

# AEJ Business Plan

June 20, 2021



## OWNER

### **Central Colorado Regional Airport**

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## I. Executive Summary

The **Central Colorado Regional Airport** (CCRA or AEJ) is a predominantly general aviation (GA) airport located in Chaffee County, Colorado in the town of Buena Vista. The Airport is owned by the Town of Buena Vista and overseen by the **Buena Vista Airport Advisory Board**.

The **Airport Enterprise Fund** supports the operation of the GA-classified airport which was constructed in 1983 and accommodates both general aviation and jet traffic. Financial support comes from fuel sales, testing, as well as backing from grants from the **Colorado Department of Transportation** (CDOT) Division of Aeronautics and the **Federal Aviation Administration** (FAA).

AEJ benefits from excellent infrastructure and unique geography which has driven high-altitude testing into a steady enterprise since it began in 2002. The testing typically occurs during summer months, June through September. Numerous companies and organizations have come to AEJ to test aircraft, and during the testing they rent office space, conference rooms, and the flight test center.

The Airport, over the last several years, has done amazingly well to increase revenue and control expenses while continuing to improve infrastructure. It has leveraged monies from both the Federal Government and the State, permitting it to maintain its pavement system, upgrade the FBO hangar, build a new SRE, and construct new hangars.

Safety and operational effectiveness are a primary guideline in the development of the Airport, and it is imperative that pilot groups and the public be educated about aviation and aerospace activities on the Airport. Additionally, it is a goal to provide an understanding to the community at large on the value of the airport as an economic asset and the responsibility of the Airport to provide a safe and efficient transportation link for the region.

The Airport reflects the seasonality of the community with the highest demand for services from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

**VISION STATEMENT:** The vision for the airport is to become a recognized economic engine for **the Town of Buena Vista** and **Chaffee County**. Specifically, the airport will develop its infrastructure to accommodate business and military turbine aircraft and establish the airport as a transportation hub for on-demand passengers and cargo and the airport will explore the UAS market and opportunities to develop a niche market for this burgeoning industry.

There are three major infrastructures needs to capture the target industries. Those have been identified as runway strength, the FBO facility (terminal), and hangars for turbine aircraft storage and maintenance.

## General Description

The **Central Colorado Regional Airport** is approximately 2 miles south of Buena Vista, 34 miles south of Leadville, and 24 miles north of Salida, Colorado.

The Airport is owned by the **Town of Buena Vista** and overseen by the **Buena Vista Airport Advisory Board**. The board meets the third Tuesday of each month at 8:30 AM at the airport, excepting the month of December.

**REF: Town of Buena Vista, [“Advisory Board & Commissions Manual”](#) (rev Jan 2020)**

The Airport Board was created with the duties and responsibilities to review policy matters relevant to airport operations and development of facilities at the Buena Vista Airport, and to make recommendations to the Town Board of Trustees. They also serve as ambassadors for the airport and perform other functions and duties as the Board of Trustees may assign.

The Airport Board has seven (7) voting members and two (2) alternates appointed by the Town Board of Trustees. The Airport Board also includes the Airport Manager and a designated Board of Trustees member, both of whom serve as non-voting, ex-officio members.

**Airport Advisory Board guiding documents: [Airport Master Plan](#), [Airport Business Plan](#)**

The **Town of Buena Vista** is responsible for all airport policy considerations, as well as compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations. AEJ benefits from established and modern infrastructure, including:

- ✎ 8,300-by-75-foot asphalt runway
- ✎ Hard pad for heavy aircraft
- ✎ Tie-downs for light aircraft
- ✎ Self-serve/full-serve Avgas (100LL) and Jet A
- ✎ Full-service Jet A refueler
- ✎ Aircraft Towing / Tug Service and Ground Power Unit (GPU)
- ✎ Lounge with WiFi, executive pilot lounge/snooze room, shower facilities, & flight planning room
- ✎ Conference center
- ✎ AWOS and GPS approach
- ✎ National Weather Reporting Point
- ✎ Executive hangar able to accommodate aircraft as large as a Citation X

Since opening in 1983, the airport has targeted several different aviation sectors including high-altitude testing and has been used by the U.S. Forest Service, CO Department of Natural Resources, CO Division of Wildlife, REACH Air Medical Services, and Flight for Life.

## History

The history of the Central Colorado Regional Airport reveals a community-inspired transportation link, envisioned to drive sustainable development for the citizens of our town and county.

The airport currently occupies approximately 184 acres near the intersection of US Highways 24 and 285. A portion of this land is owned in fee simple with the remainder through long-term leases and /or easements from the Colorado Department of Corrections, Colorado Department of Natural Resources, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife that have developed over time.

Local aviation near this site can be traced as far back as the 1920s. Documents show aircraft operations occurred on four intersecting dirt runways of approximately 3,000 ft each in the vicinity of the present-day rodeo grounds.

By the 1960s, a dirt runway near the site of the present airport was being used by private aircraft operators as well as the State. State aviation operations may have supported the prison by providing prisoner transfers and other time critical transportation. A local landowner's early vision to formalize an airport near this location ultimately failed to progress during that decade.

In the late 1970s, a new group of nearby land and business owners revived the vision for an airport with an intent to attract businesses, integrate higher education to develop the local workforce, and provide transportation to network the Upper Arkansas Valley with the rest of the State and the National Airspace System.

This coalition partnered with the **Town of Buena Vista** to develop the idea within the community. These efforts resulted in grading of the first runway for the **Buena Vista Municipal Airport**, which would become the CCRA. Grading for the new runway to replace the existing dirt strip began with design input from the FAA that positioned the new airport's eligibility for federal airport improvement program funds.

Early contracts to operate the airport and investment to further develop facilities proved to be tumultuous in a time of economic uncertainty following initial construction into the mid-1980s. When early investors were unable to continue their support, the firm that constructed the airport and associated facilities accepted a deed in lieu of foreclosure. This firm was owned and operated by one of the early visionaries for the airport and would go on to operate the airport under the company **Arkansas Valley Aviation** through 2005 in an attempt to make the airport profitable and recoup any portion of their investment in the project. It was early during this period that the airport was renamed as the **Central Colorado Regional Airport** and given the KAEJ airport identification code.

Throughout this time, a productive partnership with the FAA and CDOT continued. The following projects highlight improvements which were made to the airport over these years:

- ✍ Two 15,000-gallon aboveground fuel tanks were installed, and the Fixed Based Operator (FBO) hangar construction was completed in 1985.
- ✍ In 1991 an **Airport Overlay Zone District** was established by the town of Buena Vista.
- ✍ The **Airport Master Plan** was revised in 1993. In 1996 the runway (8300 x 75 feet) was relocated 300 feet to the east which allowed the old runway now to be utilized as a full-length parallel taxiway. The current version of the Master Plan was finalized in 2016.
- ✍ In 2002, installation of a tether (100,000-pound strength) was completed, enabling high-altitude helicopter testing.
- ✍ Between 2000 to 2005, ownership of the airport improvements, beginning with pavements and concluding with the terminal building and attached hangar, transferred to the **Town of Buena Vista** in a series of property exchanges. Land leases for the property under those buildings were bought out by the town in 2018. By 2005, airport operations had reached a break-even point in operating costs and revenue driven in large part by supporting high-altitude helicopter testing by companies like Augusta Westland; relationships that continue to this day.
- ✍ In 2017 a Snow Removal Equipment (SRE) building was completed.
- ✍ In 2020, Runway 15-33 was rehabbed including resurfacing, crack seal, seal coat, and paint.
- ✍ 2022-23: Apron / Tie-down rehab is scheduled.

