



# CHAPTER ONE

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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction and Purpose

Airport Master Plans are the tools to evaluate the airport's physical facilities, management principals, planned development, and financial foundation and future. Because the aviation industry is not static, periodic updates are needed to refresh this information and lay out future plans and expectations. Skylark Field (ILE) has had some significant changes since the previous master plan was completed in 2004. The role of the airport has changed from a commercial service airport to a general aviation (GA) airport and serves the GA/business traffic of the region.

Many of the projects and objectives from the previous master plan are not relevant with the GA/business direction of ILE. This master plan will be focused on forecasting the aviation need at ILE, identifying the projects necessary to meet demand, and examining the financial and management documents to achieve the short- and long-term goals at ILE. Additionally, the master plan will provide tools for aviation staff in their day-to-day airfield management and provide guidance for meeting future needs. The master plan will assist ILE to identify relevant

projects to improve and maintain the airport by laying out a course of projects designed to maintain and improve ILE well into the future.

## Public Involvement and Project Committees

An important element to a major planning process is the public involvement. For the ILE Master Plan public involvement took on two different options. The first option was the development and involvement of two committees: Executive Committee (EC) and Project Steering Committee (PSC). A full listing of committee members is included in **Appendix A**.

The EC was comprised of City of Killeen staff from the Aviation Department and others as designated including TxDOT's Project Manager and the consultant team. The EC role was oversight and overall guidance for the master plan process. The EC, based on their positions in leadership, reviewed draft



reports and documents prior to submission to the PSC or being made available to the general public. The EC were also ex-officio members of the PSC.

The City and ILE staff was engaged to invite individuals to be a part of the PSC. The PSC was comprised of key airport tenants, community leaders, and tenants. The focus of this committee was to provide technical and community review, input and guidance to the project, and act in the role to communicate the project to the greater Killeen region.

The second option for public involvement was comprised of public meetings intended for the ILE tenants and general public of the City of Killeen and surrounding communities. The purpose of these meetings was as much to inform and educate the community as to achieve their input and buy-in on the overall direction for ILE. These meetings were held at three times during the planning process. The first was during the early project stages to inform and open the process; the second followed the EC, PSC, and airport management selection of the preferred development concepts for various locations on the airfield and within the terminal area. The final public meeting followed the final draft approval in the form of a briefing to the City Council for approval.

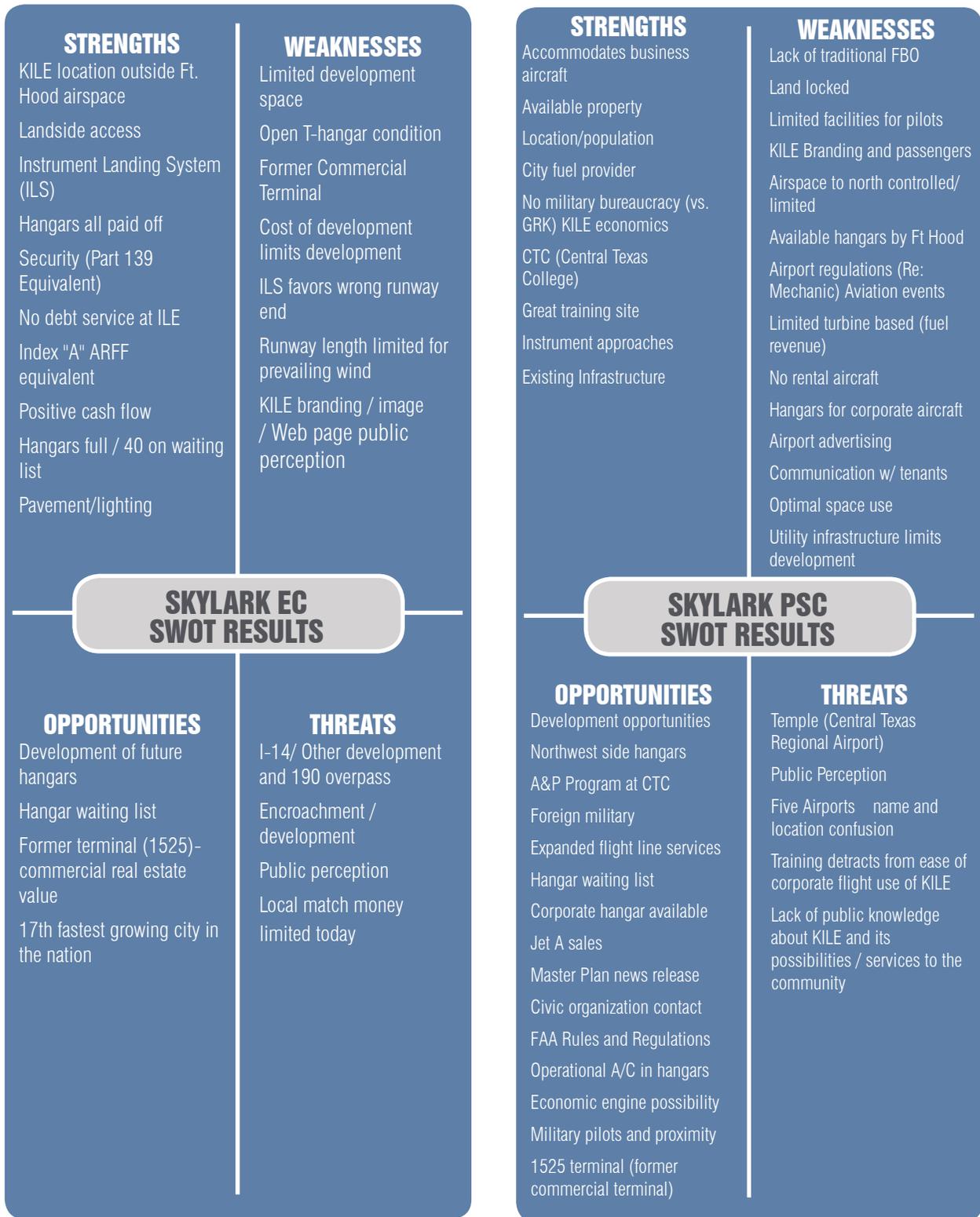
## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis

