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ANNUAL REPORT

**DETROIT REGION**  
**AEROTROPOLIS<sup>®</sup>**  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



# INNOVATION & AVIATION

2020 welcomed a new Executive Director, Christopher Girdwood, to the Detroit Region Aerotropolis Development Corporation! His experience working with the International Economic Development Council, in addition to fostering the growth of emerging technologies in Northern Virginia and Southern California brought a new perspective to the Aerotropolis region.

The daily work of supporting greenfield expansion by actively marketing 6,000 acres of development-ready land centered in a world-class network of transportation infrastructure remains. However, the pathway to drive corporate expansion and new investment in our region is slightly different.

In 2020, Aerotropolis led the nation in building highways in the sky for advanced air mobility. This new infrastructure, grounded in authoritative municipal data, brought new advanced manufacturing prospects to the region. It also expanded on the multi-modal mobility network that is often a deciding factor when considering corporate expansion.

Our target industries, which include logistics, advanced manufacturing, and next-generation mobility are constantly evolving. For example, a partnership between Kroger and Ocado resulted in an announcement to invest \$95 Million in Aerotropolis to support the growing demand for grocery ecommerce services.

Whether you are an Aerotropolis partner or a company looking to expand in Southeast Michigan, we invite you to explore this report to gain a better understanding of our region and join us in celebrating the successes of 2020.

**CHRISTOPHER GIRDWOOD**  
*Executive Director*

**DAVID GLAAB**  
*Chairman of the Board*





# THE AEROTROPOLIS ADVANTAGE

The Detroit Region Aerotropolis Development Corporation is a four-community, two-county public-private economic development partnership driving corporate expansion and new investments around Detroit Metro and Willow Run Airports.

## TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS NETWORK

### DETROIT METROPOLITAN AIRPORT

- » 18<sup>th</sup> busiest airport in North America
- » 35 million passengers per year
- » 1,100 flights per day
- » 140 non-stop destinations on four continents
- » 464 million pounds of cargo per year

### WILLOW RUN AIRPORT

- » Leading "all cargo" airport in the USA
- » 200 million pounds of cargo per year
- » U.S. Customs operation on site
- » Corporate and charter flight hub
- » 24-hour service

### PORT OF DETROIT

- » 29 terminals handle 17 million tons of cargo every year

### INTERNATIONAL GATEWAY

- » 2<sup>nd</sup> busiest border crossing in North America, providing 2 bridges and a rail tunnel to Canada

### AMERICAN CENTER FOR MOBILITY

- » 335-acre test facility for connected and autonomous vehicles
- » 2.5-mile highway loop, entrance/exit ramps, reconfigurable intersection, four-seasons testing