**REF: AEJ Annex D, ["AEJ-FAA-CDOT-Grant History 2000-2025"](#) (for a more detailed list)**

The Airport updated its Master Plan in 2004 and again in 2016 to address projected aeronautical demand through 2035. This collaborative effort involved the Town of Buena Vista, the Airport Advisory Board and staff, Chaffee County, CDOT's Division of Aeronautics, the Federal Aviation Administration, other state and federal government organizations, as well as the users of the airport and the community at large. These planning efforts ensure that the airport has a solid plan to meet the growing aeronautical needs of the region.

True to its history, future plans for the CCRA demonstrate a community-driven approach to utilizing and improving our airport in support of the economic opportunities that air transportation brings to our town and county into the next century.

## **Financing the Airport**

The FAA does not subscribe to "build it and they will come" development but is instead guided by "demand driven" economics, which is a Catch-22 paradox as it is difficult to build traffic without the necessary infrastructure. This leaves self-funding to the Town of Buena Vista. The Town is committed to ongoing funding of the airport because of FAA Grant Assurances, but more importantly because the airport is a key to the economic development of the Town of Buena Vista and Chaffee County. The airport is considered transportation infrastructure, like roads and bridges.

Operations and maintenance ("O & M") is supervised well as the airport employees are cross-trained and also manage the fixed-based operation services (fueling and test center), which is one of the highest profit centers for a general aviation (GA) airport.

[ClearGov | Transparency & Budgeting Software for Local Governments](#)

## **Economic Impact**

The **2020 Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study (CEIS)** included below measured the economic impacts of Central Colorado Regional Airport using an algorithm which includes total on-airport and off-airport economic impacts such as: airport administration, airport tenants, capital improvements, and visitor spending. The report reflects that AEJ contributes 90 direct and indirect employees to the State's economy, a \$4.21 million payroll, \$6.98 million in value added contributions, and business revenues of \$14.85 million!

Please visit [CDOT's Aviation Economic Impact Study \(CEIS\) webpage](#) or for a more in-depth view at the calculation method and economic impact measures used for the study.

**REF: CEIS, ["2020 Airport Economic Impact Report for AEJ"](#) (rev 2020)**

**REF: CASP, ["2020 Colorado Aviation System Plan for AEJ"](#) (rev 2020)**

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# 2020 Airport Economic Impact Report

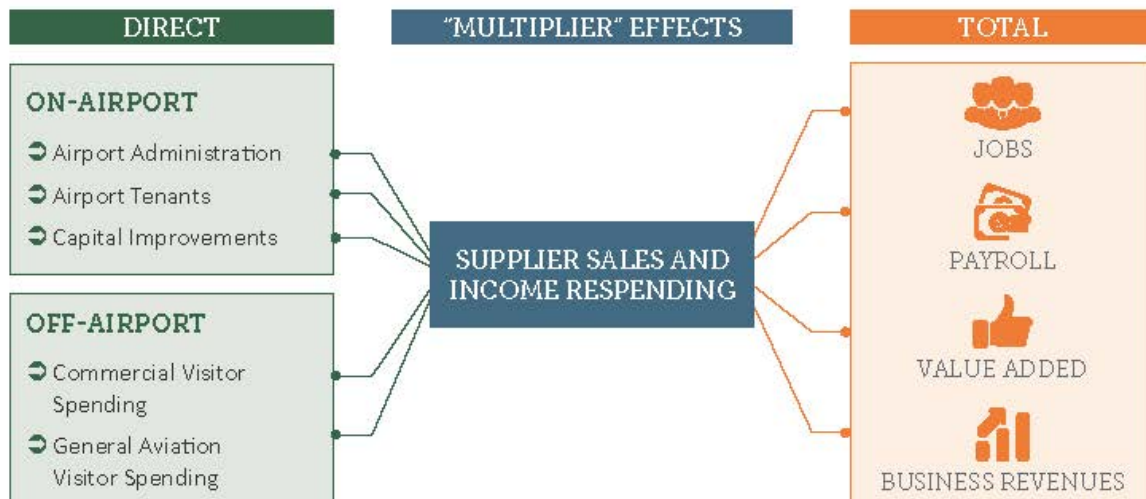
Central Colorado Regional (AEJ)



January 2020

Colorado has a robust public-use airport system that supports and contributes to Colorado's state and regional economies. All airports in the system provide important job centers and gateways for out-of-state visitors to reach all parts of Colorado. The 2020 Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study (CEIS) measured the economic impacts of Central Colorado Regional and all airports in the state using the following methodology:

## Calculation of Total Impacts by Measure



## Economic Impact Measures

The economic impacts of each airport are defined using the following economic measures:

**Jobs:** Jobs are the total number of persons employed, regardless of whether they are full time or part time.

**Payroll:** Payroll is defined as total employment compensation, including wages and other benefits (e.g. health care insurance payments, retirement contributions, etc.). This is also known as “labor income” or “total compensation”.

**Value Added:** Value added measures the economic productivity of each aviation-related business establishment, calculated as business revenues earned minus the costs of purchasing goods and services from other businesses. Value added reflects a company’s or industry’s contribution to Colorado’s Gross Regional (or State) Product (a local concept synonymous with Gross Domestic Product). It includes all labor compensation, profits, and business taxes paid.

**Business Revenues:** Business revenues incorporate expenditures needed to administer airports, sales of goods and services by airport tenants, budget expenditures by public sector agencies located on airports, the cost of capital expenditures, and visitor spending in Colorado’s hospitality-related sectors. This is also commonly referred to as business “output” or sales.

For more information on the Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study (CEIS), visit our webpage at:

<https://www.coloradoaviationsystem.com/ceis/>



## Individual Airport Impacts

Central Colorado Regional is one of 56 Colorado general aviation airports contributing to the state's aviation economic impacts. The components that comprise the total economic impacts for AEJ are summarized below.

Visitors travel to Colorado's GA airports on private and chartered aircraft to do business and visit our state. Off-Airport Visitor Spending measures all GA visitor impacts.

### Annual On-Airport Economic Impacts for AEJ

	Direct	Supplier Sales	Income Re-Spending
Jobs	35	19	29
Payroll	\$1,440,000	\$1,148,000	\$1,366,000
Value Added	\$2,322,000	\$1,798,000	\$2,445,000
Business Revenues	\$7,145,000	\$2,910,000	\$4,086,000

### Annual Off-Airport Visitor Spending Economic Impacts for AEJ

	Direct	Supplier Sales	Income Re-Spending
Jobs	5	1	1
Payroll	\$145,000	\$54,000	\$59,000
Value Added	\$227,000	\$86,000	\$105,000
Business Revenues	\$391,000	\$145,000	\$176,000

## Central Colorado Regional's Total Impacts

	Jobs	Payroll	Value Added	Business Revenues
<b>On-Airport Activity</b>	83	\$3,954,000	\$6,565,000	\$14,141,000
<b>Visitor Spending</b>	7	\$258,000	\$418,000	\$712,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>\$4.21 Million</b>	<b>\$6.98 Million</b>	<b>\$14.85 Million</b>

*Columns may not add due to rounding.*

## Total Statewide Economic Impacts

Each individual airport contributes to the statewide economic impacts that result from on- and off-airport activities. In addition to the on-airport and visitor components, the state benefits from the activity that is generated as a result of air cargo. These statewide benefits represent aviation's economic contribution to Colorado's economy. Beyond these quantifiable impacts, there are many more health, safety, and mobility benefits that are experienced due to airport activity.



