

**REPORT/ RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
ARAPAHOE COUNTY PUBLIC AIRPORT AUTHORITY AND
RECORD OF ACTION**

May 14, 2026

FROM: Mike Fronapfel, Executive Director/CEO

SUBJECT: Legislative Report and Airport Update

RECOMMENDATION: Advisory

BACKGROUND: To be provided on dais at the Board meeting.

FINANCIAL DATA: N/A

REVIEW BY OTHERS: L. Hinton, S. Davenport

PRESENTERS: Mike Fronapfel

Action of the Board of Commissioners

	1 st	2 nd	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Bagnato	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Baker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beatty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campbell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Summey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**REPORT/ RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
ARAPAHOE COUNTY PUBLIC AIRPORT AUTHORITY AND
RECORD OF ACTION**

May 14, 2026

FROM: Jeremy Gunn – Director of Operations

SUBJECT: Visioning Phase for the Community Space and Aviation Observation Area – Task 1 update.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational.

BACKGROUND: Following the Scope of Work as approved by the Board in the March meeting, Wenk Associates along with Tres Birds Architect and the airport staff have commenced the first task to outline the Project Objectives, Vision and Mission.

The attached packet provides an update on the process undertaken to outline the project Objectives, Vision and Mission, and the timeline to move forward with Task 2 – Conceptual Design.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Michael Fronapfel, Lorie Zarlengo, Lauren Wiarda, Matthew Smith

PRESENTERS: Jeremy Gunn

Action of the Board of Commissioners

	1 st	2 nd	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Bagnato	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Baker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beatty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campbell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Summey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Centennial Airport

Outdoor Aviation Themed Community Space, Playground and Observation Tower

Board of Commissioners Meeting

05/14/2026

tres birds

wenk

WCG 
CONSTRUCTION

PROCESS TO DATE

APPROVAL

- **March 12, 2026 - Proposal for design services approval by Board of Commissioners**

VISIONING

- **March 30, 2026 - Initial Survey for the Core Group**
- **April 8, 2026 - Project Kick-off & Visioning Workshop**
- **April 20, 2026 - Survey to Airport employees, FBO's, and Board of Commissioners**
- **April 29, 2026 - Workshop to finalize Project Vision and Mission Statement**

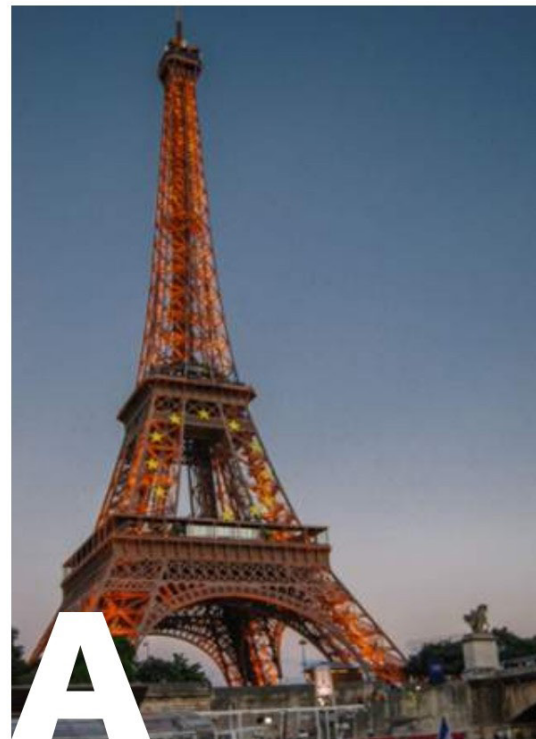


INITIAL SURVEY TO THE CORE GROUP EXAMPLE QUESTION

Survey was developed to aid in the development of the direction of the project, tensions, and the start of the project Mission Statement.

This place should primarily be experienced as...

Rank the images in order from “most aligned” to “least aligned” with your answer to the prompt question.



...a place people choose to visit intentionally - a memorable experience worth making a trip for.

3.6

...a place people return to regularly— a comfortable, easy environment to spend time and revisit often.



2.6



...a place that supports regular use, but also offers moments of intensity or spectacle that make it special.

2.6

...a place people pass through or stop at briefly—part of a larger routine rather than a primary destination.



1.2

*Example Survey Question With Results Shown in Red

INITIAL SURVEY TO THE CORE GROUP EXAMPLE QUESTION

The observation tower in this project should primarily be...

Rank the images in order from “most aligned” to “least aligned” with your answer to the prompt question.