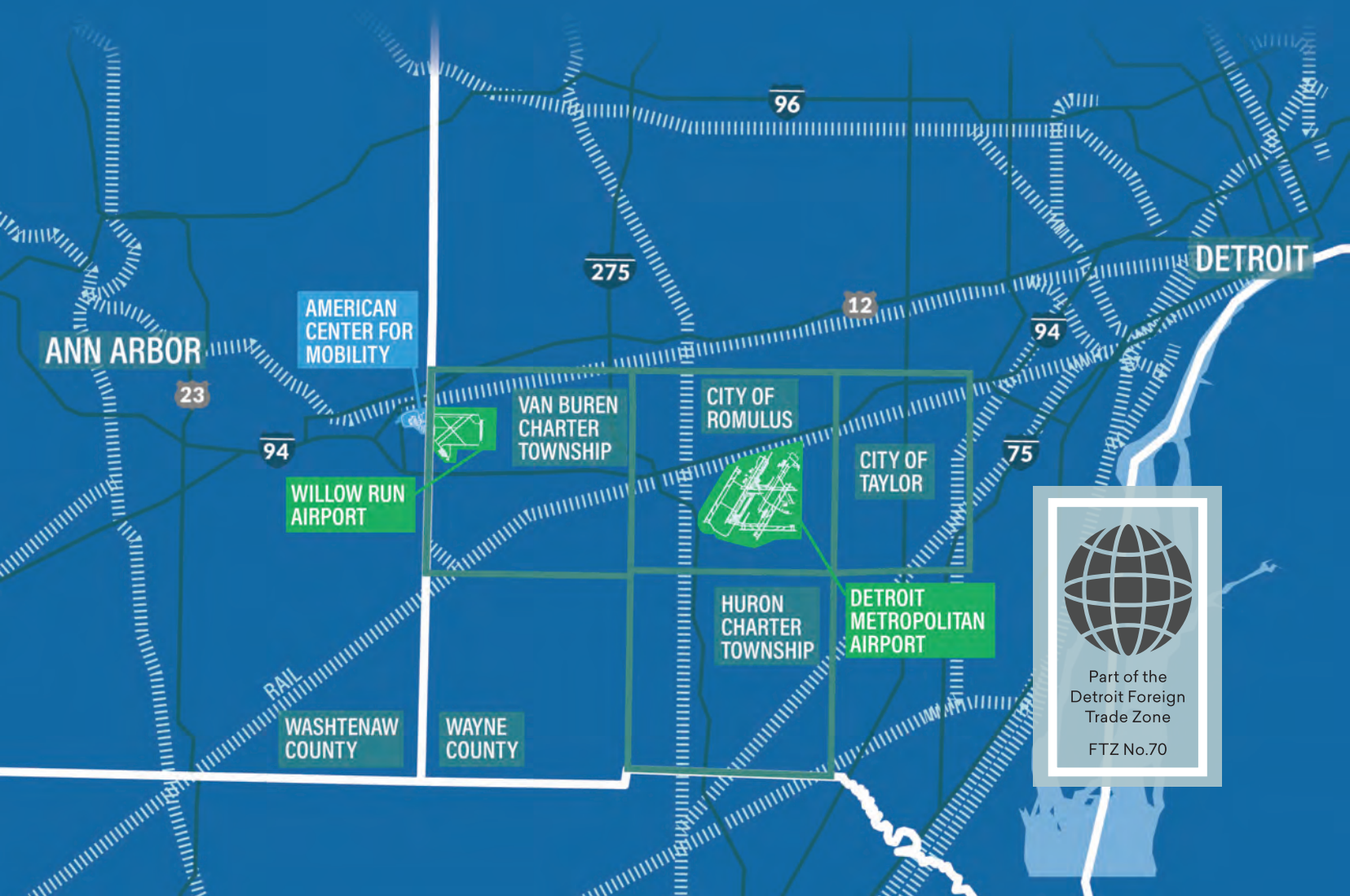
**6,000** AVAILABLE ACRES 

**5** RAIL LINES 

**3** FREEWAYS 

**2** AIRPORTS 

**1** AMERICAN CENTER FOR MOBILITY 



# MARKETING & ADVERTISING

In 2020, the Aerotropolis worked closely with the Wayne County Airport Authority to promote economic development, in addition sharing the safety and security work that has been completed at DTW and Willow Run: <https://www.metroairport.com/about-dtw/covid-19-information>.

The Aerotropolis placed 9 advertisements in 6 publications, reaching millions of readers worldwide in print and digital formats. The target audience of these increased efforts are C-suite decision makers, site consultants, and corporate real estate professionals.

## MEDIA COVERAGE

- Ann Arbor News
- CBS 62 Michigan Matters
- Crane's Detroit
- DBusiness Magazine
- Detroit Driven
- Detroit Free Press
- Detroit News
- FOX 2 News
- GovLoop
- MEDC Planet M
- Michigan.com
- MI Tech News
- MLIVE
- MSN.com
- WhereNext Magazine

**DETROIT METRO • WILLOW RUN**  
WAYNE COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY

## Committed to driving investment in our region.

**Job Creators**

**Creating growth and investment**

**Premier locations for global companies to build, expand, or develop.**

Wayne County Airport Authority drives economic activity. Its airports are not only responsible for creating jobs, but also sustaining more than 86,000 jobs throughout the state. The world-class Detroit Metro Airport is one of the world's leading air transportation hubs with more than 1,100 flights per day to and from four continents. Willow Run Airport is an international cargo and general aviation facility. This premier location is surrounded by 6,000 acres of development-ready land, centered with access to secure, timely, and reliable supply chain and logistics infrastructure.

