

Colorado Airport Operators Association Spring 2026

Beyond the Runway: How Airports Can Reshape Public Perception

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Let's be social! @FlyCentennial



CENTENNIAL
AIRPORT®

Centennial Airport

Who We Are



- Opened in 1968
 - Reliever airport for Stapelton (now DEN)
 - In conjunction with the Denver Tech Center
- Among busiest general aviation airports in the nation
 - Busiest in Colorado
 - Busiest in U.S. in 2023; 360,725 operations
- 3 Runways, 24/7 Towered Operations
- International
- 850+ Based Aircraft



The Perception Problem

Common Misconceptions About General Aviation Airports



“Noisy”



Photo by Aaron Ontiveroz/The Denver Post

“Exclusive /
Only for Wealthy”



“Hurts the
Environment”



“Not a Community Asset”



The Perception Problem

Vs. The Reality of Our Operations



Vital Lifeline

- In 2025 we supported 6,107 Medevac flights
= **17 lifesaving flights per day**
- Aerial firefighting support
- Our runways connect humanitarian missions



The Perception Problem

Vs. The Reality of Our Operations



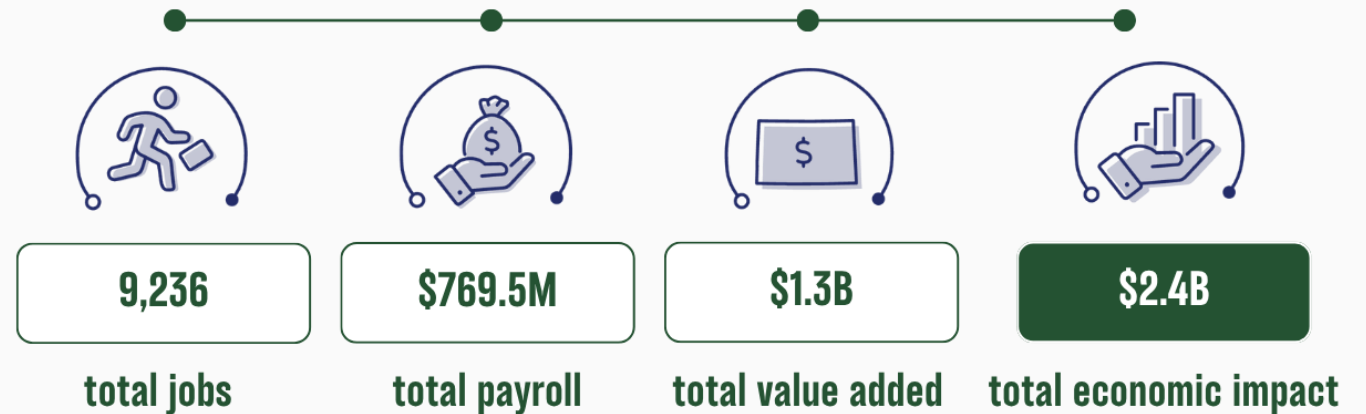
Positive Economic Impact

- Centennial Airport is home to over **125 businesses**, and **more than 9,200 jobs** in the region rely on the airport.



2025 Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study

Individual Report for Centennial Airport



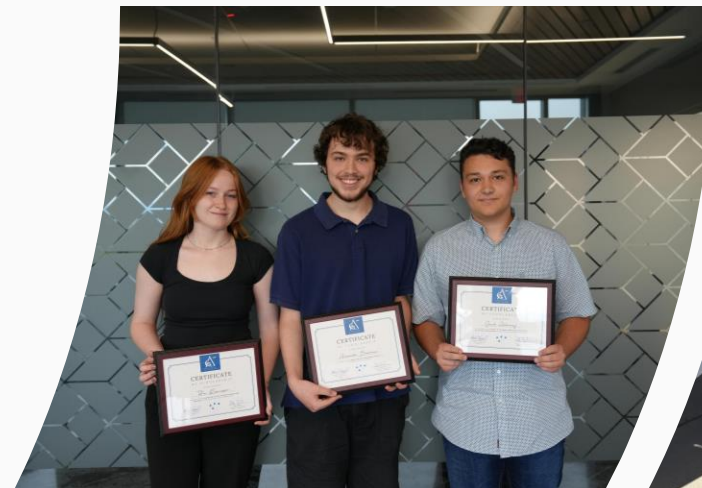
The Perception Problem

Vs. The Reality of Our Operations



Education and Career Pipeline

- 6 Major Flight Schools
- Airport Management Internship Program
 - 150+ internship alumni in aviation careers
- Scholarship Program



Solving The Perception Problem

- Reframing Our Airport Narrative
- Experiences That Change Minds
- Content That Actually Connects
- Partnerships That Expand Our Voice
- Transparency