During the project kickoff meetings a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted with each committee. Over a period of 45 to 60 minutes, each committee was asked a series of questions designed to prompt a discussion of each area of the SWOT analysis which elicited varying degrees of interest, responses, and discussion from each committee. During the SWOT analysis with the PSC members some of the EC were present but remained neutral making limited comments in an effort to gain an uninfluenced set of opinions from the PSC. **Figure 1-1** communicates the ideas generated by the EC and PSC through the SWOT analysis.

When looking at the results from both SWOT analyses there are very few overlaps. The input from the PSC differed from the EC in many places. Where the EC's focus seemed to be on strengths and weaknesses the PSC honed in on numerous opportunities available to ILE and the City of Killeen. There were a few areas where the EC and PSC differed in their view. The EC perceived a weakness as the limited development space available while the PSC viewed the available development land as a strength. Because of these type issues, the SWOT analysis was used to influence each phase of the master plan development in an effort to keep the final product focused on the needs of the local community and GA/business users at ILE.



**FIGURE 1-1 | EC AND PSC SWOT RESULTS**



## Airport Location and History

The City of Killeen is located in Bell County, on Hwy 190, west of I-35, approximately 50 miles southwest of Waco and about 60 miles north of the capital city of Austin. Skylark Field is classified as a general aviation airport within the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) *National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems* (NPIAS) and the *Texas Airport System Plan* (TASP). ILE comprises approximately 140 acres, experiences an estimated 7,000 annual operations, and houses more than 50 aircraft of various sizes and complexities. The airport serves the general aviation and business community of Killeen and the surrounding area.

Historically, ILE has served both general aviation and commercial passenger aircraft. The airport has supported both these types of services for many years; however, during the early 2000s it was determined that a joint-use facility at Robert Gray Army Airfield (GRK) would provide a better opportunity to serve the future commercial passenger demand in the region. An agreement to move commercial service to GRK was struck and with the completion of a new air carrier terminal complex on August 2, 2004, commercial passenger service was moved

from ILE to GRK. Ten years later, ILE continues to be owned and operated by the City of Killeen which is a requirement based on the restrictions imposed by the US Army on GA aircraft operations at GRK and meeting all FAA grant assurances. The Executive Director of Aviation has the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of ILE. The City Council has ultimate responsibility for all airport policy considerations, as well as the compliance with all pertinent federal, state, and local regulations.

ILE is located approximately three miles east of the Central Business District of Killeen. Direct access to the airport and terminal area is provided via Stonetree Drive from the north or south. The north entrance onto Stonetree Drive is from Business US 190, while the southern entrance comes from Farm-to-Market Road (FM) 2410. In the near future access will be provided by an extension of Stonetree Drive to the US Highway 190 frontage road. This will make for much easier access to the airport from US 190. The published airport elevation is 848 feet above mean sea level (MSL), with airfield coordinates of 31° 05' 09.00" N and 97° 41' 11.40" W. The current magnetic declination at the airport is 4.06° E (NOAA National Geophysical Data Center, 11/14) with an estimated variation change of 0.13° W per year. **Figure 1-2** depicts the ILE location.



**FIGURE 1-2 | AIRPORT LOCATION/VICINITY, SKYLARK FIELD AIRPORT**