For more information on the Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study (CEIS), visit our webpage at:

<https://www.coloradoaviationsystem.com/ceis/>

## **Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation**

The ***Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation*** is a key community partner, and an ongoing relationship will be maintained by the airport and board. CCEDC is vital to impacting the relationship with other opinion makers in the region. The organization's mission is *"to assure that Chaffee County is Open for Business, and to promote the retention, expansion, and creation of jobs in Chaffee County."* The Corporation's goals are to:

1. Function as a liaison with government and provide end-to-end support wherever possible;
2. Be open, responsive, and formative in developing plans and strategies to maintain and create jobs in Chaffee County;
3. Enable and empower business development throughout the County;
4. Join with business to link other businesses and resources to create jobs;
5. Increase access to government in order to promote economic development.

## **Infrastructure Improvements**

There are three major infrastructures needs to capture the target industries. Those have been identified as runway strength, the FBO facility (terminal), and hangars for turbine aircraft storage and maintenance. Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) will not be considered for the foreseeable future.

### **Runway Strength**

The weight-bearing capacity of the runway, according to recently reviewed engineering analysis, will support unlimited operations up to 55,000 lbs for single and dual wheel landing gear configurations. This will accommodate many modern business type turbine aircraft (e.g. Cessna Citation).

Operations above those weights for other gear configurations (e.g. single tandem C-130 operations up to 155,000 lbs) can be accommodated on an infrequent basis. This flexibility allows the community a vital resource for contingency response but multiple practice approaches at these weights increase the possibility of damage to the runway surface.

Future programmed runway maintenance or rehabilitation should look for opportunities to increase the weight-bearing capacity of the runway, taxiways, and aircraft parking areas. Doing so will increase the airport's marketability to a wider array of turbine aircraft operations from 55,000 to 100,000 lbs (e.g. Challenger or Gulfstream) and increase its ability to accommodate C-130 airlift of supplies, first responders, and evacuees during future emergency response operations (e.g. wildfire, flood, etc).

### **FBO Facility / Terminal**

**The Airport, FBO facility, and Terminal is owned by the Town of Buena Vista.** As such, the Airport employees operate the FBO facility and will for the near future, as a larger FBO organization will not consider an airport that sells less than 1 million gallons of fuel per year.

Terminal buildings are a fundamentally critical gateway for aviators and visitors into the airport and the community. Most public structures have a thirty to thirty-five-year life and the present facility is well within in that range. The terminal is in fair shape for present needs but, in anticipation of more demanding growth, a phased terminal upgrade should be planned to address greater flexibility of public space, more functional operational space, and the elimination of any unused space.

## Hangars

A significant milestone was reached with the purchase of the FBO hangar, which is attached to the terminal. Ongoing improvements and maintenance on hangar doors, heaters, lights, and adjacent testing center offices and amenities will be vital for the hangar to achieve its full potential.

Additionally, the purchase of the Carpenter hangar and adjoining acreage eliminated the through-the-fence access issue and obtained lots for future hangar development.

## Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting

Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting is a critical element to large GA and military markets. However, it is extremely expensive and not required for AEJ, therefore the airport will not entertain ARFF development or training for the foreseeable future.

## Regional Setting and Land Use

The Airport is zoned by the **Town of Buena Vista** and **Chaffee County**. The Town controls the portion which includes the buildings and hangars, while the County controls the remaining areas. The portion of the Airport controlled by The Town is zoned as **Industrial (I-1)**. The principal use of land zoned as I-1 is:

*“for the fabrication, assembly and manufacture of goods and materials in conjunction with related retail and wholesale activities. It is the intention of these regulations to encourage the development and orderly expansion of the district with such uses and in such a manner as to avoid dangerous, noxious or unsightly land uses.”*

The portion of the Airport controlled by Chaffee County is zoned as **Industrial (IND)**. The intent of IND is:

*“areas for industrial businesses in locations where conflicts with residential, commercial and other land uses can be minimized. It is the intent of this district to allow uses that are complementary to industrial uses. This land use district is intended to promote the development of local employment centers as well as to provide a location for uses that may be considered undesirable in other areas, such as concrete and asphalt plants, heavy equipment storage, and intensive manufacturing processes. These land uses should have easy access to the state highways or other transportation modes.”*

In addition to the zoning designations by the Town of Buena Vista and Chaffee County, both entities have included or adopted an Airport Overlay (APO) District in their municipal codes.

## II. Mission Statement

The expanding demand for Air Transportation requires a commitment to safety, efficiency, operational growth and capacity. To sufficiently meet the demands of a global economy, the **Airport Advisory Board** will promote **Central Colorado Regional Airport** as an economic engine for the region and will develop it to be a model for aircraft operations, efficiency, and safety.

Future expansion shall be targeted at General Aviation with an emphasis on Business Aircraft. Incremental expansion based on growing use by General Aviation will continue to be the focus of the Central Colorado Regional Airport. The Airport will continue to maintain and update an **Airport Layout Plan** and **Master Plan** as dictated by the Federal Aviation Administration and will keep an updated **Business Development Plan** based on fiscal ability and operational efficiency.

The Airport recognizes its responsibility and role within the Town of Buena Vista and Chaffee County in future development of the property surrounding Central Colorado Regional Airport and therefore pledges its commitment of cooperation in actions of importance to the well-being of all their citizens.

Central Colorado Regional Airport will provide its tenants, users, business community, and the citizens of the Town and County, the State of Colorado, and the United States with a first class, safe, and professional General Aviation airport.

## III. Vision

The vision for the airport is to become a recognized economic engine for the Town of Buena Vista and Chaffee County. Specifically, the airport will develop its infrastructure to accommodate business and military turbine aircraft and establish the airport as a transportation hub for on-demand passengers and cargo.

The airport will continue to explore the Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) market and opportunities to develop a niche market for this burgeoning industry. As of this date **Central Colorado UAS**, with approval from the Town of Buena Vista, is developing a Drone Park west of the Airport. The Drone Park will consist of four “zones” where pilots can learn to fly, practice for certifications, practice flying around obstacles, and includes a racing course as well.

Additionally, the feasibility of a Drone Corridor is being explored. The drone corridor, at approximately 23.5 miles long, would be positioned geographically in the Arkansas River Valley between the Buena Vista and Salida Airports and is envisioned as space for testing small UAS for BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) and large UAS over 55 pounds which need a runway to takeoff and/or land.

## **IV. Services**

The FBO is airport-operated and is branded as an AvFuel Dealer, effective March 1, 2021. The FBO is located on the GA apron at the northwest side of Runway 15. It is owned and operated by the Town of Buena Vista's airport staff.

The FBO is open during the summer (June 1st through September 30th) from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM and during the winter (October 1st through May 31st) from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. However, self-fueling is available 24 hours a day via the QTPod Fuel System Kiosk located at the fuel island and assisted service is provided during normal hours of operation.

Other services offered by the FBO include aircraft tie-downs, self-serve and full-serve Avgas, full-service Jet A, courtesy cars, executive pilot lounge with WiFi, conference center, and flight-planning room.

### **Weather Services**

Central Colorado Regional Airport is served by an AWOS III-P-T system, which is owned by the Town of Buena Vista and located near the south end of the taxiway, about one mile south of the terminal. The system measures temperature, dewpoint, wind speed and direction, altimeter setting and visibility, and can distinguish reductions to visibility, such as fog, haze, and mist. Byproducts of these measurements include relative humidity and density altitude.