Reframing Our Airport Narrative

Shift from Reactive to Proactive Storytelling



Stop defending operations → Start telling the story of **what those flights actually do**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 8, 2026

**Centennial Airport's New Advanced Snow Removal Equipment Keeps
Air Ambulance Services Flying Through Winter Storms**

Reframing Our Airport Narrative

Shift from Reactive to Proactive Storytelling



- **Flight for Life Colorado** conducts over 720 fixed-wing arrivals and departures at Centennial Airport annually. Operated by Mayo Aviation, the program utilizes three rotating, medically configured turboprop aircraft – two of which are based at Centennial Airport, with one serving as the active aircraft and the other as backup. Flight for Life Colorado is the nation’s first and one of the most accomplished critical care transport programs.
- **Children’s Hospital Colorado** transports approximately 700 to 750 patients annually with their two aircraft based at Centennial Airport, including some as young as 22 weeks old. They average 2-3 departures per day from Centennial Airport alone. The dedicated Children’s One emergency transport teams provide critical care transports to Children's Hospital Colorado and additional facilities across the region.
- **iCare Ambulance** seamlessly transferred over 2,680 patients and organs between Centennial Airport and local hospitals last year (2024). With specialized training for navigating airfields, their team works exclusively for air medical and air ambulance operators, ensuring a smooth handoff for critical patients and organ transplants.

Solving The Perception Problem

- Reframing Our Airport Narrative
- **Experiences That Change Minds**
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Experiences That Change Minds

Invite People to the Airfield



Bringing the Community “Inside the Fence”

Experiences That Change Minds

Invite People to the Airfield



Bringing the Community “Inside the Fence”

Runway 5K

- Over 2,000 participants from 17 states
- Over 40 vendors



Experiences That Change Minds

Invite People to the Airfield



Bringing the Community “Inside the Fence”

- Public Airport Tours
- Participation in Public Events
- FOD Walk with Partners
- On-Airport Charity Events




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Content That Actually Connects

Engaging content builds an audience.






 **flycentennial**
🎵 Benja · Flashing Lights (Instrumental Remake) ⋮

0:20

👁️ 44.1K · [View insights](#) [Boost post](#)

📍 2,061 💬 22 ↻ 56 📌 230


   Liked by **sammybeh** and others

flycentennial Cleared for 2026 ✈️
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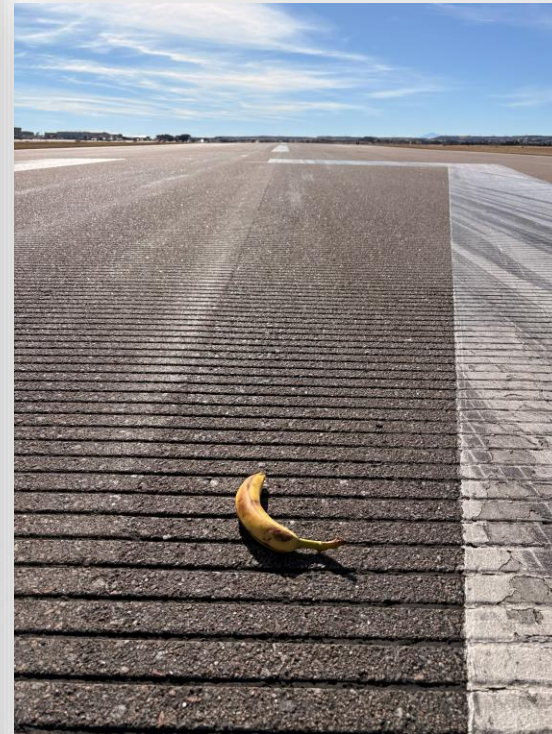
flycentennial 🚧 RUNWAY CONDITION UPDATE 🚧

After a call from the Control Tower, Airport Operations peeled off to handle a runway hazard before things got... slippery.

The runway is now clear and fully operational.
A minor delay. No slips.

