or mitigation plan with \$1.75M GOMESA to assist with site development at Port Bienville and Stennis International Airport
8. Perform due diligence and mitigation of Site 3, 4, 11 at Stennis International Airport and obtain MDA Site Development grant
9. Perform timber removal on all eligible sites at Port Bienville and Stennis International Airport
10. Update website with all new site information, maps, etc.
11. Complete and finalize a MOU with USACE Mobile to designate Vicksburg as primary office to handle all permits for HCPHC.
12. Focus on development of Tech Park phases and complete improvements with parking, road improvements, utility extensions, surveys, etc.

D. Port Bienville

1. Identify a new port partner and undertake the initial process to develop an application for Marine Highway Project designation
2. Complete new MARAD rail storage yard expansion
3. Develop, apply and receive federal CRISI grant award from FRA for Port Bienville Intermodal Phase I
4. Complete design and begin construction of CRISI Intermodal Yard Phase I

5. Complete the process of application for designation as a Marine Highway Project and explore grant funding with a strategic partner for warehousing and maritime growth
6. Partner with Southern Company and Cooperative Energy to secure funding such as GCRF or other funds to construct transmission upgrades to Port Bienville to increase energy capacity to 200MW
7. Apply for funding for an identified Marine Highway Project
8. Undertake an RFP process for a Marine Terminal Operator as appropriate
9. Study the potential for North/South rail alternative options for dual Class I railroad service to Norfolk Southern with Pearl River County partnership such as Intermodal Yard North.
10. Develop a Port Bienville dredge maintenance plan
11. Work with HCWSD and Hancock BOS on funding and construction of new well and tank for Port Bienville to enhance water capacity
12. Work with HCWSD on GOMESA or other funding sources for Port Bienville Water Loop Extension and Pipe Rehabilitation Project
13. Construct new warehouse at Port Bienville

E. Stennis International Airport

1. Develop efforts to expand flight training opportunities at Stennis Airport
2. Update and develop Air Force Joint Use Agreement services and improvements in Drop Zone
3. Explore opportunities with universities and private sector for Unmanned Aerial Systems cluster
4. Explore opportunities with University of Mississippi's Space Law & Engineering program to increase footprint at Airport in proximity to NASA's Space Center to address workforce challenges at Stennis Space Center
5. Develop public-private partnerships at Tech Park & Site 2
6. Apply for funding for future hangar development on Site 1
7. Apply for funding for future hangar development on Site 3/4
8. Secure funding to complete Taxilane Sierra Extension
9. Relocate USCG PSU 308 to Port Bienville or MS Gulf Coast
10. Complete Stennis Tech Park Phase I
11. Master plan all phases of Tech Park sites and leverage GCRF/RESTORE funds
12. Evaluate opportunities and partnerships to leverage shooting range in buffer zone at Stennis Airport
13. Secure funding to improve roadways around Hancock High School and Stennis Airport

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN TIMELINE – A timeline of when the objectives outline in the preceding section follows. Each of the objectives uses the label from the preceding section (e.g. the first objective under Business Development is “A1”) but is laid out in the sequence of when it is to be achieved in the timeline below.

Next 6 Months

A1. Develop a Customer Relationship Management System that covers business development prospects in all industrial areas including maritime, transportation, rail, manufacturing, defense, aviation, etc.

A3. Dedicate and properly staff Economic Development efforts to manage database development and origin/destination analysis of existing industry and opportunities to identify targets

A5. Update list of targeted potential customers and development opportunities that are probable new business partners. Develop new outreach efforts and setup meetings as practical. (Defense, Aerospace, UAS, Aviation, Polymers, Chemicals, Transportation, Warehousing, Manufacturing, etc.)

A6. Develop and adopt leasing policies for all HCPHC property

A8. Strengthen outreach to federal and state agencies, state legislative and federal delegation, and the Governor's office with regular communications.