The ceilometer measures up to three layers of sky cover including indefinite ceiling. The AWOS also has a precipitation discriminator, which distinguishes the various precipitation types such as rain, drizzle, snow, and sleet and their intensities. The AWOS also detects lightning and measures distance and direction of lightning strikes relative to the airport.

The CCRA AWOS data is tied into the National Weather Service network and is available on-line. It fuels social media weather apps, radio and TV weather reports and is archived at the National Climatic Data Center in Ashville, NC.

There are AWOS screens at various locations in the terminal and pilots can access AWOS data using aviation APPs as well as by telephone (719-395-2599) and radio (132.925).

Data from the AWOS has been thoroughly analyzed, particularly with respect to wind speed and direction. Diurnal wind patterns are of particular importance in high-altitude testing programs and the analysis was done at the request of companies testing at CCRA. A full PDF package of weather analysis for CCRA is available from the airport.



## High-Altitude Testing

CCRA / AEJ has benefited from excellent infrastructure which has driven high-altitude testing. High-altitude testing has become a constant at AEJ since it began in 2002. The testing typically occurs during summer months, mid-June through September but increasingly winter testing has increased. Numerous companies and organizations have come to AEJ to test aircraft and other aviation-related solutions, and during the testing, they purchase fuel, rent the flight test center, and contribute to the local economy. Companies and organizations who have tested at AEJ in the past include:

- |                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ✈ Agusta Westland / LEONARDO IT   | ✈ Complete Parachute Solutions      |
| ✈ The Boeing Co.                  | ✈ QinetiQ Defence (London, England) |
| ✈ Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin Co. | ✈ US Army, Air Force, & Navy Seals  |



## Flight Training

There are no flight schools at the Buena Vista or Salida airports, primarily because of the high cost of insurance and the low demand of users. Aircraft, especially for flight training, is very expensive. It requires a lot of rental hours to offset the annual insurance cost and there is not enough demand locally.

## Rental Cars

There is a standard expectation that rental cars will be available at an airport, even a GA airport, especially by people arriving in business class aircraft. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to establish rental cars at CCRA, but have failed mainly due to the seasonality of the community and airport: high demand during summer months gives way to low, unsustainable demand in the shoulder seasons and winter months.

The airport has done a good job of bridging the solution with local companies who are willing to bring vehicles to the airport however, as the airport grows, it will be important to establish a relationship with a national rental car company who is able to provide consistency for CCRA visitors.

## V. Marketing Plan & Community Building

REF: AEJ Annex A, ["Marketing Plan & Community Building"](#) (more thorough explanation of the marketing plan, revised annually)

REF: AEJ Annex E, ["Airpark & Local Aviation Businesses"](#)

### Purpose

The Marketing Plan will showcase the professionalism and promote long-term, operational sustainability of the Airport by utilizing six primary marketing objectives:

#### 1. Business Class (Jet/Turbine) Aviation

*The objective is to cultivate loyalty and promote business class aviation by advertisement of convenience and ease of access, amenities (at the airport and in the community), and affordability.*

#### 2. Piston Aircraft

*The objective is to cultivate loyalty and promote general aviation focused on piston aircraft by advertisement of discounts and affordability, amenities (both at the airport and in the community), as well as incredible customer service.*

#### 3. On-Airport Development

*One important objective is to promote on-airport development by incorporating or pursuing hangar / land improvements & development, air cargo operations, Aviation Business / Park Development, and High-Altitude Testing & Government Aircraft Support. Another critical goal is fostering an entrepreneurial culture by attracting hi-tech companies to CCRA. The airport has a strong record in this arena by helping airport-based businesses successfully secure Federal and State grant dollars.*

#### 4. High-Altitude Testing & Government Aircraft Support

*The Airport is proud to support the above endeavors to strengthen the good will in the aviation community, provide opportunities for future aviators, as well as increasing word-of-mouth exposure for the airport and town of Buena Vista.*

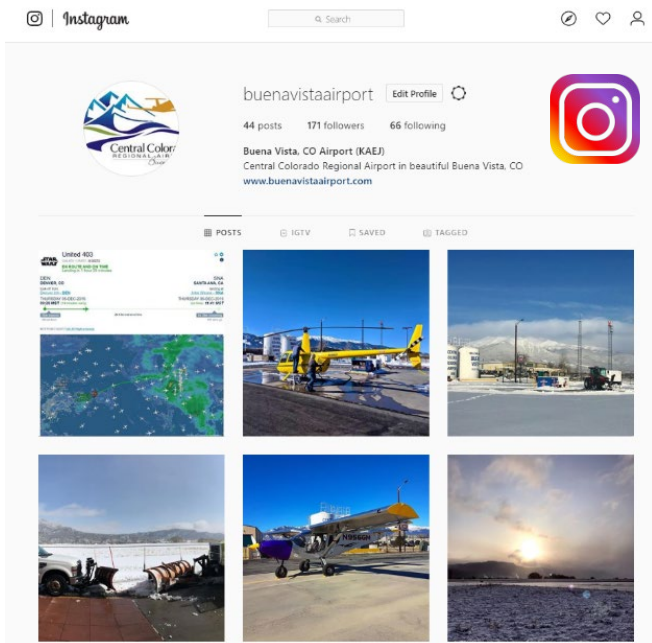
#### 5. Target Marketing, Social Media, & Merchandising

*The objective is to promote the amenities and activities at the airport by featuring: Target Marketing opportunities through a variety of online resources (CCRA Website, Avfuel offerings), Business Listings & Social*





*Media streams (Google My Business, Facebook, Instagram) and merchandising, all with the intent of increasing CCRA's online presence and word-of-mouth marketing.*



## 6. Airport Business, Professional Organizations, & Sponsored Events

*The objective is to promote and grow the economic development opportunities and professional network at the airport by: attending exhibitions & conferences, membership in professional organizations, and pursuit of networking opportunities & event hosting.*

## **Key Points For Accomplishing & Goals of the Marketing Plan**

- ✍ The key to accomplishing the marketing plan is the Airport's most important asset – the determination and endeavors of its employees.
- ✍ CCRA is known for employees that are genuinely friendly and sincerely motivated which happens only with the stability of a safe working environment, continuous professional development, and a spirit of cooperation both with each other as well as from the Town of Buena Vista as a forward-thinking supporter of our efforts.
- ✍ Hiring an Operations Specialist has relieved pressure on the Airport Manager for management of the airport's daily operational, logistical, staffing, and marketing needs so that the Manager may pursue long-term strategic planning, satisfy the increasing need to act as a liaison with multiple government agencies, as well as making time to pursue economic opportunities such as increasing flight testing and additional airport development.
- ✍ Airport will designate funding in the annual budget for paid promotional opportunities.
- ✍ Airport staff will continue to recommend local businesses whenever possible in order to strengthen the area's commerce and bolster the robust connections we have built.
- ✍ The FBO and Terminal environment is a central impetus of marketing for the Airport. Service inside the FBO, on the main ramp, the self-serve fueling system, and community offerings of the meeting rooms and facilities create a synergy that is the focal point of marketing the Airport through services, amenities, merchandising, and word-of-mouth.
- ✍ Dibble will assist the Airport, at no cost, with the design of promotional material and booth graphics, leaving only the production and booth backdrop as an expenditure for future exhibitions.
- ✍ Avfuel will assist the Airport, often at no cost, with many additional marketing offerings such as website review, inclusion in Avfuel directories and online sites, and other opportunities for exposure.