...a bold, recognizable object—something that defines the identity of the place and is seen from afar.

... a subtle, quiet structure - something you discover in the landscape rather than something that dominates it.

...an experience you move through—defined by ascent, structure, and changing perspectives.



...a series of connected experiences—less a singular object and more a continuous landscape intervention.

...visible and memorable, but defined more by the experience of being in it than its form.



*Example Survey Question With Results Shown in Red

INITIAL SURVEY AND WORK SESSION KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. **Design For Immersion First** - everything else is secondary
2. **Let The Airport Speak For Itself** - amplify the real activity that is already occurring
3. **Layer the Experience** - sensory is the primary experience, learning is secondary
4. **Prioritize Clarity And Ease Of Use** - welcoming, intuitive, and easy to use
5. **Support Multiple Modes Of Engagement** - observation, movement, play
6. **Balance Intensity With Comfort** - moments of awe within an everyday environment

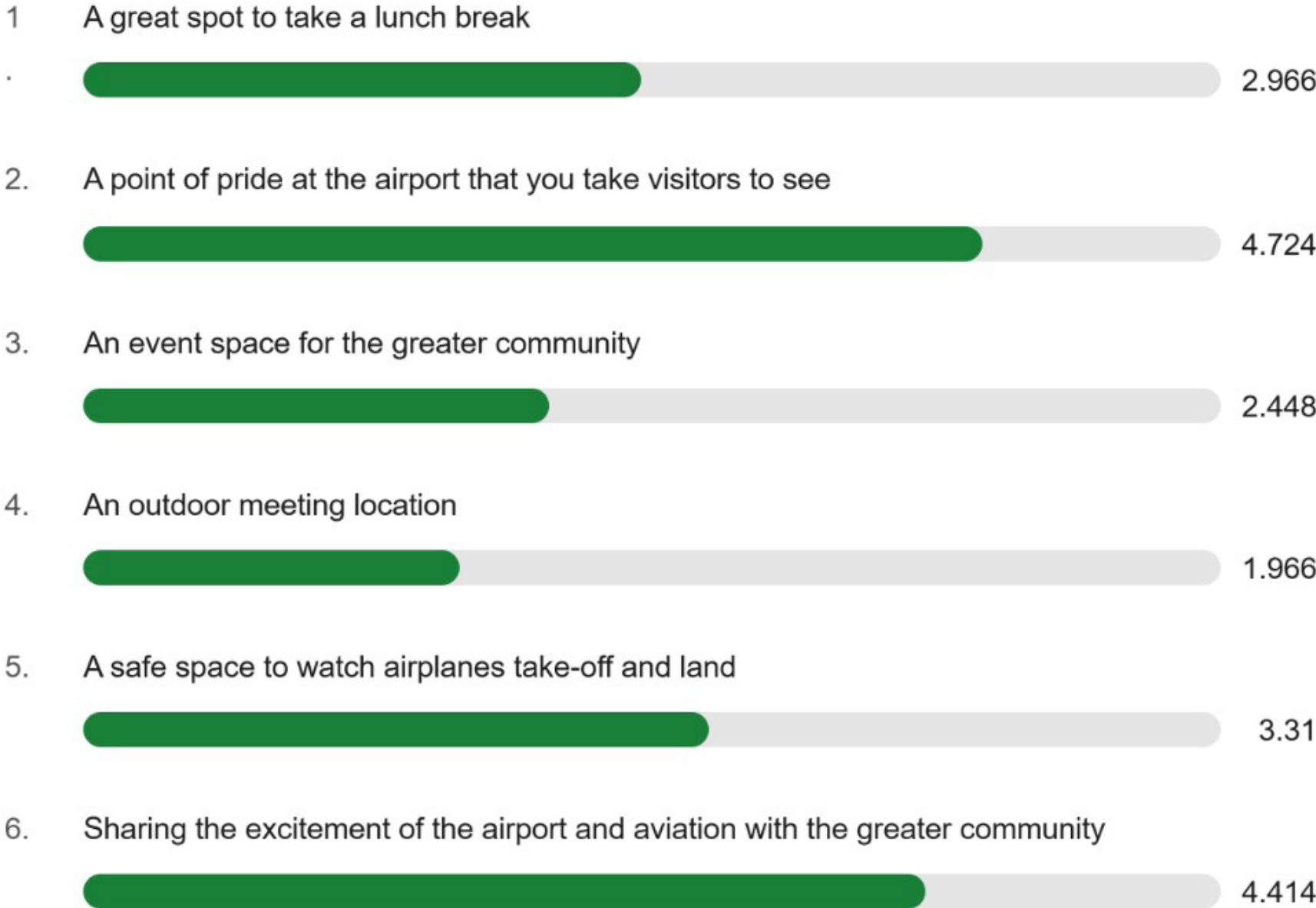
***This project is an opportunity to strengthen the airports relationship with the surrounding community**

April 20, 2026 - Survey to Airport Employees, FBO's, and Board of Commissioners

Survey was developed to aid in the development of the direction of the project, tensions, and the start of the project Mission Statement

What are you hoping to gain through the completion of this project? (Please rank your preferences from highest to lowest).

