

Media Contact:
Tony Vicari
Director of Aviation
(970) 382-6052
tony.vicari@durangogov.org

Durango La Plata County Airport
1000 Airport Road
Durango, CO 81303
www.flydurango.com

Follow us:
twitter.com/DROAirport
facebook.com/DROAirport
twitter.com/cityofdurango
facebook.com/cityofdurango



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

NEWS RELEASE

Durango-La Plata County Airport as an Economic Driver

Durango, CO: The Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) is a critical economic driver for southwest Colorado, contributing an estimated \$160 million annually to the La Plata County economy alone, with even further impact throughout the Four Corners region.*

DRO operates as an enterprise fund of the City of Durango, and generates self-sustaining revenue from airport tenants and users in the form of airline rent and landing fees, terminal concessions, ground leases and parking fees. The airport does not receive any local tax funding. DRO generated a revenue surplus in 2017, which will be reinvested to fund ongoing airport repairs and improvements in 2018 and beyond.

DRO also took advantage of two Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants in 2017 to fund taxiway repairs and snow removal equipment acquisition, which added an additional \$2.46 million in direct economic benefit.

"In 2017, the Durango-La Plata County Airport continued to invest in its infrastructure in order to keep up with strong demand for air service in southwest Colorado and the Four Corners region," said Tony Vicari, DRO's director of aviation. "The FAA grants - which we seek annually - are a key component of keeping our facilities up-to-date. Many of these are behind the scenes projects on our airfield that aren't always apparent to airport users, but in addition to keeping our runways and taxiways up to FAA safety and operational standards, they provide significant economic benefit locally."

2017 DRO facility improvements included:

- Repair of approximately 27,000 square feet of asphalt on the airport's roadways, parking lots, and taxiway system.
- Addition of 66 new vehicle parking spaces to the airport's overflow lot.
- Installation of three mobile device charging stations in the terminal.

[MORE](#)

PAGE 2

- Improvement of the airport Wi-Fi system, enhancing wireless connectivity for passengers.

Several improvement projects are planned for 2018 including:

- Repairs to the airport's main vehicle parking lot and rental car parking lot.
- Reconstruction of approximately 55,000 square feet of Taxiway A.
- Addition of 40 new vehicle parking spaces to the credit card parking lot.
- Replacement of components of the airport's water treatment facilities.
- Renovation and expansion of the airline operations space within the airport terminal building. This project will improve the efficiency of current airline operations and also increase capacity for future growth.

DRO also plans to work with many local area businesses in 2018. For example, the paving contractor Four Corners Materials was the successful bidder on this spring's taxiway reconstruction project at a value of \$1.8 million. Many other local and regional businesses are utilized to facilitate day-to-day work and maintenance at DRO, such as Aztec Machine, Basin Co-Op, Farmington Fire Equipment, Nichols Electric, San Juan Basin Health, Summit Supply, and countless others.

"When passengers use DRO for air service, they are investing in a true community resource," said Tony Vicari, DRO's director of aviation. "Our revenue supports much more than the 28 full- and part-time airport positions, but hundreds more jobs at many different kinds of local businesses."

Additional DRO economic statistics:

- Estimated economic activity related to DRO supports some 2,400 jobs - over 1,850 located in La Plata County or 3.5 percent of total county employment.*
- The activity generated by the airport is estimated to drive nearly 5 percent of tax revenue collections in La Plata County and the City of Durango while remaining a self-sustaining entity.*
- DRO is the primary regional airport for southwest Colorado and is served by two of the four largest U.S. airlines (United and American). United Airlines services a daily nonstop route to Denver (DEN) – DRO's most popular flight in 2017. American Airlines services nonstop routes to Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW), Phoenix (PHX) and seasonally Los Angeles (LAX).
- DRO saw 372,327 passengers using the facility for commercial airline flights in 2017, supporting access to the area.
- DRO is the 5th busiest of 14 commercial airports in Colorado.

* Source: 2016 Cutler and Shields Study, *Estimating the Economic and Fiscal Contribution of Durango Regional Airport to the La Plata County and Regional Economies*

To learn more about the Durango-La Plata County Airport, please visit www.flydurango.com.