## **VI. Operational Plan**

CCRA / AEJ is a key economic development engine which will help facilitate and catalyze the population growth and development of the Town of Buena Vista, including parts of Chaffee County. For example:

- ✍ The communities surrounding the airport need AEJ now and in the future, and AEJ depends on these communities for economic activity.
- ✍ While AEJ is currently surrounded by low population density and limited development, this will change in the future as office, commercial, industrial, and residential developments take advantage of available land near the airport.
- ✍ The future is bright for AEJ and the region, but the airport must be preserved in the short term.

In order to attract the various new business opportunities identified in this Plan, it is important that the Town and CCRA identify sources of capital funding for the following infrastructure improvements:

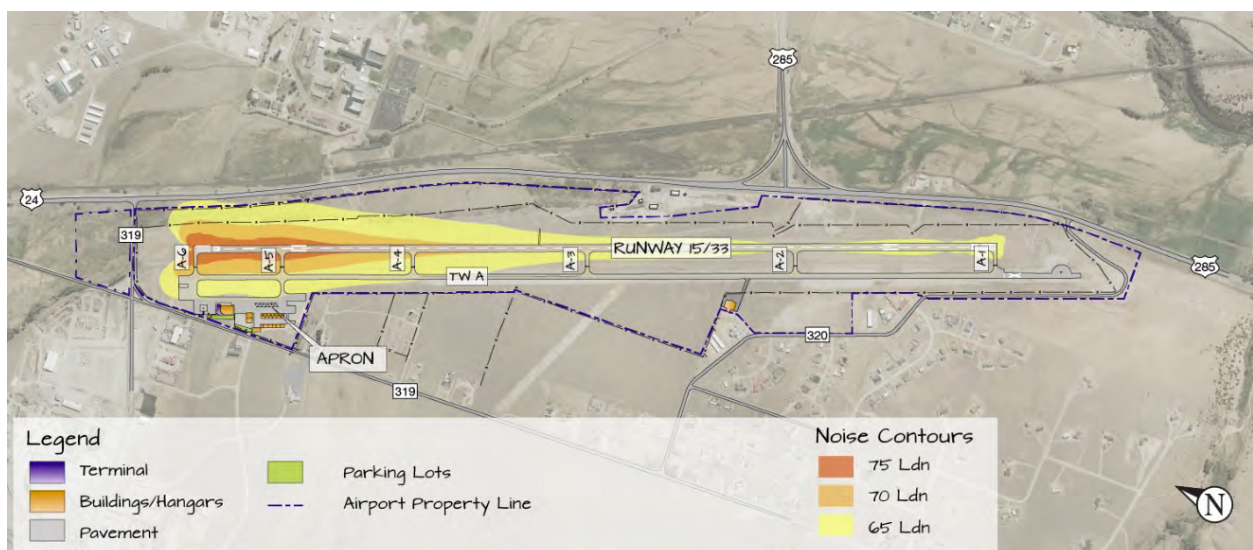
- ✈ A redeveloped “21st Century” FBO facility, as expected by today’s corporate pilots and their passengers, to attract additional turbine operations;
- ✈ Upgraded pavement strength for the runway, associated taxiway, and key ramp areas to 55,000 lbs SW/60,000 DW or higher;
- ✈ Larger hangars able to house business aircraft, as is required of the increasing number of turbine tenants, and maintenance services.

In addition to infrastructure investment, the Town and CCRA should consider an airport-specific incentive program to motivate aviation-related companies to establish businesses and operations at the airport.

## Noise

The Central Colorado Regional Airport (CCRA) understands that aircraft noise and noise surrounding airports are two of the most notorious issues related to the airport environment. CCRA is sensitive to the reality that noise in a rural, mountain environment presents a unique set of challenges.

Because of this, a noise analysis for existing conditions was completed by KB Environmental Sciences, and the photo below illustrates the 65 Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL). The noise contour was generated using the Aviation Environmental Design Tool (AEDT), Version 2b. As shown, the noise contour remains well within AEJ’s boundary with exception to a small area west of the Runway 15 end. Land use (road right-of-way) within that area is compatible with the 65 DNL contour.



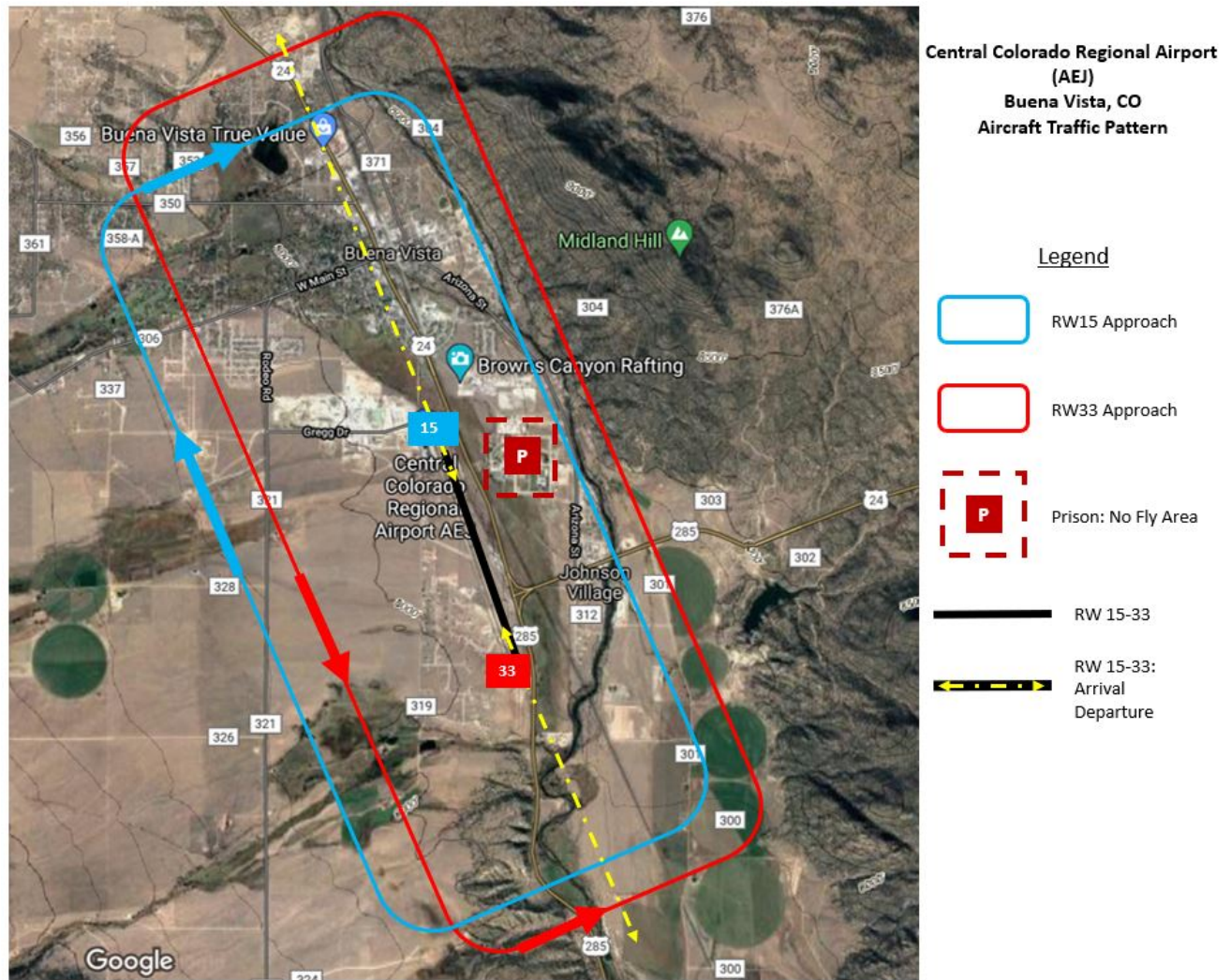


In order to preserve the positive relationship between the local community and CCRA, the airport has proactively developed voluntary aircraft noise abatement recommendations and procedures in cooperation with, and as advised by, the FAA, pilots and aeronautical operators based at the airport, and members of the local community.