**Together with Detroit Region Aerotropolis, we drive economic development in our region.**

**DETROIT REGION AEROTROPOLIS™**

*Driving corporate expansion and new investments around Detroit Metro and Willow Run airports.*

Contact Us Today - [DetroitAero.org](http://DetroitAero.org)

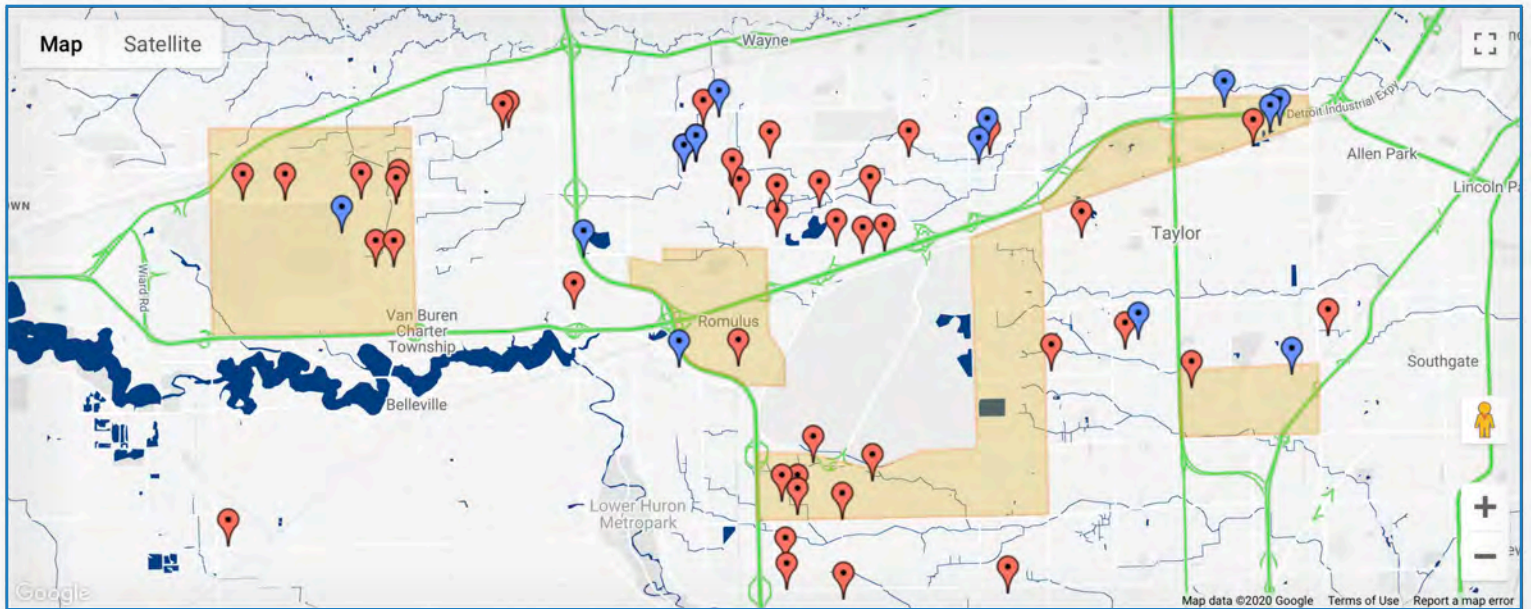
**Planning a trip?** Find out what Detroit Metropolitan Airport is doing to keep you healthy and safe: [www.metroairport.com/about-dtw/covid-19-information](https://www.metroairport.com/about-dtw/covid-19-information)



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OUTREACH

One of the pillars of the Aerotropolis' business development strategy is connecting with our target audience. In 2020, the Aerotropolis submitted over 175 sites (10+ acre sites noted in red below) to compete for high quality jobs in the region. The blue marks below indicate vacant industrial properties that the Aerotropolis team markets daily.

Working with our partners at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Detroit Regional Partnership, Wayne County and the Aerotropolis communities brings a strong team approach to economic development.



VISIT [DETROITAERO.ORG/PROPERTIES/](https://DETROITAERO.ORG/PROPERTIES/) TO ACCESS INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY DATA SHEETS.

