

# Erie Municipal Airport Overview

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## Erie Town Council

Todd Fessenden, Utilities Director

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# Did you know?





# Presentation Overview

- Comprehensive 5-year project list overview
  - FAA/CDOA/Town Contributions
- FBO plan, next steps
- New Hangars - plans
- Crosswind best use?
- Flight school traffic patterns, community concerns
- Budget/Finances
- Strategic Planning Documents (for reference)





# FAA Contributions

## CIP Projects

- Typical funding: 90% FAA, 5% CDOA, 5% Town
- CDOA/Town: 90% CDOA. 10% Town
- Some projects: 95% FAA, 2.5% CDOA, 2.5% Town

## FAA Grant Assurances

- 20+ Compliance requirements
- 20-year commitment to maintaining airport
- New requirements – DEI, ICE (pulled back for now)

Year	Project	FAA	CDOA	Town	Total
2025	Taxiway/Ramp Rehab Electrical Vault Move	\$146,572 \$0	\$8,142 \$450,000	\$18,288 \$50,000	\$173,003 \$500,000
2026	Pavement Maintenance	\$0	\$300,000	\$33,334	\$333,334
2027	Transfer to Yuma				\$150,000
2028	Reconstruction Design & Transfers In	\$775,000	\$43,055	\$43,056	\$861,111
2029	Runway Reconstruction & Drainage Improvements	\$7,200,000	\$250,000	\$550,000	\$8,000,000
2030	Transfer to La Junta				\$150,000



# FBO plan, next steps

- Separation of Manager/FBO Agreement in 2023
  - FBO vs. Terminal
- Manager Agreement in place 3-year with 2 extensions
- FBO Agreement tied to FBO Improvements:
  - ABS Report 2023
  - BA Group
  - Airside FBO
  - Dependent upon level of improvements

# Recent Press

## ***FLYING***

### #3. Erie, Colorado

Located in the Boulder Valley, Erie benefits significantly from the [Erie Municipal Airport](#) (KEIK).

This small town has capitalized on its aviation connections, and now there are many renowned [flight schools and maintenance facilities in town](#).

Colorado has a robust tourism industry even without airports (too robust, if you ask some native residents). But Erie holds a special place in the aviation world, and no wonder. Just look at those views.

## Top 5 Aviation Communities in the U.S.

These towns are heavily influenced by the presence of general aviation and residential airparks.



Matt Herr

Wednesday, July 30, 2025







SPOTLIGHT: AIR TRAVEL

## Operating a municipal airport? Be prepared for takeoff!

Running an airport isn't easy,  
but the benefits to your community go sky high

By **TODD FESSENDEN**, Town of Erie utilities director

Operating a municipal airport brings unique challenges. Unlike other city or town operations, airports are high-maintenance facilities with strict safety and regulatory requirements. Infrastructure at the airport must meet the rigorous standards of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Colorado Division of Aeronautics (CDOA). Fortunately, most capital improvement projects are funded 90% by the FAA, 5% by CDOA, and just 5% by the municipality. These funds, however, come with grant assurances — chief among them, a commitment to keep the airport operational for 20 years.

Municipal airports rarely generate profit. In fact, more than 90% of small airports are subsidized by their municipalities. Residents may question the value of the airport, especially those living near flight paths. The small aircraft used by private pilots and flight schools are noisy, and repetitive practice flights such as “touch-and-gos” often amplify noise complaints. While aviation accidents are far less common than car accidents, they draw greater public attention and concern. Effective public communication and expectation management are essential.

Recruiting capable airport management can also be difficult. Given that municipal airports aren't revenue drivers, it's often hard to justify staffing costs. Yet, success

depends on two key roles: an airport manager and a fixed-base operator (FBO). The manager handles internal operations, capital needs, and regulatory compliance. The FBO provides essential pilot services, fuel, supplies, transportation, and guidance — essentially acting as a concierge for incoming aviators. These roles can be staffed in-house or outsourced.

