

50.2 Million Passengers in 2019 a New Record

Aircraft Operations Also Hit All-Time High

Charlotte Douglas International Airport served 50.2 million passengers in 2019, a historic all-time high and 8 percent increase from the previous year.

“Reaching 50 million passengers is a huge milestone for the Airport,” said Aviation Director/CEO Brent Cagle. “It’s the biggest jump in passenger traffic we’ve had since 2010, which shows our tremendous growth just within the past year.”

CLT officials attribute the record-breaking number to a rise in local passenger traffic and additional flights offered by airlines. Local traffic (passengers who begin and end their travels at CLT) continues to grow 5 to 8 percent each year as the city’s population grows. It now comprises nearly 30 percent of all passenger traffic. Ten years ago, it was 25 percent.

More flights in 2019 meant more competition and airline options for CLT passengers. Spirit Airlines launched service from Charlotte to Baltimore, Orlando, Newark and Fort Lauderdale in June citing the region’s economic growth. American Airlines also revved up flights to popular destinations and began operating more than 700 daily flights from the Queen City.

Benefitting from the added service, airport operations hit a record high as well. Charlotte Douglas oversaw 578,263 arrivals and departures, a 5 percent jump from 2018. CLT offers nonstop flights to 178 destinations, including 38 international locales and three U.S. territories. Daily aircraft movements averaged 1,550 compared to 1,400 in 2018.

“We’re continually expanding the terminal for airlines to add new service and that’s a great position for the Airport as we build for demand,” Cagle said. “CLT’s prime location on the east coast and low cost per enplaned passenger make the Airport very desirable for airlines to expand in Charlotte.”

CLT has responded to its dramatic growth through its \$2.5 to \$3.1 billion capital investment campaign Destination CLT. The Airport completed Concourse B renovations, debuted the East Terminal Expansion (The Plaza), opened the upper and lower level Elevated Roadway and Terminal Curb Front and broke ground on the Terminal Lobby Expansion in 2019.

Throughout last year, the Airport remained focused on enhancing the passenger experience by installing 1,400 seats with integrated power, three selfie stations, five new artworks (four murals by two local artists) and opening 16 new concession concepts, including Wicked Weed Brewery, Potbelly, iStore and a second Minute Suites’ location. A redesigned website and new app also were introduced.

“We want CLT to be the first choice for passengers,” Cagle said. “From the latest amenities to the more than 100 shopping and dining options, elevating the travel experience is our top priority.”

As an economic engine of the Carolinas, CLT contributes \$23 billion in annual economic input, \$1.1 billion in state/local taxes, 132,330 jobs for N.C. residents and \$5.7 billion in personal income, according to a report conducted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Aviation.



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