The 2025 HUB Build Northwest Awards
Entry Form - Contractors

PROJECT TYPE

CHECK ONE (See ***Project Category*** section in Entry Packet for detailed descriptions of each project type.)

- ☒ **Building (under $10 million)**
- ☐ **Building ($10 million and over)**
- ☐ **Highway & Transportation**
- ☐ **Heavy & Utilities**
- ☐ **Sub-Contractor**
- ☐ **Out of Area**
- ☐ **Small Projects**
- ☐ **Special Projects**

CHECK ONE

- ☒ **New Construction**
- ☐ **Renovation**

CONTRACTOR INFORMATION

Must be an Inland Northwest AGC member in good standing

Company Name *(list all if a joint venture)*: Garco Construction, Inc.

Entry Submitted By: Rob Decker Title: Vice President - Commercial

Email: robertd@garco.com

PROJECT TEAM INFORMATION

Owner: Aero-Flite

General Contractor: Garco Construction, Inc.

Lead Architect: Garco Construction, Inc. Lead Engineer: Coffman Engineers, Inc.

Major Sub-Contractors: Harris Rebar Columbia Basin; Northwest Fence Co; Power City Electric, Inc.; S&S Coatings, Inc; Western States Steel & Fab, Inc; Continental Door Company; Apollo Mechanical Contractors; Modern Drywall, Inc; AM Hardware; Budding & Associates; Kilgore Tec Products; Patriot Fire Protection, Inc.; Hilltop Commercial Supply, Inc; Poe Asphalt Paving, Inc; Acme Concrete Paving. Inc; Mathis Striping & Snowplowing; RJ Construction Services; Evergreen Excavating; Jett Concrete, Inc; Flexible Lifeline Systems, Inc; Norco Manufacturing

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: Aero-Flite Maintenance Hangar

Location: Spokane, WA

Contract Amount: $9,215,884

Date Project Started: Award 11/1/23, construction start 3/1/24

Completion Date: 12/2/24

What was the percentage of volume of work on this project performed with your own field personnel? 65 %

Were there any fatalities on this project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Attach additional sheets if necessary

Send this form and your completed entry package to:

Inland Northwest AGC
Build Northwest Awards
4935 E. Trent Ave.
Spokane, WA 99212

All entries must be received no later than 4:00 pm on November 6, 2025 at the AGC office. There will be no exceptions or extensions.

GARCO

2025 HUB BUILD
NORTHWEST AWARDS

AERO-FLITE MAINTENANCE HANGAR

CATEGORY:
Building (under $10 million)

LOCATION:
Spokane, WA

SUBMITTED BY:
Garco Construction
Rob Decker
Vice President - Commercial

WHY This Project Deserves a Build Northwest Award

The new Aero-Flite Maintenance Facility is more than a building—it is a critical investment in wildfire response capability across the Northwest and beyond. Aero-Flite operates one of the nation's largest fleets of aerial firefighting aircraft, providing rapid suppression support during increasingly severe wildfire seasons. In 2024 alone, wildfires burned millions of acres across the U.S., with Washington and neighboring states facing record-breaking fire events. Every hour of aircraft downtime during these emergencies can mean thousands of additional acres lost. This facility directly addresses that challenge.

PURPOSE-BUILT FOR MISSION READINESS

The 36,800-square-foot maintenance hangar was designed to streamline heavy maintenance and inspections for Aero-Flite's specialized fleet, including Dash 8-400 airtankers, RJ85 airtankers, and CL-415 water-scooping aircraft. With a 230-foot clear span, 34-foot clear height, and a 180-foot-wide powered sliding door, the hangar accommodates two Dash 8-400 aircraft side by side with ample space for safe, efficient work. This consolidation of maintenance operations under one roof reduces turnaround times and ensures aircraft can return to service faster during peak fire season.

INNOVATIVE DESIGN & SAFETY

Designed an constructed by Garco Construction, the hangar incorporates a custom fall protection system designed specifically for Aero-Flite's fleet, safeguarding technicians during elevated work. Advanced fire suppression systems, flexible work zones, and environmental controls were integrated to meet the unique demands of aerial firefighting aircraft. These features reflect Garco's commitment to safety, adaptability, and technical excellence.

SUPPORTING GROWTH & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Because the new hangar displaced the existing parking space, Garco constructed a new lot to replace lost spaces and expand overall capacity, supporting Aero-Flite's workforce of which are 125 based in Spokane. Beyond supporting Aero-Flite's mission, the hangar strengthens regional wildfire resilience. Faster maintenance cycles mean more aircraft available when communities are threatened, reducing property loss and environmental damage. The facility also boosts Spokane's economy by supporting skilled aviation jobs and positioning the region as a hub for aerial firefighting operations.