Reminder: this is an airport, not Rainbow Road 🍌

February 4



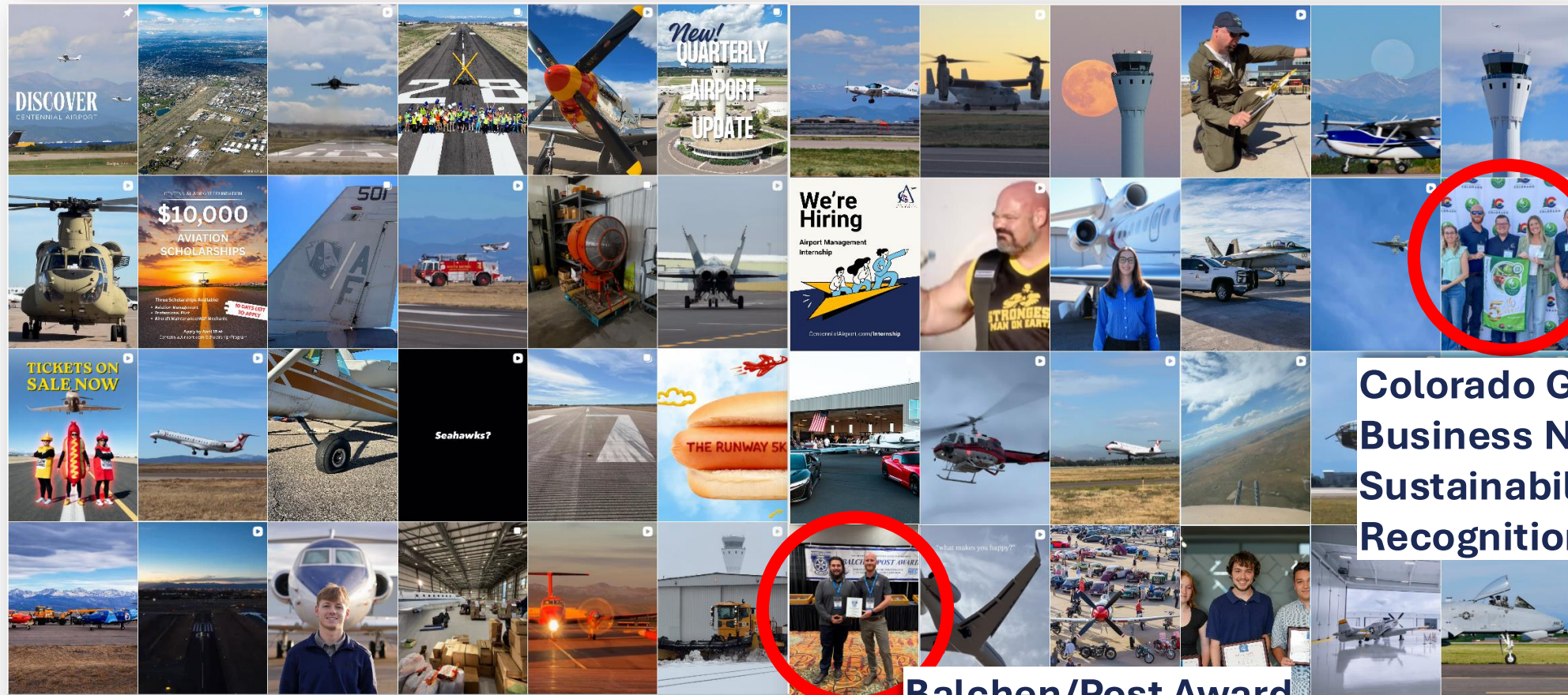
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Content That Actually Connects

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People follow what interests them – then stay for the important stuff.