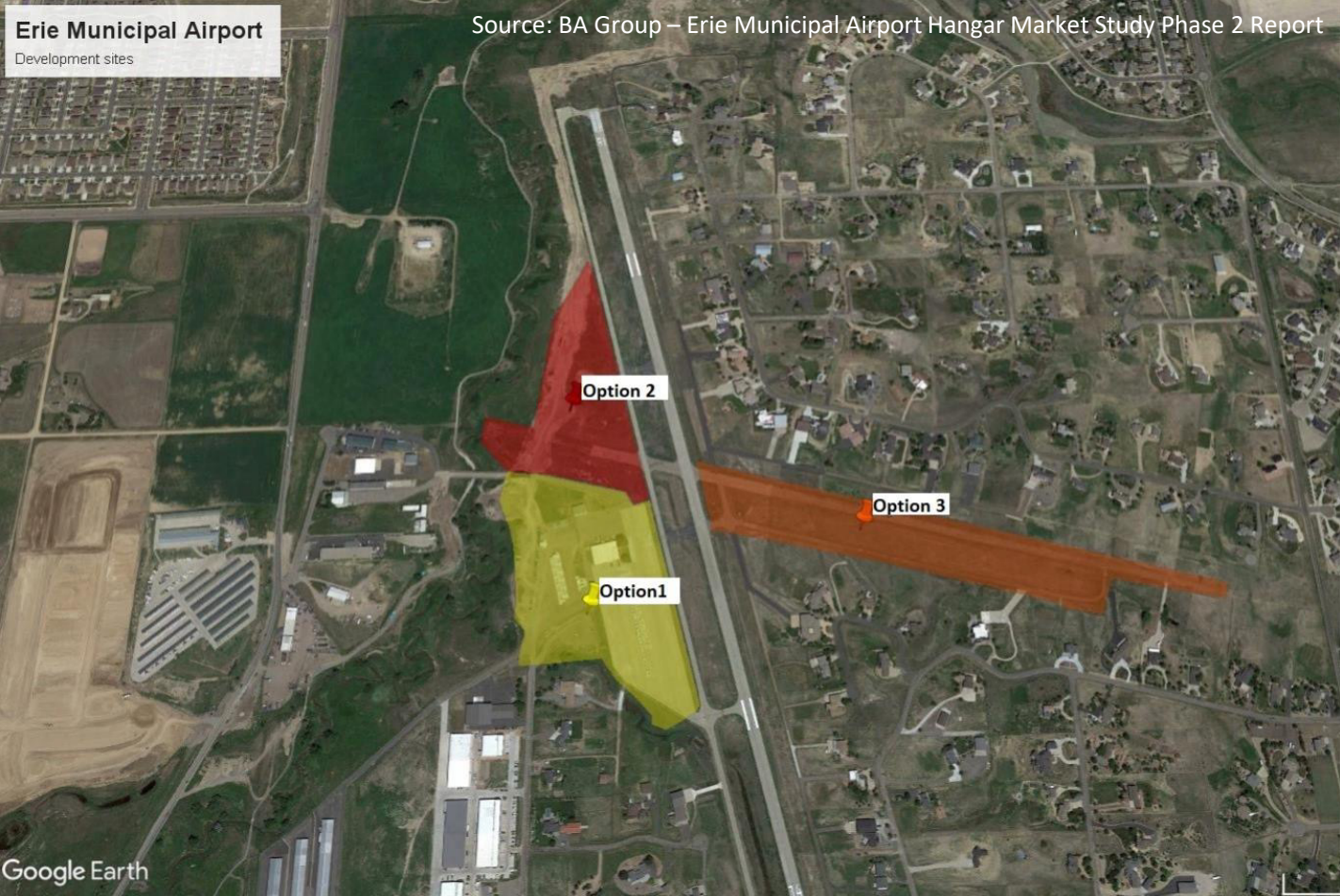
Municipal airports can play a vital role in emergency response for nearby communities. From wildfire and flood operations to medical flights and dog rescue missions, these facilities are critical infrastructure. Having knowledgeable staff or a well-trained manager is essential for compliance and preparedness.

