



Arapahoe County

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Board Summary Report

File #: 26-344

Agenda Date: 8/11/2026

Agenda #:

To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Michelle Halstead, Director, Commissioners' Office

Prepared By:
Jeremy Gunn, Director of Operations, Centennial Airport

Presenter: Michael Fronapfel, Executive Director, Centennial Airport

Subject:
3:00 PM *Drop-in: Surface Awareness Initiative Vehicle Movement Area Transponders Grant for the Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority

Purpose and Request:

The Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority Board (ACPAA) anticipates receiving a Surface Awareness Initiative (SAI) Vehicle Movement Area Transponders (VMATs) Grant distributed through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). AIP Grant 3-08-0029-066-2026 will provide additional safety measures for aircraft and airport staff driving on the airfield through the purchase and installation of vehicle transponders which report vehicle location to the Air Traffic Control Tower.

We are requesting approval of AIP Grant 3-08-0029-066-2026 conditioned upon receipt of the grant. Once the grant is received in mid-September, the final Grant Agreement will be forwarded to the County to be signed.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Good Governance - Plan for future service, infrastructure, and fiscal needs.

Background and Discussion: In 2025 the Federal Aviation Authority completed a Surface Awareness Initiative (SAI) upgrade at Centennial Airport which enables the air traffic controllers to view aircraft location and movements on the airfield through a special SAI display screen. The completion of this initiative resulted in AIP eligibility for installation of Vehicle Movement Area Transponders (VMATs) on airport-owned vehicles at Centennial Airport, allowing air traffic controllers to view the vehicles on the new SAI display. Adding this new technology will increase safety for airport-staff operating vehicles at Centennial Airport, which is especially important during limited visibility operations such as snow removal.

AIP Grant 3-08-0029-066-2026 includes the purchase and installation of transponders for 34 airport vehicles.

At the August 13, 2026, ACPAA Board Meeting, Airport staff will recommend conditional approval of AIP Grant 3-08-0029-066-2026.

The 2026 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grant assurances do not include the controversial grant conditions associated with the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 (Public Law number (P.L.) 118-63).

Alternatives: The Board could elect not to approve receipt of the Grant. However, should the Grant not be signed within a reasonable timeframe, the Airport may risk losing the Grant altogether and will have to find alternative methods of funding for the project.

Fiscal Impact: The total cost of this project is \$121,410. FAA AIP grant funds for 3-08-0029-066-2026 will cover 95% (\$115,339) of the cost of the federal project; the Airport Authority will be responsible for the remaining 5% (\$6,071) match which the 2026 budget has sufficient funds to cover.

Alignment with Strategic Implementation Strategies: N/A

Staff Recommendation: Airport staff recommends approval of the AIP 3-08-0029-066-2026 grant, conditioned upon receipt of the grant. Once the grant is received, the final Grant Agreement will be forwarded to the County to be signed.

Concurrence: Federal Aviation Administration.