

Northern Colorado Regional Airport Stakeholder Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, October 24, 2025

Location: 4900 Earhart Road, Loveland, CO 80538

Facilitator: Airport Director, John Kinney

Attendees: (Didn't get list, will have for next meeting)

Meeting Type: Stakeholder Meeting

Opening Remarks

Airport Director, John Kinney, welcomed attendees to the first stakeholder meeting under the new administration, clarifying that it is not a public meeting due to no elected officials. Purpose: Foster two-way communication between Staff and Airport Stakeholders. This meeting is to allow stakeholders to discuss security and safety issues as well as allow for transparency for what is happening at the airport.

Airport Safety – Updates and Observations

Concerns were raised regarding helicopter operations from the Grumman Taxiway; staff was unaware this was happening and will keep eyes on any future safety issues. Stakeholders addressed that there was no communication on asphalt crack sealing, staff clarified that T-hangar asphalt sealing was a private project by another tenant. Airport Operations Manager, Dylan Swanson, added that new equipment for ATC called (UAvionics) is expected within 3–6 months, this new equipment will help with safety aspects as it has real-time updates for radar using ADBS via sensors throughout the airfield.

Airshow After-Action Review

Airport Staff: Dylan Swanson stated the airshow was successful in both engagement and revenue and asked Stakeholders their thoughts on what went well and what could be improved if in the future the airport held another airshow. Staff did reiterate that this airshow was already contracted before new administration took over and had to manage the event per original contract.

Positives:

- Improved traffic logistics and coordination to get into the airport
- Jet-powered glider performance drew strong interest
- Effective integration of the digital tower to manage safety and security from all angles

Areas for Improvement:

- Access issues for Grumman hangar tenants. Stakeholders requested that the south side

would have had ability to get their planes out of hangars and wanted to know if staff had followed up with air show about if they could have access from previous Airport Commission Meetings. Staff verified with airshow that concessions were moved from the Grumman area to allow tenants to have access to hangars for more days.

- Downtime between performances when airshow was happening. Multiple comments that the downtime made it hard to stay engaged and had caused a surplus of attendees to leave before show was over.

- Exiting on Saturday was a bit harder due to improper utilization of traffic lanes that were quickly addressed by staff operations and managed better on Sunday's departure.

Outcome:

Staff committed to revising the air show contract and involving stakeholders in planning future events.

Winter Operations – Annual Kickoff and Snow Response Review

Snow Bosses: Dylan Swanson and Simeon Anderson

24-hour Emergency On-Call Number: 970-614-4040

Email Flight Schedules if have a need to get out during a storm: airport@cityofloveland.org

Pavement Priorities:

1. Primary Runway, Taxiway, parking and Emergency Access
2. Secondary runway and taxiways
3. Remaining ramp and between hangars

All equipment is ready; Runway Condition Codes (RwyCC) and NOTAMs will continue to provide operational updates. Staff will maintain flexibility to assist tenants during snow events when feasible, encouraging direct coordination with the Snow Boss for urgent needs.

Tenant Communications

The new administration is prioritizing proactive communication and engagement through:

- The upcoming "FNL Flyer" which will be a monthly newsletter
- Operations and Runway Widening Construction calendars on the FNL website
- Monthly Operational Blasts

Quarterly Stakeholder Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly, with the next scheduled for:

- Out-of-Cycle Meeting: Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 3:00PM-5:00PM

- 2026 Dates:

- Wednesday, January 14 at 3:00PM- 4:30PM
- Wednesday, March 11 at 3:00 PM- 4:30PM – Budget Preview and Tenant Input
- Wednesday, June 10 at 3:00 PM- 4:30PM
- Wednesday, September 9 at 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM– CIP Preview and Tenant Input
- Wednesday, November 11 at 3:00 PM- 4:30PM

Future meetings will include updates on City Council items, operational safety, budget planning, and construction progress. Any additional items from Stakeholders should be submitted at least a week in advance to airport@cityofloveland.org to be added to the agenda.