These voluntary procedures encourage pilots operating at CCRA to utilize an FAA traffic pattern in a way that minimizes impacts on adjacent residential areas while maintaining safety parameters. It should be noted that because the CCRA airfield is open 24/7 with no curfew or other prohibitions on aeronautical activity and because the policy is voluntary, it cannot be enforced.

**REF: Town of Buena Vista, [“Airport Noise, Airspace, & UAS Webpage”](#) (Rev Jun 2021)**

CCRA advises pilots to use these above guidelines and the FAA traffic pattern is as follows:



The Town and Airport will continue to work with pilots, airport users, and to collaborate with nearby airports to encourage compliance with voluntary procedures. For the most updated information, please visit the airport's noise webpage.

## VII. Management and Organization

The corporate authority of the Town of Buena Vista, CO is vested in a mayor and six board members who are non-partisan. The mayor and all board members are elected to four-year terms with a two term limit. Elections rotate so either three or four of the Trustee seats are up for election every two years.

The mayor and board are elected at large. The Mayor Pro Term is chosen among the entire town board and serves a two-year term. The current board members and terms are as follows:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ✈ Duff Lacy, Mayor – Term Ends 2022        | ✈ Devin Rowe, Trustee – Term Ends 2024    |
| ✈ Libby Fay, Trustee – Term Ends 2022      | ✈ Dave Volpe, Trustee – Term Ends 2022    |
| ✈ Norm Nyberg, Trustee – Term Ends 2024    | ✈ Cindy Swisher, Trustee – Term Ends 2022 |
| ✈ Position Empty, Trustee – Term Ends 2024 |   |

### Key Players

In politics, as with individuals, reputations and relationships are defined by "opinion makers" who seem to articulate "reality" that everyone then accepts as fact. The identification of these organizations or individuals who impact perception are necessary in order to impact the doing of business in body politic. Therefore, the airport and board will cultivate relationships with "opinion makers."

## VIII. Professional and Advisory Support

### Town Administrator

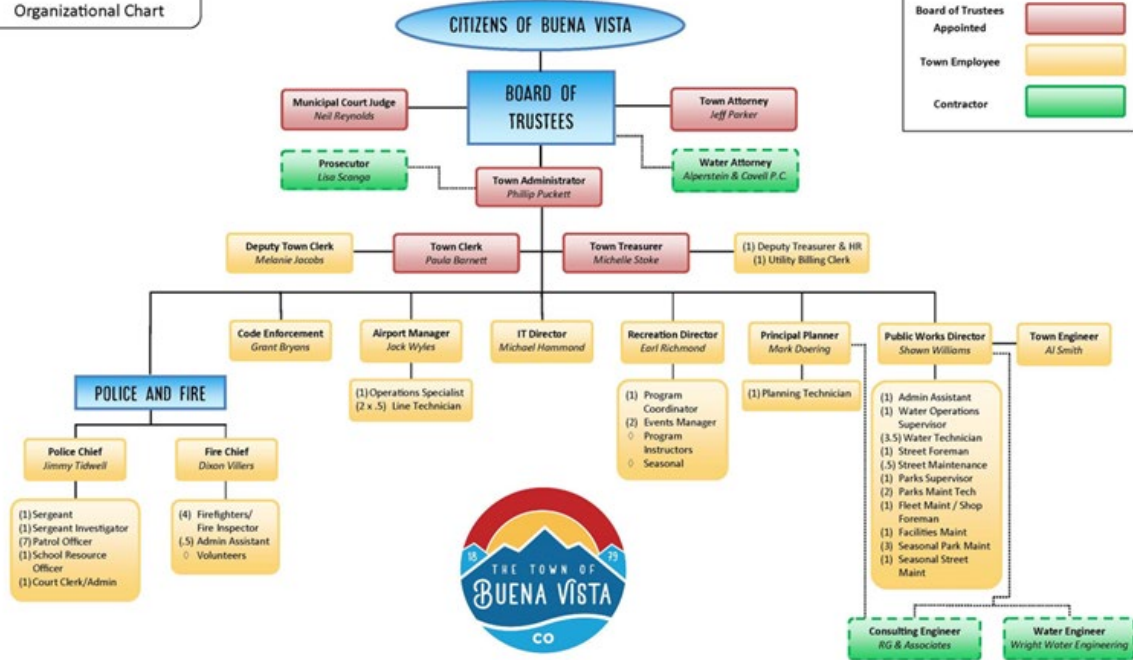


**Phillip Puckett** is the Town Administrator for the Town of Buena Vista. Prior to assuming the Administrator role in 2017, Phillip served as an elected official for the Town starting in 2012. Phillip is an experienced leader in both the public and private sectors and has held a wide range of roles including people management, program and project management, business operations, and IT specialist. Phillip enjoys leading organizational development and transformation.

His educational background includes an MBA and a BBA majoring in Computer Information Systems.

Specialties: Project Management Professional (PMP), Financial Analyst, Program Management, Systems Analysis, Operations Architect, Certified Lotus Professional, Application Administration, Municipal Government, Board of Directors

# TOWN OF BUENA VISTA Organizational Chart



REF: Town of Buena Vista, ["Organizational Chart"](#) (Rev Dec 2020)

## Airport Manager



**Jack Wyles** is employed by the Town of Buena Vista as the Airport Manager for the Central Colorado Regional Airport. Jack was first hired as a part-time Line Technician in the summer of 2016 and in January of 2018 took over in his current position as the Airport Manager.

Jack retired from the military after 30 years of distinguished service. He has seen operations around the world including the High Arctic; Naples, Italy; Bosnia, and Afghanistan. He brings a wide range of leadership and management skills and, as the Airport Manager, Jack is dedicated to the successful and safe operations of the airport. He is a Certified Member (CM) of the American Association of Airport Executives.

Jack enjoys spending time with his wife and two children in many of the outdoor activities available in the surrounding area of Buena Vista.

## Airport Operations Specialist



**Chandra Swanson** was hired by the Town of Buena Vista as the Airport Operations Specialist in January of 2019. In her time at the airport, she has focused on learning Line Tech duties as well as streamlining the daily operations of the airport including the testing contract and billing processes, increasing social media exposure, and moving the airport to a new point-of-sale system. Her professional goals include completing her AAAE Certified Member course as well as her drone pilot training.

Chandra has myriad administrative, marketing, and logistics experience, as well as degrees from Colorado Mountain College in Outdoor Education and her BA in Cultural Anthropology from Oregon State University. Prior to life at the airport, she worked in operations and logistics for the USDA Forest Service in Leadville and the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) in Lander, WY, as well as a Head Designer and Online Marketing Assistant for other businesses in the Arkansas River Valley.

Chandra has hiked and climbed up and down The Valley since well before her move here in 2007 and enjoys being in the alpine, organizing international adventures with her boyfriend (3 more continents to visit!), reading Sci-Fi, and digital photography and design.

## Airport Employees

Additionally, the airport employs 2 part-time, line technicians and occasionally seasonal employees or local high-school students through ***Colorado's School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP)***.