Finally, municipal airports are the foundation of the aviation industry. After the Vietnam era, the supply of trained pilots and maintenance technicians steadily declined. Most commercial pilots today began their training at municipal airports. If your community values the ability to travel affordably across the country, or internationally, supporting your municipal airport is a smart long-term investment.

Like other essential but sometimes unpopular facilities (wastewater plants, landfills, major roadways) airports are a vital public asset. They are worth defending, maintaining, and communicating about with clarity and purpose.



# New Hangars - plans



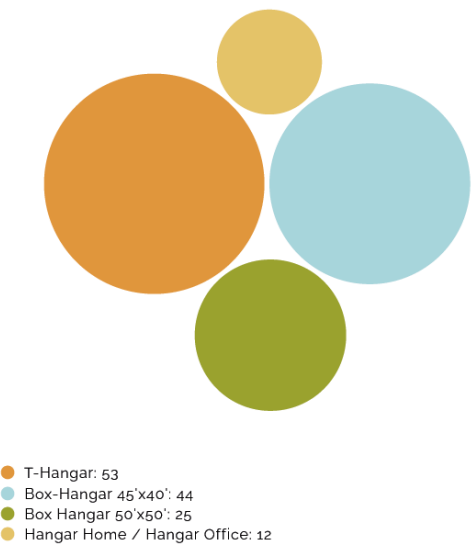
# of Hangars	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Small T-Hangar	14	20	36
Medium Box Hangar	14	18	36
Large Box Hangar	11	6	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>83</b>



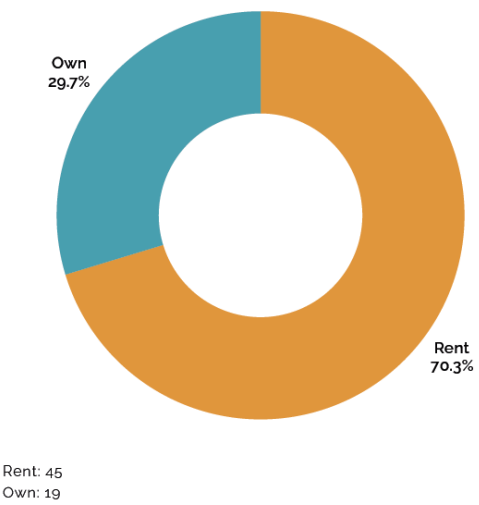
# New Hangars - plans

- Hangar Interest Form on Town website: 187 entries since July 2022.
- AEDAB sent “Follow-on Questionnaire” to all respondents in June 2025 requesting additional information on aircraft/hangar specifics. Received 65 completed questionnaires in response.