About the Project

CONTRACT VALUE: $9,215,884

PROJECT COMPLETION: 12/2/2024

DELIVERY METHOD: DESIGN-BUILD

WILDFIRE STATS:

- Over 457,000 acres have burned across Oregon and Washington in the 2025 season, with suppression costs exceeding $465 million. SOURCE
- Wildfire suppression costs in the Pacific Northwest are approaching half a billion dollars for 2025. SOURCE

Difficulty in Construction

During pre-construction, Garco identified two primary challenges for the Aero-Flite Hangar project: unforeseen site conditions and a winter start date. The project was scheduled to begin in early February—originally January—introducing the risk of severe weather delays. Despite approximately four weeks of weather-related impacts, Garco mitigated these delays through proactive planning and task adjustments, allowing work to progress under challenging conditions.

Unforeseen conditions emerged within the first week of site demolition. The location, formerly owned by the military, concealed numerous undocumented structures and utilities. Discoveries included stormwater structures, gas and water lines, fiber-optic cables, and concrete footings, none of which were accurately documented over time. Each required careful vetting and removal before construction could continue, resulting in an additional four-week delay.

Garco responded by revising the construction plan to prioritize excavation and concrete work, preventing further schedule impacts. Once these conditions were resolved, the team maintained the revised schedule and successfully delivered the building on time to the adjusted substantial completion date.

PROJECT FACTS

This project set a new benchmark for Garco, featuring the largest crew of female ironworkers in our history—a proud moment for diversity and inclusion in the trades.

B Unusual Construction Techniques Involved

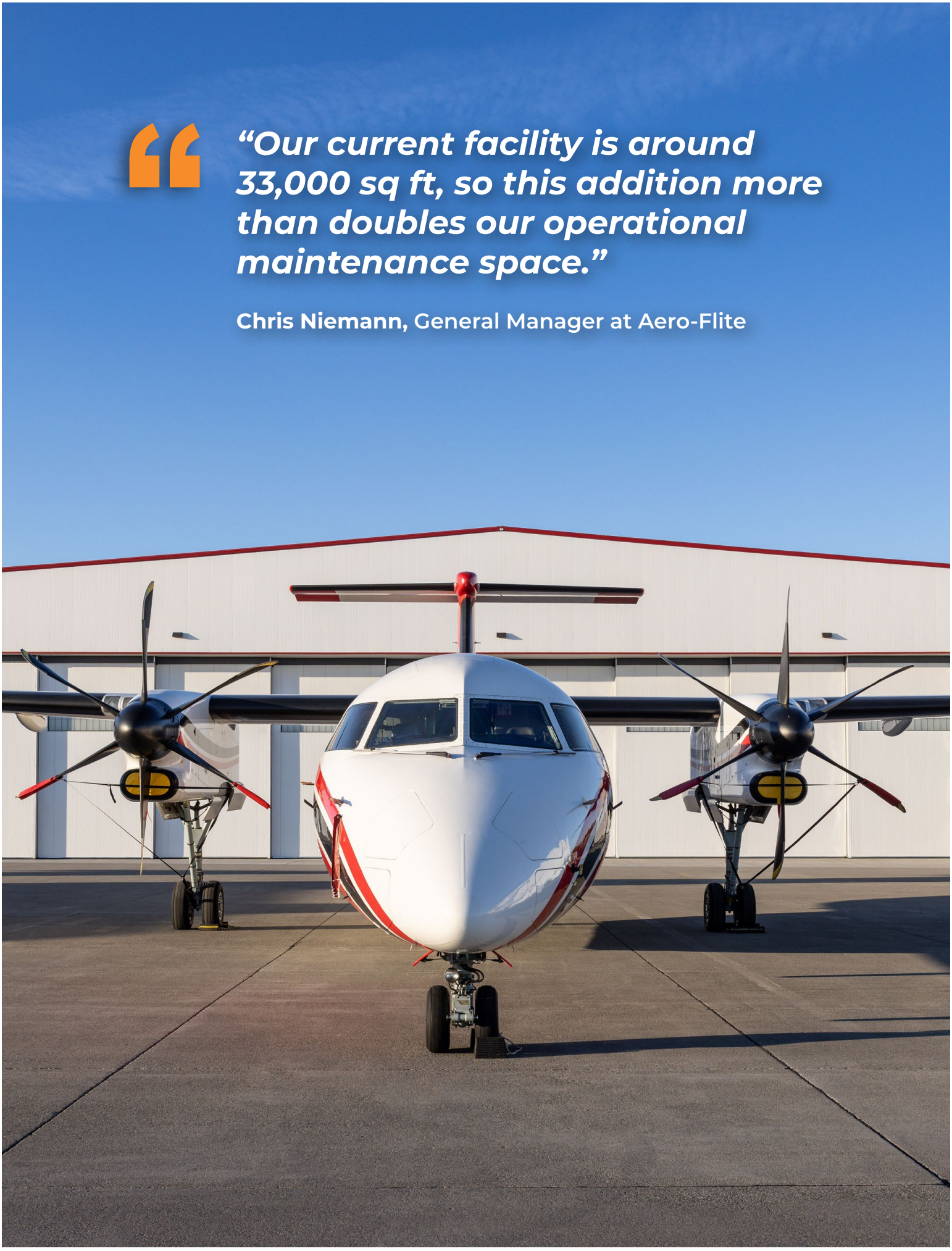
To accelerate the schedule and optimize resources, Garco implemented several innovative construction techniques. Structural concrete details were modified to reduce duration and labor, including the use of form-saver rebar reinforcement couplers and adjustments to standard forming practices. Instead of traditional stem walls, Garco utilized grade beams, minimizing material use while maintaining structural integrity.