Air Traffic Control Tower – Project Update

The airport continues to pursue both traditional and virtual tower options.

- The virtual tower project is delayed again by FAA until October 2026.
- The traditional tower site plan has been selected near the fuel farm, the design for the tower is at 110 feet to allow for best visibility.
- Finalized maps from the FAA and the report are currently with the ADO for final comments.

Runway Widening and Grant Projects

The discussion focused on the upcoming Runway 15/33 Widening Project, addressing operational, safety, funding, and business implications. Participants raised several concerns and sought clarification on FAA requirements, project impacts, and future airport operations.

Overview

- The project aims to widen Runway 15/33 to meet FAA standards and accommodate broader aircraft operations.
- FAA regulations prohibit aircraft from overflying active construction areas, both day and night, regardless of construction activity.
- Stakeholders expressed concerns about how these restrictions will affect flight operations, safety, and airport usability during the project period.

Operational and Safety Concerns

- Construction will restrict overflight and takeoff/landing over work zones, significantly limiting operational flexibility.
- Pilots may face limited runway options during crosswind or tailwind conditions, raising safety risks.
- Attendees warned that reduced options could lead to unsafe landings or diversions, particularly for turbine and light aircraft.
- FAA's **Safety Management System (SMS) analysis** determined all risks are mitigable to acceptable levels; the project received full FAA approval.
- However, stakeholders questioned whether the **human factors** of pilot decision-making were fully considered in FAA evaluations.

Business and Economic Impacts

- Several tenants (e.g., PAS, Discovery) raised concerns about how construction will disrupt operations and reduce airport utility.
- Businesses recently affected by the addition of customs services and a new FBO fear that construction could harm operations during peak periods.
- Participants noted potential long-term financial and liability impacts for the airport and city governments if safety incidents occur during construction.

FAA Funding and Obligations

- The FAA emphasized that the **current discretionary grant funding** is highly competitive and that Northern Colorado Regional Airport has been prioritized over other airports.
- Should the airport decline or delay the project, it would **lose eligibility for similar grants for many years**, as other airports' projects were deferred to make this funding possible.
- FAA and city partners view this as a strong commitment to move forward, with mutual understanding that the funding opportunity is not easily replaceable.

Historical and Planning Context

- Airlines previously withdrew service from FNL due to two main factors: runway width and the absence of an air traffic control tower.
- Initial project plans included a full runway closure but were revised to a **phased half-and-half closure** to allow continued general aviation operations.
- Options for nighttime-only or 24/7 construction were evaluated but rejected as cost-prohibitive, as the FAA would not cover the additional expense.

Discussion of a Second Runway

- Stakeholders suggested postponing the project until a second parallel runway could be developed.
- FAA representatives responded that current traffic levels do not justify a second runway, making it ineligible for FAA funding at this time.
- Engineering estimates showed a parallel runway could cost under **\$25 million**, which will remain a consideration for future planning.

Clarifications

- FAA confirmed that overflight prohibitions apply at all hours, even when no active construction occurs.
- Coordination between FAA divisions (ADO, FSDO, NTSB) ensures full compliance with safety and operational standards.

Summary of Discussion Points

- **Safety vs. Funding:** Balancing safety concerns with the opportunity for federal funding was the core of the debate.
- **FAA Assurance:** The FAA confirmed the project passed all required safety assessments with no unmitigated risks.
- **Local Impacts:** Stakeholders highlighted safety, business continuity, and long-term liability as key concerns.
- **Commitment to Proceed:** FAA and city officials reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the project under current funding conditions.

Action Items

- Provide stakeholders with the FAA's **Safety Management System (SMS) report** for review.
- Continue engagement with airport users to plan for operational adjustments during construction.
- Evaluate long-term opportunities for a **secondary runway** to improve safety and capacity.