## BY THE NUMBERS



CONDUCTED  
**SITE TOURS** 811

67

BUSINESS ATTRACTION & EXPANSION  
**PROJECTS**



11

**RESPONSES**  
TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION (RFIS)



177

**SITES**  
SUBMITTED FOR LOCATION CONSIDERATION



17

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TRADESHOWS AND  
**CONFERENCES**





## BUILDING HIGHWAYS IN THE SKY

In January 2020, Detroit Aerotropolis licensed the Airspace Link AirHub platform in partnership with Michigan PlanetM (Mobility) and Michigan Unmanned Aerial Systems Consortium (MUASC) to establish and test a new low altitude drone infrastructure in the region. The complete AirHub platform including AirHub for Pilots and AirHub for Government was developed and implemented for all four Aerotropolis communities.

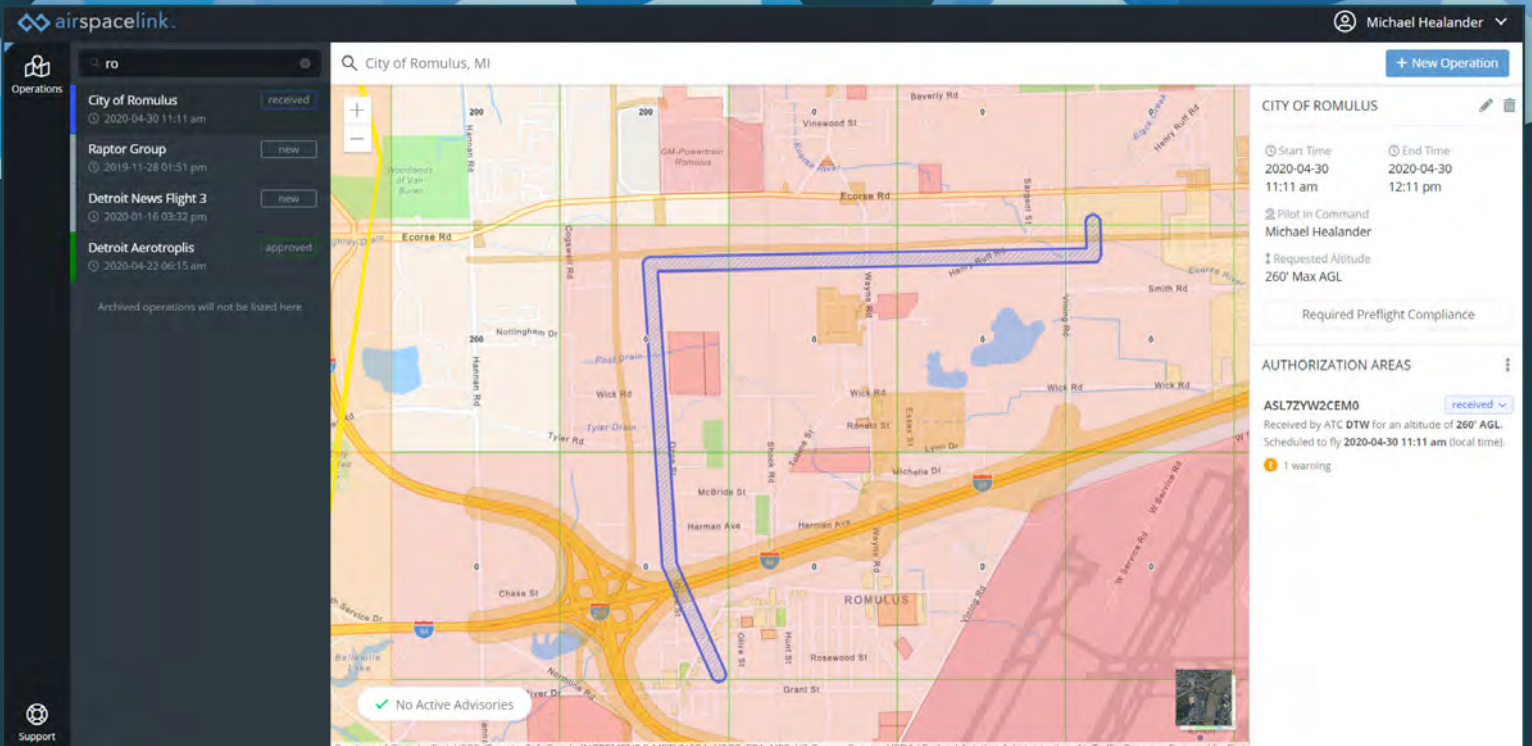
Data from the communities, county, state, local and commercial sources were collected, processed and analyzed to identify relevant hazards and risks associated with UAS operations occurring within Aerotropolis used for building safe “Highways in the Sky” that are in harmony with Aerotropolis community interests.