A9. Redevelop relationships with military partners and interests to explore expanded opportunities at Stennis Airport and Port Bienville such as CNMOC, SBT22, NAVSCIATTS, USCG, AIR FORCE, etc.

B5. Work with Retail Strategies and MS Power on retail and commercial recruitment in key corridors

C4. Complete Dept. of Marine Resources Designation under the Coastal Master Plan as Special Management Area to expedite permitting and requirements.

C5. Complete USACE Sect. 214 Agreement to expedite permitting timelines for infrastructure or development projects.

C10. Update website with all new site information, maps, etc.

D1. Identify a new port partner and undertake the initial process to develop an application for Marine Highway Project designation

D3. Develop, apply and receive federal CRISI grant award from FRA for Port Bienville Intermodal Phase I

E2. Update and develop Air Force Joint Use Agreement services and improvements in Drop Zone

E5. Develop public-private partnerships at Tech Park & Site 2

E8. Secure funding to complete Taxilane Sierra Extension

Next 12 Months

A2. Implement an integrated business development effort for all HCPHC assets including other economic development efforts with targeted sectors

A4. Work with existing regional terminal operators such as SSA Marine or Ports Americas to identify new or existing industry opportunities with mutually beneficial development goals

A7. Meet with Port of Gulfport and other potential port partners to develop a partnership related to marine cargo movement for inbound and outbound cargo as a strategic inland port

B1. Strengthen key partnerships such as MS Power, NASA, MSET, Coast Electric, MDA, Associations, etc.

- B2. Advocate and improve Hancock County FEMA designation, floodmaps, etc.
- B3. Work with existing industries and Foreign Trade Zone 92 on new participation in Hancock County
- B7. Hancock County serve as lead on new study about future recommendations for NASA Stennis Space Center management model and strategic investments.
- B8. Schedule annual FAM Tour with Site Consultants
- B9. Commence a public relations effort, including public meetings, stakeholder meetings, and legislative briefings on Commission efforts.
- C1. Develop updated site maps for Industrial Park and Stennis Airport with boundaries, utilities, access, power, etc.
- C2. Develop master plan with updated costs for each site at Port Bienville and Stennis Airport such as utility improvements, road improvements, mitigation, etc.
- C9. Perform timber removal on all eligible sites at Port Bienville and Stennis International Airport
- C12. Focus on development of Tech Park phases and complete improvements with parking, road improvements, utility extensions, surveys, etc.
- D2. Complete new MARAD rail storage yard expansion
- D5. Complete the process of application for designation as a Marine Highway Project and explore grant funding with a strategic partner for warehousing and maritime growth
- D7. Apply for funding for an identified Marine Highway Project
- D12. Work with HCWSD on GOMESA or other funding sources for Port Bienville Water Loop Extension and Pipe Rehabilitation Project
- E3. Explore opportunities with universities and private sector for Unmanned Aerial Systems cluster
- E4. Explore opportunities with University of Mississippi's Space Law & Engineering program to increase footprint at Airport in proximity to NASA's Space Center to address workforce challenges at Stennis Space Center
- E11. Master plan all phases of Tech Park sites and leverage GCRF/RESTORE funds
- E12. Evaluate opportunities and partnerships to leverage shooting range in buffer zone at Stennis Airport
- E13. Secure funding to improve roadways around Hancock High School and Stennis Airport

