



CITY OF CLEVELAND  
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

# Burke – Developing Cleveland's Lakefront

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*February 4, 2026*



# Agenda

- Overview
- Meeting purpose
- Burke and other Downtown Airports
- Burke Operations
- Burke's Budget
- Direct Economic Impact of Redeveloping Burke



# Overview – Burke and the Budget

- Aircraft operations have been declining
  - *Around 40,000 operations per year on average – peaked in the late 90s*
  - *FAA forecasts continued decline in operations at Burke through 2050*
- Annual operating loss of \$900,000 on average over the past 20 years
  - *Subsidized by Cleveland Hopkins Airport*
  - *Subsidy has increased over time*
- Nearly all Burke economic activity can be redirected to Hopkins and/or County Airport
- Burke offers minimal benefit to the City's general revenue fund
- Greater opportunity for direct economic impact if Burke is redeveloped



# Purpose

**To provide Cleveland City Council and the public with a clear, fact-based understanding of the legal, financial, operational, and market realities associated with Burke Lakefront Airport—so that any future decision regarding its closure or continued operation is informed, transparent, fiscally responsible, and aligned with the long-term interests of Cleveland taxpayers.**

Completed City Council meetings about Burke:

- *Historical, Legal, Operational, and other Regulatory Considerations (January 21)*

Future City Council meetings about Burke:

- *How to Close an Airport (April 1)*
- *Redevelopment Opportunities (April 15)*



# Comparison Downtown Airports

Airport	Code	Aerial Photo	Acreage	Governance	Annual Operations	Based Aircraft	Runway - Longest			FBOs	
							Runway	Length (ft)	Width (ft)	1	2
Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport	BKL		450	City of Cleveland, Ohio	49,984	30	6L/24R	6,604	150	Signature Aviation	
St. Paul Downtown Airport	STP		540	Metropolitan Airports Commission	40,618	97	14/32	6,491	150	Signature Aviation	St. Paul Flight Center
Kansas City Wheeler Airport	MKC		700	Kansas City Aviation Department	81,099	176	1/19	6,827	150	Signature Aviation	Atlantic Aviation
St. Louis Downtown Airport	CPS		1013	Bi-State Development Agency	111,130	111	12R/30L	7,002	150	Jet Aviation	



# Burke Operations

- 15 tenants at Burke, 7 tenants are aviation related
- Two main airport tenants are Signature (18 employees) and Aitheras (35 employees).
  - *City is in discussions about moving operations to Cleveland Hopkins and/or Cuyahoga County Airport*
  - *Cleveland Clinic and other hospital operations can be redirected to CLE/County, in ongoing discussions about impact of Burke closure on their medical operations*
- Cleveland Air Show is currently hosted at Burke
  - *Other air shows operate from other airports. For example, Chicago's air show in-flight participants takeoff from the airport in Gary, Indiana*



# Burke Budget – Trends

- Since 2006:
  - Average operating deficit is approximately \$900,000
  - Burke has maintained an operating deficit every single year going back 20+ years
  - Highest deficit in last 20 years was in 2025, \$1.7M
    - Substantial underground leak
    - New HVAC control system that increased costs by \$320K
    - Decreased parking revenue
  - Lowest deficit in 2018, \$158,235
    - Higher parking fees
- Expenses have been relatively stable but will increase as the building ages and deferred maintenance catches up to Burke



# Burke's Budget – Enterprise Fund

- Port Control is an Enterprise Fund
- Signatory airlines determine the budget and investment for both Cleveland Hopkins and Burke
- Primary revenue sources for Burke
  - Leases
    - 87%+ occupied
  - Parking
- There is no debt directly attached to Burke



## 2025 Budget - Actuals

Expense Category	2025 BKL Actuals
Salaries	1,075,898.00
Employee Benefits	387,001.00
Travel & Training	-
Utilities	741,189.00
Contractual Services	344,494.00
Materials & Supplies	635,450.00
Maintenance	125,082.00
Judgements; Indirect Costs	-
Interdepartmental Charges	23,953.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,333,067.00</b>

Revenue	2025 BKL Actuals
Concessions (Parking)	521,312.00
Ride Share	7,984.00
Landing Fees	170,961.00
Space Rental	279,092.00
Ground Rental	369,350.00
Fuel Flow	197,675.00
Utilities	64,095.00
Misc Non-Operating Rev	-
Misc Operating Rev	-
-	1,610,469.00
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>(1,722,598.00)</b>



# Burke's Impact on the General Revenue Fund

- ESI Report was conservative in its estimates and indicated that Burke brings in +/- \$500k in income, property, and parking taxes
  - *\$250k income tax to be retained if closed*
  - *Parking tax may be captured by future reuse of the site*
- Analysis by Finance Department estimates Burke's direct tax impact is closer to \$200,000
  - Admissions tax – The air show is tax-exempt, so there is no lost admissions tax revenue related to the air show
  - Parking tax – approximately \$15,000-30,000 annually
  - Income tax – approximately \$100,000 annually, with most income tax opportunities staying in Cleveland upon BKL closure



# Opportunities for Economic Impact with Burke Transformation

ESI Economic Impact Study – March 2024

- Lowest development scenario – parks and green space only
  - \$400k direct tax impact (i.e. income, parking, property tax) to City of Cleveland
- Mixed-use development – 170 acre park, 1200 residential units, 10,000 sf retail, and 100 key hotel
  - \$3.3M direct tax impact (i.e. income, parking, property tax) to City of Cleveland
- Burke's use as an airport is a major constraint with substantial opportunity costs for the City
- Additional economic impact studies and cost estimates are underway



# Priorities for Burke Transformation

- Improve public access
- Drive economic impact
- Financially viable model
  - *Privately financed uses combined with public space*
- Leverage existing financial tools and investment
  - *New Community Authority*
  - *Shore-to-Core-to-Shore TIF*
- Complimentary to Stadium site

## Cleveland Waterfront Access

- +/- 6 miles of waterfront land between Edgewater (W 95) and E 55<sup>th</sup> Street Marina
- Less than 25% of waterfront land currently utilized for public access
- BKL comprises +/- 2 miles of waterfront land





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# Questions?

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