Ranking Poll  29 votes  29 participants



*Example Survey Question With Results

April 20, 2026 - Survey to Airport Employees, FBO's, and Board of Commissioners

What will provide the largest benefit to the surrounding community? (Please rank your preferences from highest to lowest).

Ranking Poll  30 votes  30 participants



*Example Survey Question With Results

AIRPORT EMPLOYEES, FBO's, AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SURVEY KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1. This Is An Immersive Experience** - direct immersion in the real, active environment of aviation
- 2. Experience Drivers** - awe, curiosity and the "feeling of flight"
- 3. Learning Philosophy** - passive, optional, and layered
- 4. Programmatic Identity** - a "destination" that supports everyday use
- 5. Observation Tower** - experience over object
- 6. Play + Landscape** - integrated but differentiated
- 7. Community Role** - gateway between the airport and the community

VISION MAP



VISION STATEMENT

Centennial Airport's observation tower and community space is an immersive, public-facing experience of aviation—where visitors of all ages come into direct contact with the excitement and wonder of flight.









Through intuitive design, layered experiences, and meaningful proximity to real airport operations, the project fosters curiosity, inspires future aviators, and strengthens the airport's connection to its surrounding community—creating a destination that is both memorable and accessible, iconic yet grounded in everyday use.

PROJECT PRIORITIES





PROJECT PRIORITIES

RANK YOUR TOP PRIORITIES

<p>A</p>  <p>IMMERSIVE AVIATION EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Deliver direct engagement with live aviation—sight, sound, scale, and movement.</p> <p>10.6</p>	<p>B</p>  <p>AWE + MEMORABILITY</p> <p>Create a powerful, emotionally impactful experience that visitors will remember.</p> <p>8.4</p>	<p>C</p>  <p>COMMUNITY CONNECTION + PUBLIC PERCEPTION</p> <p>Strengthen public understanding and pride in the airport and aviation.</p> <p>8.4</p>	<p>D</p>  <p>ACCESSIBILITY + EVERYDAY USABILITY</p> <p>Make the space intuitive, welcoming, and easy for everyone to use.</p> <p>8.4</p>	<p>E</p>  <p>OPEN-ENDED EXPLORATION + PLAY</p> <p>Inspire discovery and active engagement through play, exploration, and discovery.</p> <p>4.8</p>	<p>F</p>  <p>AVIATION AS THE PRIMARY CONTENT</p> <p>Frame the airport itself as the main attraction—real, active, and unfiltered.</p> <p>8.8</p>
<p>G</p>  <p>CARBON + SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>Reduce environmental impact through responsible design, materials, and operations.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>H</p>  <p>MAINTENANCE + LIFECYCLE PERFORMANCE</p> <p>Ensure durability, ease of maintenance, and long-term value.</p> <p>7.3</p>	<p>I</p>  <p>PROJECT SCHEDULE + DELIVERY</p> <p>Deliver the project on time, meeting key milestones and commitments.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>J</p>  <p>FIRST COST (CAPITAL EFFICIENCY)</p> <p>Deliver a high-quality project within the approved budget.</p> <p>7.8</p>	<p>K</p>  <p>SECURITY + SAFETY</p> <p>Ensure visitors feel safe while maintaining appropriate airport security.</p> <p>5.6</p>	<p>L</p>  <p>RESILIENCE + FLEXIBILITY</p> <p>Design for changing needs, adaptive use, and long-term resilience.</p> <p>4</p>

