



March 10th, 2022

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**GRAND FORKS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS AWARDED
"2021 COMMERCIAL SERVICE AIRPORT OF THE YEAR"**

Grand Forks International Airport has been recognized as North Dakota's "2021 Commercial Service Airport of the Year." Airports receive this award for excellence in community outreach, facility management, construction and beautification projects, and special events. The award is sponsored by the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission in partnership with the Airport Association of North Dakota, and was presented on March 8th, 2022, at the FLY-ND aviation conference held this year in Fargo.

Airport Accomplishments for 2021:

While airline passenger traffic continues its slow recovery nationwide, aircraft activity at Grand Forks International Airport is nearly as busy as ever. As the home of the University of North Dakota's School of Aerospace Sciences, hundreds of student pilots take to the skies over Grand Forks each semester in a carefully orchestrated flurry of activity to train for careers in the aviation industry. This activity helped Grand Forks International Airport achieve the extraordinary distinction of America's busiest airport on no less than eleven separate days between March 1st and May 26th. The airport was ranked as the 12th busiest airport in the country for 2021 with 349,405 successful takeoffs and landings.

2021 saw an impressive effort by the Grand Forks International Airport to tackle a series of projects that will improve its services and capabilities. An Environmental Assessment was completed in a brisk one-year timeframe and agreements were negotiated with neighboring landowners to acquire property for future airport expansion. Construction work was initiated on the partial relocation of County Road 5 to enable an extension of the airport's crosswind runway slated for next year. Several new hangars will soon be constructed to house local private aircraft. The airport has also been working closely with the Department of Homeland Security to develop a new Customs and Border Protection facility, and a new air traffic control tower is under design by the Federal Aviation Administration. Additionally, Grand Forks has acquired several new firefighting and snow removal vehicles to enhance safety at the airfield.

To the delight of hockey fans, the Grand Forks airport coordinated with the Ralph Englestad Arena, Allegiant Airlines, area travel agencies, and airport tenants to enable 1,500 excited fans to fly directly to Nashville, Tennessee on October 28th to attend the 2021 U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame Game. This resulted in Grand Forks experiencing the single busiest day of passenger traffic in the airport's history.

The Grand Forks International Airport is congratulated for a tremendous year of accomplishments.



Grand Forks International Airport receives the 2021 Commercial Airport of the Year award during the North Dakota Aviation Association's FLY-ND Conference awards banquet on March 8th, 2022. Pictured from left to right are Rick Audette (Director of Operations, GFK airport), Ryan Riesinger (Executive Director, GFK airport), and presenting the award is Kyle Wanner (Executive Director, ND Aeronautics Commission).