- Schedule a **follow-up discussion** to review mitigation strategies and project coordination before construction begins.

Runway 06/24 Discussion

Discussion centered on the decision to proceed with the reclassification of runway 06/24 to a taxi-lane for access to and from the airpark-based aircraft. The daytime closure originated from a line-of-sight obstruction identified during the terminal construction project, which the FAA determined compromised the runway's safety. The FAA's Airport District Office (ADO) reaffirmed that the runway cannot reopen without meeting current ATCT safety standards. They Airport Staff also noted this runway does not meet the agencies and design standards, nor the criteria to have a second runway, and would not be eligible for any FAA grants to maintain or improve. The discussion boiled down to two safety standards and as the FAA has stated "it is up to the airport sponsor how much Risk they are willing to accept by allowing use of this substandard runway for flight ops". Airports follow the FAA's Airport District Office Safety and Design standards. Pilots on the other hand follow the Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) rules which are more flexible towards operations. FSDO takes the approach, "unless metal is bent or paint is exchanged" it's a safe operation / we don't have an issue. The airport director stated: The two City Airport Sponsors do not share nor will they embrace this degraded level of a metric towards determining what is safe operation. Airport grant assurances require the airport be operated and maintained in a safe manner – this runway does not meet the ADO criteria for a safe runway as the safety area contains non compatible obstacles and hazards to aircraft Additional concerns were also discussed.

Pilots and airport users emphasized that Runway 06/24 provided a valuable crosswind alternative, especially during frequent southwest wind conditions, and its closure reduces both the airport's safety margin and utility. Several participants cited that many general aviation airports nationwide operate safely with infrastructure not fully aligned with updated FAA standards, arguing that risk could be mitigated through proper documentation in the Airport Facility Directory and clear pilot advisories. Airport Director shared, several of the stakeholders comments were accurate and offered two points of clarification in addition to comments already made: 1) The FAA has stated in writing, the primary runway covers the 95% wind condition meeting the FAA's safety threshold and 2) After the priority of airfield safety, affordability comes into play to address mitigation efforts; how can airport users pay the enormous cost? The airport does not have the funds to allocate. Nor will the FAA participate financially towards the required ~\$3.2 M to address obstacles and / or excessive grades within the runway safety area issues or the cost to maintain the pavement consistent with the FAA and CDOT pavement management criteria.

Some attendees discussed potential alternatives, including displacing the threshold or privately funding safety area improvements, though no specific commitments were made.

The group concluded that while there is strong pilot support for reopening Runway 06/24, safety, compliance, and financial constraints remain significant barriers. Attendees stated they will continue to push for the reopening. A request was made to airport management,

to delay submitting any filings with the FAA. Director Kinney shared they would not be submitting until the end of the month. No concern of that timing allowing stakeholders to obtain and review emails and comments was voiced.

T- Hangar Updates

T-Hangar Policy: Staff reversed a prior plan to phase out T-hangars. Current T-Hangar tenants were notified that:

- T-hangars will remain operational
- Repairs will extend usability by at least five years
- A formal waitlist and lottery system will be reinstated in the coming weeks

Hangar Investment:

- Current rent: ~\$361/month with CPI adjustments each year.
- Over \$60,000 invested this year with further repairs scheduled.

Operational Coordination and Safety Improvements

Stakeholders suggested improving coordination between pilots and tower staff, noting efficiency differences between controlled and non-towered operations. Staff will explore organizing a separate pilot-tower coordination meeting.

Additional concerns:

- Jet exhaust near T-hangars
- Marshaller placement
- Enhanced ATC advisories

Staff agreed to coordinate adjustments with ATC and the Jet Center.

Closing Remarks

The meeting concluded with mutual appreciation for participation and collaboration. Staff reaffirmed commitments to:

- Post meeting documents online
- Continue transparent communication
- Encourage feedback at the next stakeholder session

Meeting adjourned.