*Survey Preferences Shown in Red

MISSION STATEMENT FRAMEWORK/MATRIX

	A	B	C	D
WHAT? <i>What is the mission of this project?</i>	<p>AVIATION AS EXPERIENCE</p>  <p>We are creating a place where people can experience aviation—watching, understanding, and connecting to the movement of flight in real time.</p>	<p>A MEMORABLE PUBLIC DESTINATION</p>  <p>We are creating a destination—an iconic, memorable place that draws people in and offers a unique experience they can't find anywhere else.</p>	<p>AN EVERYDAY PUBLIC SPACE</p>  <p>We are creating a place people return to—an easy, welcoming environment that supports daily use while offering moments of engagement and connection to aviation.</p>	<p>A PUBLIC INTERFACE TO THE AIRPORT</p>  <p>We are creating a place that connects the airport to the public—making its operations, value, and presence visible and accessible to the community.</p>
WHY? <i>Why are we doing this?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aviation is inherently compelling but typically inaccessible to the public. Centennial's greatest asset is real-time proximity to active flight. People form stronger connections through direct experience rather than explanation. By enabling people to feel aviation, the project builds lasting understanding and appreciation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project must justify itself as a regional draw and civic investment. A memorable destination elevates the airport from infrastructure to cultural asset. Creating something "worth the trip" builds visibility, pride, and economic activity. The uniqueness of aviation proximity can support a one-of-a-kind destination experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term success depends on repeat use, not just first impressions. The airport lacks a space that supports daily, informal engagement. A welcoming, low-barrier environment builds community ownership over time. Everyday use helps normalize and demystify aviation through casual exposure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to make aviation visible, legible, and relatable. This project can act as a bridge--physically and perceptually--between airport and public. Building transparency fosters trust, pride, and future engagement (education, careers, advocacy). The airport is sometimes misunderstood or perceived negatively by surrounding communities.
HOW? <i>How will we do this?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize unmediated access to aviation phenomena (sight, sound, movement). Frame the airport itself as the primary content. Design the tower and site as a sequence of experiential reveals. Minimize didactic elements; embed passive, situational learning. Create multiple viewing conditions (ground, elevated, tower) to deepen experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design for peak moments and signature experiences (overlooks, tower summit, thresholds). Emphasize form, identity, and recognizability. Curate a clear arrival sequence and sense of occasion. Integrate supporting amenities (events, gathering, flexible programming). Balance authenticity with memorable, possibly heightened moments of spectacle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design for short, flexible visit durations (10–60 minutes). Prioritize comfort, accessibility, and intuitive use. Emphasize the ground plane experience as much as the tower. Integrate seating, shade, and informal gathering zones. Ensure clarity of circulation and low-friction entry. Integrate design elements that change on a daily or seasonal basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make airport operations visible and interpretable without formal instruction. Integrate real-time cues and layered learning. Design as a threshold condition (arrival sequence = transition into airport world). Provide multiple ways to engage (observe, explore, play, learn). Support programming and events that connect community to aviation.

The Mission Statement matrix served as a tool to generate discussion and refine the specific goals of the project. Four variations of the statement were developed to explore intent, language, and emphasis, helping to clarify the project's core objectives. The outcome of those conversations is represented in the final Mission Statement shown on the following page.

MISSION STATEMENT

What are we doing?

We are creating a place where people can directly experience aviation—watching, understanding, and connecting to the movement of flight in real time.

Why Are We Doing It?

We are doing this to connect the public to the airport—revealing the airport's operations, value, and impact to the wider community. The project will make aviation inviting, understandable, and accessible, inspiring future generations of aviators while providing the gateway to an enhanced connection between the airport and its surrounding communities.

How Will We Do It?

We will do this by creating a destination—an iconic, memorable place that draws people in and offers an experience they can't find anywhere else. Aviation is inherently compelling, and this project will focus on the unique opportunity to immerse visitors in the world of aviation, including the sights, sounds, and physical impact that can only be felt through proximity to actual aircraft operations. The project will create multiple viewing conditions (e.g. ground, elevated platform, and observation tower summit) to frame different aspects of airport operations. This will be a place where observation, exploration, play, and learning merge into a heightened and deeply memorable experience of aviation.

NEXT STEPS

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

- **June/July 2026 - Develop and Price 3 Concepts**
 - Work sessions with Core Group and Design Team
 - Develop 3 different concepts for the site/playground, balcony, and observation tower
 - Develop drawings and presentation materials
 - Develop rough order of magnitude (ROM) pricing
- **July 2026 - Survey to Airport employees, FBO's, and Board of Commissioners on the 3 Concepts**
- **08/13/26 - 3 Concepts presented at the board meeting**

FINAL CONCEPT

- **Sept/Oct 2026 - Develop Final Concept Plan**
 - Work sessions with Core Group and Design Team
- **Nov/Dec 2026**
 - Final Design presented at the board meeting
 - Final Master Plan, Cost Estimate, and Graphics

