

Economic Profile

Austin-Bergstrom Airport

Austin, Texas

BEFORE

Air force base

AFTER



International Airport

CLEANUP OVERSEEN BY

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
and EPA

Beginning in 1942, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) operated this 3,197-acre facility as the Bergstrom Air Force Base. The property is located about 7 miles southeast of downtown Austin, Texas. Historic military operations contaminated soil and groundwater. With oversight from EPA and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), DoD cleaned up the facility.

Given the facility's ideal location just outside the city of Austin, the property was prime for reuse as part of the DoD's Base Realignment and Closure program. After cleanup was complete, DoD transferred the property to the city in 1991. The city transformed the former military base into the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. Today, airport operations contribute to the local economy, generating an estimated \$272 million in annual revenue.



ANNUAL SALES

\$272 million



EMPLOYEES

3,642



ANNUAL WAGES

\$120 million

For more information about RCRA and the economic benefits of site reuse, visit www.epa.gov/hw/learn-about-hazardous-waste-cleanups





THE REDEVELOPMENT OF BERGSTROM AIR FORCE BASE TO AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (AUS) HAS PROVIDED THOUSANDS OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT JOBS TO THE AUSTIN AND CENTRAL TEXAS COMMUNITY SINCE 1999. ALONG WITH BEING AN ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR THE REGION, AUS CONNECTS TRAVELERS TO THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD TO CENTRAL TEXAS AND THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY.

- Austin-Bergstrom International Airport

DoD, EPA, TCEQ and the city worked together to fast-track cleanup so it could meet the city's airport opening deadline of April 1999. Cleanup was integrated into construction of the airport to facilitate and expedite the property transition. Cleanup included excavating contaminated soil and installing a protective layer over remaining contamination.

The cleanup and transformation were performed with sustainability in mind. About 30% of the existing buildings were incorporated into the airport design. Additionally, more than 700 residential buildings at the facility were sold and removed, providing low-cost housing to the community and reducing waste. The city estimates it saved \$200 million in land acquisition and runway construction costs by converting the former air force base. The City of Austin Aviation Department, which operates the airport, plans to incorporate sustainable principles, natural hazard resiliency best practices and environmental stewardship into all aspects of its culture, planning, development and operations. The city is engaging with Austin's community about current and future plans through surveys, newsletters, meetings, open houses and more.

TCEQ now oversees the facility under the RCRA Hazardous Waste Cleanup Program (formerly the RCRA Corrective Action Program). Maintenance of the protective layer and long-term groundwater monitoring are ongoing.

Cleanup of the former Bergstrom Air Force Base has protected public health and the environment, while allowing the facility to be transformed into an economic asset for the region. Austin-Bergstrom Airport now provides more than 3,000 jobs at 80 businesses, generating an estimated \$120 million in employee income per year.



With a focus on sustainable cleanup and redevelopment, more than 35,000 tons of concrete from the facility were crushed and reused for airport roadways and runways.



Bergstrom Air Force was activated in 1942 and closed in the early 1990s. The Base Realignment and Closure Act allowed Austin to convert the closed air base into an international airport.