**REF: Town of Buena Vista, ["Airport Organizational Chart"](#) (Rev May 2021)**

## Airport Engineer

Dibble Engineering was selected as the engineering firm of record in 2019. Dibble is committed to monitoring the impacts airports face and helping navigate the changes with the Airport's goals in mind.

Dibble's team is the Airport's voice to industry organizations, key partners, and stakeholders – working with the FAA and Departments of Transportation to help educate sponsors and facilitate essential projects funded by the recent CARES Act and future supplemental funding programs.

**[Airport Engineer – Dibble Engineering \(dibblecorp.com\)](http://dibblecorp.com)**



## Airport Advisory Board

**REF: AEJ Annex B, [“AEJ Lines of Responsibility”](#) (for Staff and Airport Advisory Board Members)**

The Airport Board was created with the duties and responsibilities to review policy matters relevant to airport operations and development of facilities at the Buena Vista Airport, and to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. They also serve as ambassadors to the airport and perform other functions and duties as the Board of Trustees may assign.

The Airport Board has seven (7) voting members and two (2) alternates appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Airport Board also includes the Airport Manager and a designated Board of Trustees member, both of whom serve as non-voting ex officio members.

The Airport Advisory Board meets at 8:30 AM on the third Tuesday of each month at the Central Colorado Regional Airport conference room (27960 CR 319).

**Airport Advisory Board guiding documents: [Airport Master Plan](#), [Airport Business Plan](#)**

**REF: Town of Buena Vista, [“Advisory Boards & Commissions Manual”](#)**

## Central Colorado Regional Airport, Advisory Board Members

### Dennis Heap, Chair



Dennis began his career in 1971 with Rocky Mountain Airways, a Colorado airline that created market dominance by using leading-edge technology. Dennis joined RMA as its first air cargo salesman and left Continental Express/Rocky Mountain Airways as the VP General Manager for the Western Region.

In 1994, Dennis joined the Front Range Airport and oversaw the administration and management of the airport and an operating and capital budget of more than \$86.5 million. Major capital projects included: a road link between the Front Range AP and DIA, construction of the tallest, general aviation, air traffic control tower in the U. S., site development for private hangars, the construction of a water and wastewater system, auxiliary SRE building, and he began an initiative for Front Range Airport to attain a spaceport license and operate as Spaceport Colorado accommodating horizontal takeoff and landing spacecraft.

Dennis received a B.S. in Aerospace Technology from Metropolitan State College of Denver in 1970, earning his Commercial Pilot License, instrument, and multi-engine ratings. Dennis is a licensed Part 107 unmanned pilot.

**PRESENT ORGANIZATIONS:** Treasurer, Central Colorado UAS Club

**PAST ORGANIZATIONS:** Past Chair, Chaffee County UAS Advisory Board; Member of the Colorado Aeronautical Board; President, Colorado Airport Operators Association (CAOA)



### **Daniel Courtright, Vice-Chair**



Dan has served on the Airport Advisory Board since 2017. He is currently employed as a First Officer with Southwest Airlines flying the Boeing 737. Dan recently retired from the Wyoming Air National Guard as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2020 after 20 years of active-duty Air Force and Air National Guard service, piloting the C-130 Hercules including multiple combat deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as domestic wildland firefighting operations supporting the U.S. Forest Service.

### **EDUCATION**

B.S. United States Air Force Academy, 2000

Master of Aviation Science; Aviation Safety; Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, 2011

Air Force Advanced Instrument Instructor Course, Oklahoma City, OK, 2010 Air Force Flight Safety Officer Course (program management and accident investigation), Air Force Safety Center, Kirkland AFB, NM, 2008

### **Taylor Albrecht, Secretary**



Taylor has been interested in aviation since his youth. He achieved his Private Pilot certificate and FAA Ground Instructor credentials in 2006 and 2007. He has used those skills to help pilots achieve pilot certificates and increase their proficiency using seminars, simulators, and other technology as the owner of [TNLAviation](http://TNLAviation.com).

Taylor is a founding member and president of [Central Colorado UAS](http://CentralColoradoUAS.org), a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of unmanned aerial systems to the community, education, and industry. He has served as a Central Colorado Regional Airport Advisory Board member since 2017.

### **Mark Muller, Advisory Board Member**



Mark received his Ph.D. from the University of British Columbia (Vancouver) in Molecular Virology and Microbiology. He was on faculty at The Ohio State University for 20+ yrs and has been an NIH-funded cancer researcher for over 30 yrs with multiple patents, publications, and seminars around the globe.

Mark is also an IFR-rated private pilot with single-engine land and single-engine sea ratings. Dr. Muller has owned multiple aircraft since earning his pilot's certificate (mid 1990s) and he is an active commercial drone pilot under part 107. Dr. Muller has previously served on airport authority boards in the past and has co-located his business activity on airports. He is intimately familiar with aviation and airport operations and understands the Federal Funding models. Dr. Muller is strongly entrepreneurial and has started several successful biotechnology companies. While at Ohio State, Dr. Muller took a leadership role in establishing a Research Incubator with the Edison Foundation, and was on the board to develop and grow new start-ups in the Columbus community.

Dr. Muller is currently founder and CEO of [TopoGEN, Inc.](#), a mature biotechnology reagent company located at the Central Colorado Regional Airport in Buena Vista, Colorado. TopoGEN, Inc., is currently NIH Funded on multiple projects (including one on cold chain workarounds for SARS-CoV-2, aka Covid-19, vaccine). [TopoGEN](#) has also attracted State resources and incentives (Advanced Industry and REDI funding for development at the airport). Dr. Muller is focused on establishing a rural, hi-tech incubator facility in Chaffee County in rural Colorado to foster a start-up enterprise in the Central Rockies. He has been recognized for successfully setting up the first Biotech company in a rural mountain environment.

### **Jerry Steinauer, Advisory Board Member**



Jerome Steinauer, Dentist and Mayor at the time, proposed the Buena Vista Airport in 1980 and construction was started in 1983. He came to Buena Vista in 1965 and has been active in Town Government and many other organizations in the County. He is also a pilot and proponent of both airports in the County. He has always seen a need for air service and transportation, so remains active on the Town Airport Board.

### **Bob Dimmitt, Advisory Board Member**



Bob was raised and has lived in Buena Vista for the past 63 years. Bob attended high school and was graduated from BVHS. After a stint in the Army and then 4 years of college at Metro-State in Denver, Bob returned to Buena Vista to pursue contracting and maintenance services. Bob worked 20 years for and retired from Copper Mountain Ski Resort as the Manager of Maintenance Operations. Bob is an avid photographer and has many examples of his work displayed at several establishments around town. Aerial photography became of interest to him several years ago and he has taken many flights into and out of CCRA. His son-in-law and his brother-in-law own small aircraft, and both use Buena Vista's airport often, which was the impetus for interest in the maintenance and operation of the airport.

### **Wayne Lee, Advisory Board Member**



Wayne Lee retired from the FAA Dec 31st, 2016. During his 28 years in the FAA Wayne worked as an air traffic controller at Jacksonville and Ft Worth ARTCCs (Air Route Traffic Control Centers). He spent his last 16 years as a manager and from 2014 until his retirement, worked as the national management lead alongside labor (NATCA) in moving the agency and union into a more collaborative and interest-based organization. This involved leading a team of consultants training and working with every air traffic facility leadership and senior FAA and Union leadership in the collaborative skill sets that help move organizations together and forward.

Wayne is also a certified mediator and facilitator who enjoys helping parties solve or resolve the issues that may prevent them from moving ahead.