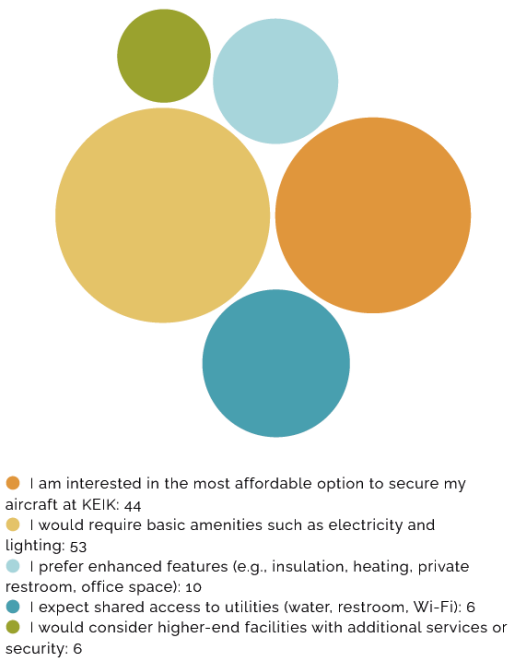
TYPE OF HANGAR DESIRED



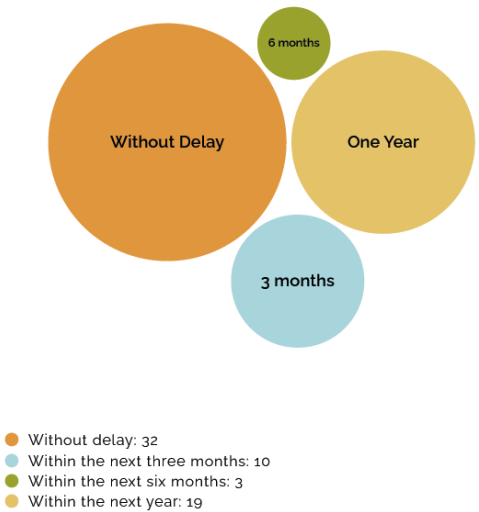
ARE YOU PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN RENTING OR OWNING A HANGAR?



HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PERFECT HANGAR?



HOW SOON WOULD YOU EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO OCCUPY THE HANGAR?