Next 18 Months

- B4. Strengthen workforce programs and messaging with PRCC, CTAP, etc.
- B6. Work with City partners on creation of Redevelopment Authorities
- C3. Develop plan for Site 1 and Site 8 at Stennis Airport including NASA/USACE Buffer zone application approval
- C7. Develop Single Client Mitigation Bank or mitigation plan with \$1.75M GOMESA to assist with site development at Port Bienville and Stennis International Airport
- C8. Perform due diligence and mitigation of Site 3, 4, 11 at Stennis International Airport and obtain MDA Site Development grant
- C11. Complete and finalize a MOU with USACE Mobile to designate Vicksburg as primary office to handle all permits for HCPHC.
- D6. Partner with Southern Company and Cooperative Energy to secure funding such as GCRF or other funds to construct transmission upgrades to Port Bienville to increase energy capacity to 200MW
- D9. Study the potential for North/South rail alternative options for dual Class I railroad service to Norfolk Southern with Pearl River County partnership such as Intermodal Yard North.
- D10. Develop a Port Bienville dredge maintenance plan
- D13. Construct new warehouse at Port Bienville
- E1. Develop efforts to expand flight training opportunities at Stennis Airport
- E6. Apply for funding for future hangar development on Site 1
- E9. Relocate USCG PSU 308 to Port Bienville or MS Gulf Coast
- E10. Complete Stennis Tech Park Phase I

Next 24 Months

- B5. Work with Retail Strategies and MS Power on retail and commercial recruitment in key corridors
- B9. Commence a public relations effort, including public meetings, stakeholder meetings, and legislative briefings on Commission efforts.
- C6. Develop Mega Site at Site 5 at Port Bienville and complete all due diligence using MDA Site Development grant or other resources
- D4. Complete design and begin construction of CRISI Intermodal Yard Phase I

D8. Undertake an RFP process for a Marine Terminal Operator as appropriate

D11. Work with HCWSD and Hancock BOS on funding and construction of new well and tank for Port Bienville to enhance water capacity

E7. Apply for funding for future hangar development on Site 3/4

Next 36 Months

After the first 24-months, the SAP's progress should be evaluated, progress assessed, and new plans developed based on findings.

1. Commence an evaluation period for the success of business development efforts.
 - a. Evaluate access to the international markets and progress.
 - b. Evaluate partnerships with NASA and universities.
 - c. Evaluate the growth of the industrial park.
 - d. Evaluate the growth of rail activities.
 - e. Evaluate the growth of airport development.
 - f. Evaluate the port's activities.
 - g. Evaluate warehousing capacity.
 - h. Evaluate military partnership.

2. Adjust plans and set new goals for next 36 months.
 - a. Adjust Strategic Action Plan as required.
 - b. Adjust Master Plan as required.
 - c. Adjust Business Development Plan as required.
 - d. Adjust staffing as required.
 - e. Identify potential grants and track success rates on existing grant applications.

APPENDIX A – CUSTOMER INFORMATION FORM

The form below is included as a reference for an example of relevant customer information that might be gathered regarding potential port customers as part of a CRM.

Name of Company: _____		Principal Business: _____	
Contact Person: _____		Title: _____	E-Mail: _____
Phone: _____	Fax: _____	Address: _____	
City: _____	Postal Code: _____	Nation: _____	
EXPORT-IMPORT DATA			
Commodity Amount Per Year* _____		Shipments Per Year Transportation _____	
*Specify Tons, KG, or other weight measurement			
1. How many truck loads: per day: _____ week: _____ month: _____ LTL _____			
2. What is the largest size package shipment: _____ smallest: _____			
3. What is the prime export mode: Water: _____ Air: _____ All Road: _____			
4. Would a year round all water service benefit: (Circle) Yes No			
5. What destination best services your need: _____			
6. What prime markets do you serve in the US: _____			
7. Shipment frequency: Daily Weekly Monthly Only Occasionally			
8. Size/weight of an individual shipment unit: _____			
9. Number of units per average shipment: _____			
10. Minimum Shipment Size: _____ units Maximum: _____ units			
11. Unique Customs requirements: _____			
12. Name and contact information for person/firm handling Customs documentation: _____			
13. Warehousing at origin or destination point _____			
14. Other special needs/remarks: _____			
15. CONTACT RECORD: Include Name/date/remarks and person making contact _____ _____ _____ _____			

APPENDIX B – CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM) SOFTWARE SYSTEMS

IAMPE has prepared a list of Customer Relationship Management software systems options below. IAMPE does not endorse any of the listed products, and the list is in no particular order.