As technology advancements push innovation into the skies, transportation managers can lean on GIS data already being generated within their communities to prepare themselves for the Jetsonian future. The Aerotropolis trial demonstrates that now is the time to be part of the solution and can't afford to wait until unmanned vehicles begin operating before considerations are made on how to participate in drone integration and innovation.

*“WITH OUR PARTNERSHIP, AEROTROPOLIS IS PROVIDING THE FOUNDATION TO SAFELY INTEGRATE DRONES INTO THE NATIONAL AIRSPACE AND IT'S COMMUNITIES WHILE PROVIDING A FOUNDATIONAL DRONE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ADVANCED OPERATIONS, MANUFACTURING AND INNOVATION.”*

**- MICHAEL HEALANDER, AIRSPACE LINK PRESIDENT & CEO**





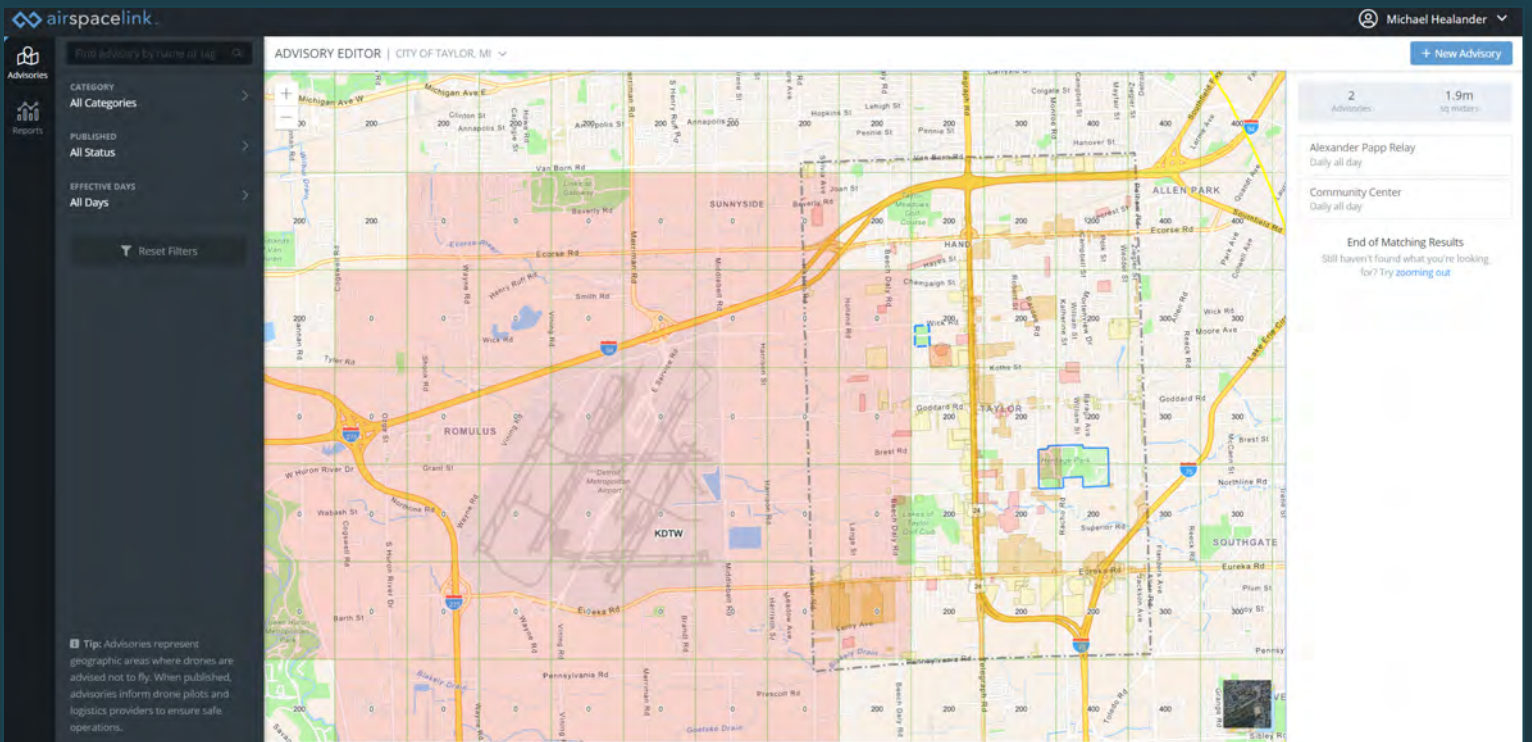
## AEROTROPOLIS INFRASTRUCTURE UNLOCKS NEW HIGHWAYS IN THE SKY!