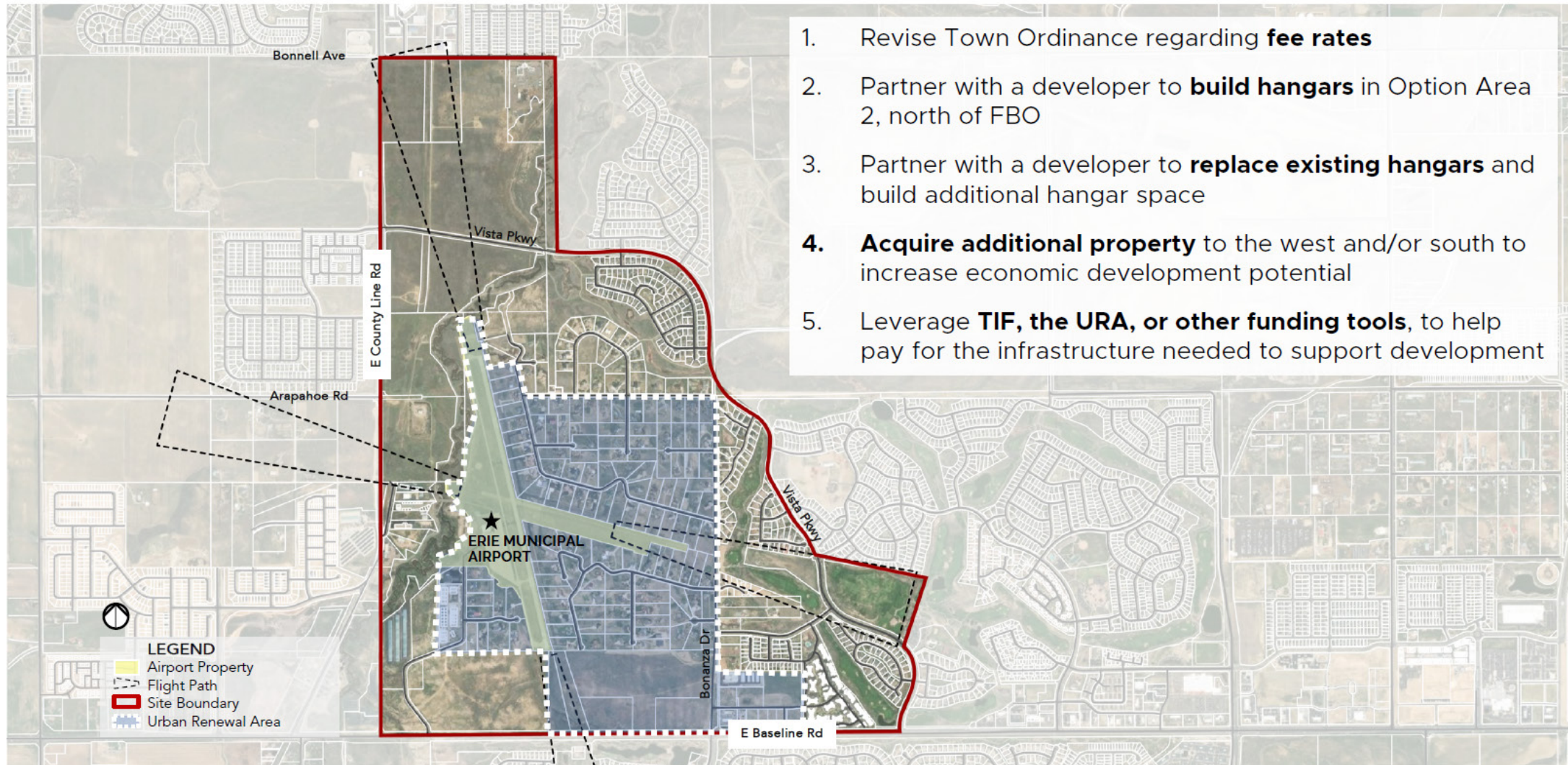




# New Hangars - plans

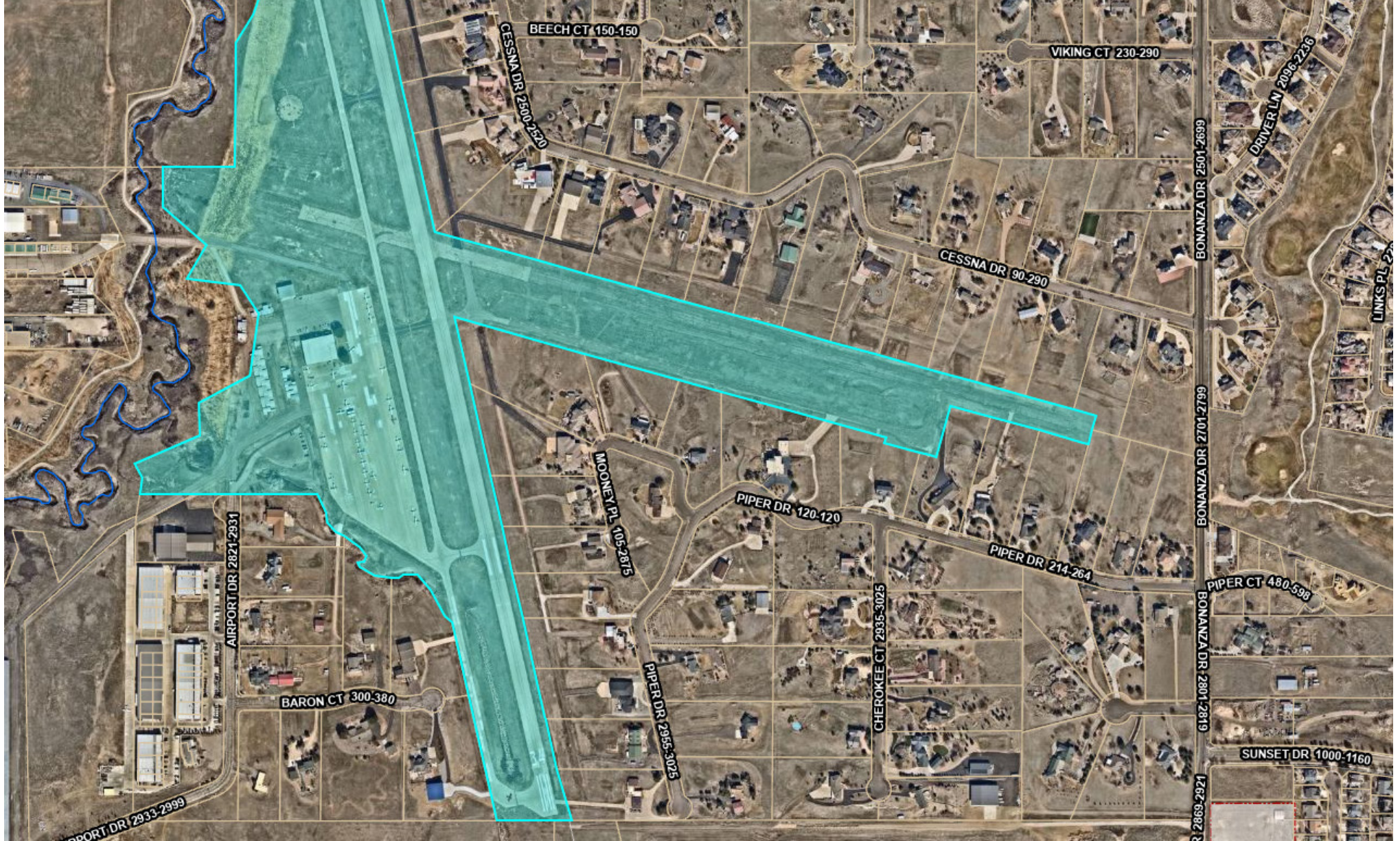
WHERE CAN YOU START TO FOCUS?