- Zoho CRM System
- Hubspot CRM Software
- Capterra CRM Software
- Salesforce CRM System
- Thryv Management System
- Free Agent
- Clarity Software Solutions CRM
- Top Producer Management System
- Maximizer CRM
- Shape Management System

APPENDIX C - MARINE GRANT AND FUNDING PROGRAMS GUIDE

Committee on the Marine Transportation System

Full Guide Information Available at

https://www.cmts.gov/assets/uploads/documents/Federal_Funding_Handbook

Accessed 10 April 2023

1. Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E)
2. Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program
3. Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD)
4. Biological Oceanography
5. Business Energy Investment Tax Credit (ITC)
6. Capital Construction Fund Program
7. Chemical Oceanography
8. Civil Infrastructure Systems
9. Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program
10. Clean Diesel Tribal Grants
11. Clean Vessel Act Grant
12. Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP)
13. Coastal Program
14. Coastal Resilience Grants Program
15. Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program
16. Construction Reserve Fund
17. Continuing Authorities Program (CAP)
18. Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund/ Section 6 Grants (CESCF)
19. Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS)
20. Department of Energy Unsolicited Proposal Office
21. Disaster Loan Assistance
22. Economic Development Assistance Programs
23. Emergency Relief Program
24. Endangered Species Conservation - Recovery Implementation Funds
25. ERDC Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)
26. Farm Storage Facility Loan Program
27. Federal Ship Financing Program (Title XI)
28. Ferry Boat Program
29. Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program
30. General Small Business Loans (7A)
31. Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEEs)
32. Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)
33. Humans, Disasters, and the Built Environment (HDBE)
34. Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants
35. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Ocean Technology Transition (OTT) Project
36. Marine Debris Removal Grant
37. Maritime Environmental and Technical Assistance (META) Program
38. Maritime Heritage Grants
39. Marine Highway Grants
40. Metropolitan Planning
41. National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program
42. National Highway Performance Program

43. NOAA Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)
44. Ocean Drilling (OD)
45. Ocean Freight Reimbursement (OFR) Program
46. Ocean Technology & Interdisciplinary Coordination (OTIC) Program
47. Oceanographic Facilities & Equipment Support
48. Operations Engineering (OE) Program
49. Passenger Ferry Grant Program
50. Physical Oceanography
51. Planning Program & Local Technical Assistance Program
52. Pollution Prevention Grant Programs
53. Port Infrastructure Development Program
54. Port Security Grant Program (PSGP)
55. Ports & Waterways Construction
56. Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program
57. Private Activity Bonds (PABs)
58. Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF)
59. Real Estate & Equipment Loans (SBA 504 Loan Program)
60. Renewable Electricity Production Tax Credit (PTC)
61. Section 129 Loans
62. Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC)
63. Small Shipyard Grant Program
64. Source Reduction Assistance Grant Program (SRA)
65. State Infrastructure Banks (SIBs)
66. Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
67. Targeted Air Shed Grant Program
68. Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP)
69. Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside
70. Transportation Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (TIFIA)
71. USACE Flood Risk Management Services (FRMS)
72. USACE Planning Assistance to States
73. Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)
74. Wetland Program Development Grants
75. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs

APPENDIX D - FAA SAMPLE OF COMMON AIRPORT GRANTS AND FUNDING PROGRAMS

Full Information available at https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/2022_aip_grants
Accessed 10 April 2023

1. Airport Improvement Program
2. Airport Workforce Development Program
3. Airport Rescue Grants
4. Aviation Research and Development Grant Funding
5. FAA Discretionary Funding

APPENDIX E - FRA SAMPLE OF COMMON RAIL GRANTS AND FINANCE PROGRAMS

Additional Information Available at <https://www.federalgrantswire.com/federal-railroad-administration-department-of-transportation-federal-grants>.
Accessed 10 April 2023

1. Railroad Safety Grants
2. Rail Line Relocation and Improvement Program
3. Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program
4. Railroad Development Program
5. Railroad Research and Development Program
6. Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality
7. Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program