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General aviation reliever airport taking off

Updated: 6/15/2009 6:15:15 PM

By: Karina Kling

There's a small airport between Pflugerville and Manor, which could soon be a big help for businesses in the area.

[Austin Executive Airport](#), formally known as Bird's Nest, is spreading its wings from a 1,500-foot runway, to a more than 6,000-foot runway.

For more than 40 years, pilots flying out of the former Bird's Nest Airport have enjoyed their bird's eye view, and their small, single-engine planes never needed a lot of room to get off the ground.



Single-engine planes didn't need much room to land, but the airport is trying to attract some bigger clients.

Now, the expansion will make it possible for bigger, corporate jets, to land on a newly laid runway.

"The Austin area is actually the largest metropolitan area in the U.S. that didn't have a second reliever airport to [Austin] Bergstrom [International Airport]," Austin Executive Airport Vice President of Development Andrew Perry said.

Perry said there's been a need to improve aviation infrastructure, since Mueller and the former Austin Executive Airport closed in the 1990s.

"In the last 10 years there's been about 300 airplanes displaced once those two facilities closed," he said.

Providing a place for corporate jets to land is also good news for the economy in the area.

"One of the real keys to any business growth is simply mobility, being able to get to where you need to go," Charley Ayres, with the Round Rock Chamber of Commerce, said.

Ayres said 38 percent of the companies in Round Rock consider their primary market international, and 28 percent national. He said having a tool like a general aviation reliever airport will help to accommodate top executives and potential corporate projects.

"They want to come in quickly, spend a couple hours and leave," Ayres said.

He said they don't want to spend a lot of time in the terminal.

So while it might look about the size of a bird's nest from the air, the small airport southeast of Pflugerville is gaining ground and spreading its wings to becoming a major reliever airport in Central Texas.



The new addition to the airport should be complete by early 2010.

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[Georgetown Municipal Airport](#) operates a similar business. The Georgetown airport manager said a little competition is good and expects there will be a need for both airports.

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