Unforeseen site conditions required further ingenuity. When undocumented utilities and remnants from prior military use were discovered, Garco adapted the steel erection plan for the pre-engineered metal building (PEMB). The team employed pipe bracing and cable bracing to safely adjust the sequential order of steel placement without compromising safety—the top priority on site.

Steel erection

"The additional space means we can operate more effectively, and results in our ability to respond to federal and state needs for longer periods during the year. We are finding that fire seasons are becoming fire years, requiring the ability for Aero-Flite to respond year-round, not just during the expected summer months."

Chris Niemann, General Manager at Aero-Flite



> *“Our current facility is around 33,000 sq ft, so this addition more than doubles our operational maintenance space.”*

Chris Niemann, General Manager at Aero-Flite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AEROFLITE

C Final Appearance and Quality

The new Aero-Flite Maintenance Hangar is a 36,800-square-foot pre-engineered metal building designed to meet the demanding requirements of aerial firefighting aircraft maintenance. Featuring a 230-foot clear span and 34-foot clear height, the hangar accommodates two Dash 8-400 airtankers side by side, with ample space for safe and efficient servicing. Aircraft access is provided through a 180-foot-wide, 32-foot-tall powered sliding hangar door, engineered for reliability in all seasons. The facility supports Aero-Flite's diverse fleet, including the Dash 8-400, RJ85 airtankers, and CL-415 water-scooping aircraft, ensuring flexibility for current and future operational needs.

SAFETY & SPECIALIZED SYSTEMS

The hangar integrates a custom fall protection system tailored to Aero-Flite's fleet, safeguarding technicians during elevated work. This system reflects a proactive approach to worker safety and compliance with stringent aviation maintenance standards.

DESIGN RATIONALE & INTERIOR FINISHES

Aircraft maintenance demands a clean, bright, and organized environment. The design achieves this through thoughtful material and finish selections:

- Glossy white insulated metal panels (IMPs) on interior walls enhance brightness by reflecting light and provide a durable, cleanable surface.
- Kalwall translucent panels introduce natural light while minimizing glare, creating a comfortable and productive workspace.

The ceiling is finished with a brilliant white scrim sheet over metal building insulation for a uniform, reflective surface.

The floor features a white epoxy coating, offering chemical and oil resistance, easy cleaning, and improved visibility of spills or debris—critical for safety and maintenance efficiency.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMFORT & EFFICIENCY

Technicians work in challenging conditions, so maintaining comfort was a priority. The hangar uses strategically placed unit heaters and high-volume, low-speed fans to ensure consistent temperature and air circulation. This system quickly recovers heat loss after door operations and maintains a stable environment during normal use.

WINTER RELIABILITY

A major design improvement addressed a recurring issue in Aero-Flite's existing hangar: hangar door freezing during winter months. The solution included in-slab heat and proper drainage around embedded door rails, preventing ice buildup and ensuring reliable door operation year-round.

SITE ENHANCEMENTS

Because the new hangar displaced existing parking, Garco constructed a new lot to replace lost spaces and expand capacity, supporting Aero-Flite's growing workforce of approximately 180 employees, 125 of whom are based in Spokane.

IMPACT

This facility more than doubles Aero-Flite's maintenance capacity, enabling faster turnaround times and supporting wildfire suppression efforts across the Northwest. It combines technical excellence, operational functionality, and worker safety, positioning Spokane as a hub for aerial firefighting operations.

MEDIA COVERAGE

Media links throughout the project include:

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

- New firefighting hangar at Spokane International Airport touted as investment in 'the future of wildfire response for our state'

JOURNAL OF BUSINESS

- Aero-Flite to expand at Spokane Airport

AERIAL FIRE

- Aero-Flite Opens New Hangar as Aerial Firefighting Company Grows

Timeliness of Completion

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The project was completed on time. The project was awarded on November 1, 2023, and immediately began the design phase. Construction phase started on March 1, 2024. The project was completed on December 1, 2024.

Safety Performance on this Project

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Total man hours completed by the GC and all subcontractors totaled approximately 20,000. Garco contributed around 14,722 hours.

As the design-builder, Garco self-performed 65% of the work for the following scopes: all concrete, steel and hangar door installations. The remaining scopes of work were performed by valued trade partners under Garco's management.

This project had no recordable injuries.

GARCO

Enjoy the Journey!

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