**Colorado Green
Business Network
Sustainability
Recognition**

Balchen/Post Award

Content That Actually Connects

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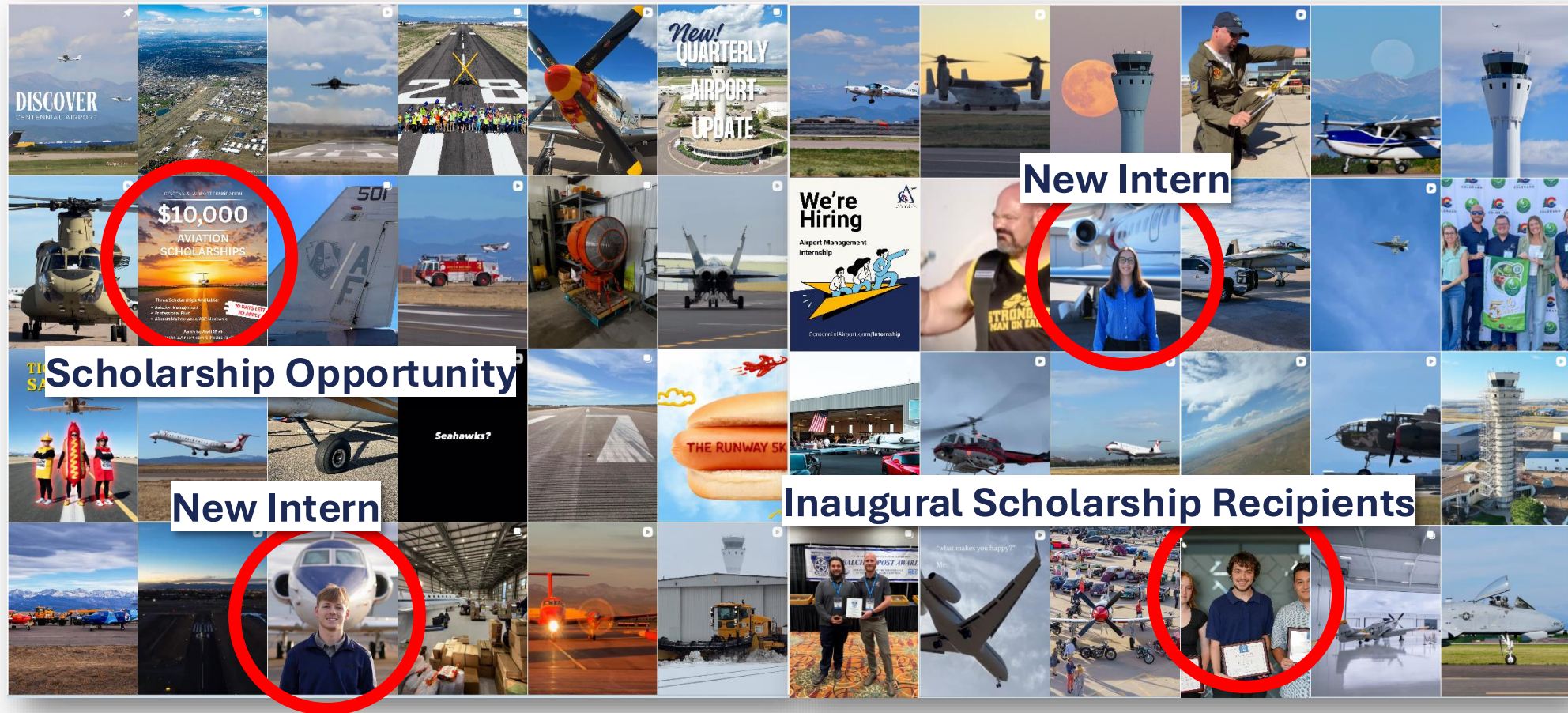


Content That Actually Connects

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People follow what interests them – then stay for the important stuff.



Solving The Perception Problem

- Reframing Our Airport Narrative
- Experiences That Change Minds
- Content That Actually Connects
- **Partnerships That Expand Our Voice**
- Transparency

Partnerships That Expand Our Voice

- On-Airport Businesses
- South Metro Fire Rescue
- Schools and Universities
 - MSU Denver, DC Legacy Campus, CC Innovation Campus
- Charitable Organizations
- Medevac Partners
- Government
- Chambers/Organizations
- Etc.



Solving The Perception Problem

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- **Transparency**

Transparency

- Public Facing Documents
 - Monthly Reports
 - Bylaws
 - Financial Statements/Budget
 - Master Plan/ Airport Layout Plan (ALP)
 - Development Policy & Application Procedures
 - Etc.
- **New! Quarterly Airport Update**
 - Total Operations
 - Medevac Operations
 - International Arrivals
 - Fuel Sold
 - Busiest Day of the Quarter
 - Average Operations per Day
 - Major Airport Updates

Quarterly Airport Update

January–March, 2026

Quarter in Numbers

Aircraft Operations

View graphs ▾

75,243

YTD: 75,243

Medevac Operations

View graph ▾

1,832

YTD: 1,832

Military Operations

457

YTD: 457

International Arrivals

312

YTD: 312

Jet A Fuel Sold
3,476,114 Gallons

YTD: 3,476,114 Gallons

100LL Fuel Sold
137,791 Gallons

YTD: 137,791 Gallons

UL94 Fuel Sold
31,836 Gallons

YTD: 31,836 Gallons

Snowfall Total
18.13"

YTD: 18.13"

Busiest Day of the Quarter
Jan 28, 2026

1,370 Operations

Average Operations per Day
836

Transparency



- Noise Office
 - Full time Noise Office/staff
 - Permanent Noise Monitoring System
 - Monthly Report
 - Centennial Airport Community Noise Roundtable
 - FAA Study Group
 - FAA sub-technical working group formed to address extended traffic pattern over Greenwood Village
 - Quarterly Flight Safety Noise Abatement Meetings
 - Required attendance by flight schools under our Minimum Standards
 - Separate Noise Website
 - noise.centennialairport.com
 - Flight School Dashboard
 - Grading system for flight school participation and adherence to Voluntary Noise Abatement Guidelines
 - Part 150 Study



How We Measure Success

- ✓ Fewer complaints (+more educated/informed complaints, improved conversations)
- ✓ Increased tour participation
- ✓ Event sellouts (quickest 5K sellout so far)
- ✓ Media reporting on positives
- ✓ **Strong demand from aircraft owners and businesses seeking to base at Centennial Airport**

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Thank you!

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