AS SEEN ON:

CBS62 NEWS MICHIGAN MATTERS: A NEW HIGHWAY IN THE SKIES FOR METRO DETROIT

DBUSINESS MAGAZINE: DIGITAL DRONE INFRASTRUCTURE INSTALLED IN METRO DETROIT

WERENEXT MAGAZINE: UNDER CONSTRUCTION: DRONE HIGHWAYS OVER DETROIT



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS



The Kroger Co., America's largest grocery retailer, and Ocado, a world leader in technology for grocery ecommerce, announced Romulus, MI, as the latest location for a Customer Fulfillment Center (CFC). The location confirms a previous announcement stating Kroger and Ocado would construct a CFC in the Great Lakes Region.

"We are delighted to welcome the Kroger fulfillment center to Romulus, building on the city's status as a logistics and fulfillment hub," said Romulus Mayor LeRoy Burcroff. "We are thrilled about the many new jobs the operations will provide to local residents. Even amid COVID-19, we have remained focused on ensuring Romulus continues to be a home of opportunity--for businesses and residents alike--and with the support of strong partners like Kroger, we can keep our community vibrant for years to come. At the same time, the innovative use of robotics at the fulfillment center to prepare grocery orders for delivery to customers nearby will offer residents critical access to healthy and fresh food."

"Kroger's decision to invest \$95 million and create 250 new jobs in Romulus further demonstrates that Wayne County is a global leader in logistics and fulfillment industries. Kroger's continued commitment to our region with the innovative new grocery delivery service provided by this high-tech facility will help improve access to fresh foods in southeast Michigan at a time when this service is more important than ever to keep residents safe and healthy," said Warren Evans, Wayne County Chief Executive.

This new 135,000-square-foot CFC will accelerate Kroger's ability to expand its products to a larger footprint. This facility will create 250 new jobs, benefitting the City of Romulus/Aerotropolis region.

1  CLOSED  
**PROJECT**

250 <sup>NEW</sup>   
**JOBS**

 \$95M  
MILLION IN CAPITAL  
**INVESTMENT**



# COMMUNITIES & PARTNERS

Regional economic development is only as strong as the individual parties that comprise “the region” and the Detroit Region Aerotropolis Development Corporation is no exception.

Our success in 2020 and beyond would not be possible without the continued collaboration with and commitment of our communities and partners. Each of the following communities, counties, and organizations – both public and private are critical to the success of our business attraction efforts. To each, we say thank you!

*“2020 BROUGHT SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES, BUT NONE THAT COULDN'T BE SOLVED WITH STRONG PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS LIKE THE DETROIT REGION AEROTROPOLIS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU IN 2021 AND BEYOND.”*

**- DAVID GLAAB, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**



**CITY OF ROMULUS**



**CITY OF TAYLOR**



**HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP**



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**



**VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP**



**DETROIT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP**



**WAYNE COUNTY**



**WAYNE COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY**



**DTE ENERGY**



“AEROTROPOLIS HAS POSITIONED WAYNE COUNTY AS AN EMERGING LEADER IN THE LOGISTICS AND MOBILITY INDUSTRIES. DESPITE THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF 2020, WE WITNESSED THIS EFFORT ONCE AGAIN BEAR FRUIT WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF KROGER’S NEW ADVANCED DISTRIBUTION FACILITY FOR ECOMMERCE GROCERY ORDERS. AEROTROPOLIS’ CONTINUED SUCCESS IN 2021 WILL FURTHER STRENGTHEN OUR REGIONAL ECONOMY WITH GOOD-PAYING JOBS IN FORWARD LOOKING INDUSTRIES.”

- WARREN EVANS, WAYNE COUNTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

 @DetroitAero

 Detroit Region Aerotropolis

 DetroitAero.org

## DETROIT REGION AEROTROPOLIS<sup>®</sup> DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