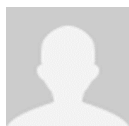
### Mark Godonis, Alternate Advisory Board Member



In 1976, Mark started a metal manufacturing and fabricating company that focused on industrial pump system development serving wastewater, oil refineries/platforms, industrial and marine applications. The company has products on 6 continents and the 7 seas. Mark has held American Welding Society “Certified Welding Inspector” certificates and was the instructor of the welding program at the Leadville campus of Colorado Mountain College for three years. Mark earned his private pilot’s license in 1979 and, since then, has been involved in aviation environments, providing hangar development/erection in four states, along with volunteering with the Experimental Aviation Association for over 25 years. The manufacturing company also produced industrial snow removal equipment for airports and rail yards, including plows up to 30 feet wide. These plows can be found from Maine to Alaska, as well as Canada.

In 2013, Mark and his wife Erin sold the manufacturing company located in Wisconsin, and bought a Bed and Breakfast in Buena Vista, Colorado. Within a year, the B & B was the top-rated B & B in Chaffee County, Colorado. Mark and Erin sold the B & B in 2020, and now have business interests in Wyoming, managing the enterprise from their home in Salida, Colorado.

### VACANT, Trustee Liaison



Works as a member of the Town board team to establish policy and long-range planning for the Town of Buena Vista, Colorado.

## IX. Fund Summary & Airport Goals

### Annual Airport Fund Summary

REF: AEJ Annex C, [“Annual Airport Fund Summary”](#)

**REVENUE SUMMARY:** The Central Colorado Regional Airport receives most of its revenue from fuel sales and from FAA and CDOT grants.

[ClearGov | Airport Revenue](#)

**EXPENDITURE SUMMARY:** The majority of expenditures at the Airport go towards Capital Improvements and Operational & Maintenance costs.

The FAA/CDOT round of funding comes to CCRA in 2022/23 which will fund Rehab of the Runway and Apron including fog seal and crack repair. The funding is estimated at \$600,000 for each consecutive

year for a total of \$1.2 million. The Town's share for these projects will be approximately \$33,334 each year, for a total of \$66,668.

Additionally, airport staff plans to attend the annual DIA Surplus Equipment Auctions to acquire an additional work/plow truck which would be subsidized by CDOT.

[ClearGov | Airport Expenditures](#)

## **Airport Goals**

### **Goal #1: Safety and Operational Effectiveness**

Safety and operational effectiveness are a primary guideline in the development of the Airport. Additionally, it is a goal to provide an understanding to the community at large on the value of the airport as an economic asset. The Airport achieves this by providing excellent customer service, consistent service, and a vital culture of safe operations.

Airport operations reflect the seasonality of the community with its highest operational demand from June through September. It is the desire of the community to market Buena Vista as a unique destination and the Airport seeks to provide a safe and efficient transportation link to fulfill those desires.

### **Goal #2: Support High-Altitude Testing**

High-altitude testing has become a constant at AEJ since it began in 2002. The testing typically occurs during summer months, mid-June through September through requests for winter testing during the colder winter months is increasing.

Numerous companies and organizations have come to AEJ to test aircraft and other aviation-related solutions, and during the testing, they purchase fuel, rent the flight test center, and greatly contribute to the airport's revenue. The testing teams (sometimes as many as 15 people) eat, sleep, shop, and play during their visit in Buena Vista and the surrounding Arkansas Valley which contributes to the area's economy as well.

### **Goal #3: Maintain and Develop Equipment & Infrastructure**

Over the last several years, the Airport has done amazingly well increasing revenues and controlling expenses while continuing to improve infrastructure and expand equipment needs. It has leveraged monies from both the Federal government and the State of Colorado, allowing it to maintain its pavement system, upgrade the FBO hangar, build a new Snow Removal Equipment building, purchase subsidized equipment, and construct new hangars.

On operations and maintenance (O&M), the airport has also kept its costs low. Its four employees are cross-trained and together they operate the airfield as well as the fixed-base operator (one of the highest profit generators on General Aviation airports) with services like aircraft fueling, hangaring, and tie down & parking.

Self-funding is left to the Town of Buena Vista which is committed to ongoing funding of the Airport because of FAA Grant Assurances but, more importantly, because the Town recognizes that the Airport is integral to the economic development of the Town of Buena Vista and Chaffee County.

## Potential Airport Projects and Tasks

**REF: AEJ Annex D, ["FAA-CDOT Grant History: 2000-2025"](#)**

Contemplated projects may include any of the following projects, but are not limited to:

### Federal/Airside:

#### *Items within 5 year (Short-Term) CIP Plan*

- ✍ Game/Security Fencing, Gates and Security Systems
- ✍ Environmental Assessments and Impacts
- ✍ Runway 15/33: rehabilitation, signage, lighting, electrical
- ✍ Taxiway A: rehabilitation, lengthen, strengthen, signage, lighting, electrical
- ✍ New construction and/or rehabilitation of taxiways, taxi lanes
- ✍ New construction and/or rehabilitation of aircraft parking aprons
- ✍ Construct new fuel farm and delivery system to new locations (disposal of existing system).
- ✍ Refurbish exiting Executive Hangar
- ✍ Acquisition of Snow Removal Equipment and Airfield and Mowing equipment
- ✍ Airfield: construction, updating, and/or rehabilitation of electrical, lighting and signage systems
- ✍ New construction, updating, and/or rehabilitation electrical vaults/systems
- ✍ New construction and/or updates of Nav-Aids
- ✍ Upgrade and Acquisition of Airport Communications Systems
- ✍ Upgrade AWOS
- ✍ Master Plan and Airport Layout Plans updates and amendments
- ✍ AC De-icing systems and equipment for Airport Operational and Surfaces
- ✍ Potential Wildlife Management and Safety Management Plans and Systems
- ✍ Plan and Develop Wildland Fire Base

#### *Items within the 6-10 year (Mid-Term) CIP Plan (still holds potential)*

- ✍ Land Acquisitions
- ✍ Widen and Strengthen Runway 15/33 and Taxiways A1-A6 (as needed)
- ✍ Hangar Construction
- ✍ Acquisition of ARFF Vehicles and Equipment

- ✍ Expansion and/or new construction of ARFF Facility
- ✍ New construction and/or rehabilitation of aircraft parking aprons
- ✍ Help Planning Develop 11 + year (Long-Term) CIP Plan

#### Non-Federal/Landside

- ✍ Vehicle parking
- ✍ General Aviation terminal building rehabilitation/upgrade
- ✍ New hangar construction
- ✍ New and existing land development for hangars and buildings
- ✍ New construction and updating of airport utilities (water, sewer, storm, electric, gas etc.)
- ✍ Roadway and access road development and construction
- ✍ Landscape construction and/or rehabilitation
- ✍ Security issues
- ✍ FBO issues
- ✍ Emergency Response Center
- ✍ Marketing assistance
- ✍ Assistance in graphics and drawings

The above-contemplated projects are dependent upon federal Airport Improvement Plan and/or CDOT funding, and approval of the Sponsor, so it shall be understood that some of the services related to the above-listed projects may be deleted and that the Sponsor reserves the right to initiate additional services not included in the initial procurement.

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## **X. Annexes**

**[ANNEX A:](#) Marketing Plan & Community Building (Expanded Version)**

**[ANNEX B:](#) Lines of Responsibility**

**[ANNEX C:](#) Airport Annual Fund Summary**

**[ANNEX D:](#) FAA / CDOT Grant History, 2000 – 2025**

**[ANNEX E:](#) Airpark & Local Aviation Businesses**