ACTION STEPS





# Crosswind best use?





# Crosswind best use?



- Approx. 10 acres remains from former Closed Crosswind Runway 09-27 (excluding newly relocated AWOS).
- AEDAB completed Crosswind Runway Land Use Evaluation in Dec 2024.
- EPS studied feasibility and economic impact of the following uses:
  - Urban Agriculture
  - Solar Facilities
  - Commercial hangars (lease/own)
  - Residential hangar homes
- AEDAB supports hangars of some kind, subject to community engagement.
- Discuss further in Executive Session.



# Crosswind best use?

## DEVELOPMENT OPTION COMPARISON

The purpose of the table below is to provide the Town of Erie and the Airport Economic Development Advisory Board with a relative understanding of the potential net revenues possible under various development options. In addition to the quantified options below, two other options involving Urban Agriculture and Solar Arrays should be kept in consideration.

	Commercial Hangars				Residential Hangars		
	Ground Lease Agreement	Land Sale to Developer	Town of Erie Development		Larger (1 ac.) lots with Septic	Small Lots with Sewer Access	
			Low	High		Low	High
<b>Forecasted return (present value)</b>	\$1.3 to \$3.4 million	\$941,000+	-\$956,572	\$1.6 million	\$1.1 million	\$50,256	\$2.3 million
<b>Timing of revenue</b>	Long-term (40+ yrs.)	Immediate	Long-term (40+ yrs.)	Long-term (40+ yrs.)	Long-term (20 yrs.)	Long-term (20 yrs.)	Long-term (20 yrs.)
<b>Potential long-term costs</b>	Low	None	High	High	High	High	High
<b>Ongoing maintenance commitment</b>	None	None	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
<b>Risk taken on by town</b>	Low	None	Moderate / High	Moderate / High	Moderate / High	Moderate / High	Moderate / High

# Flight school traffic patterns, community concerns

- The majority of noise complaints are due to flight training schools.
- These schools generate from and are being pushed from Broomfield (Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport) to Erie
- Boulder has been looking at closing its airport for affordable housing
- Grant assurances
  - Grant assurances
  - 20-year requirement
  - FAA funds for property purchase
    - Relevancy to EIK



# Budget/Finances

## 2-7-2 Airport fund.

- A. *Fund created:* A fund is created entitled "airport fund", to be a self-balancing set of accounts for the purposes of acquisition and operation of airport facilities. This fund shall comply with all accounting and budgetary laws of the town and the state.
- B. *Relationship to other funds:*
1. Loans, transfers, and investments may be made to this fund by other funds for the above stated purposes if approved by the town council. Any assistance by other funds to the airport fund will be repaid to the other funds.
  2. The airport fund shall be self-supporting and not an encumbrance to other funds. The airport shall be operated in a fiscal balance whereby the facilities accrue revenue in excess of expenditures. If the airport does not accomplish this fiscal balance, then the town council may consider closing the facility and ending its operation.

(Ord. 421, 9-12-1991; Ord. No. 031-2023, § 1, 11-28-2023)

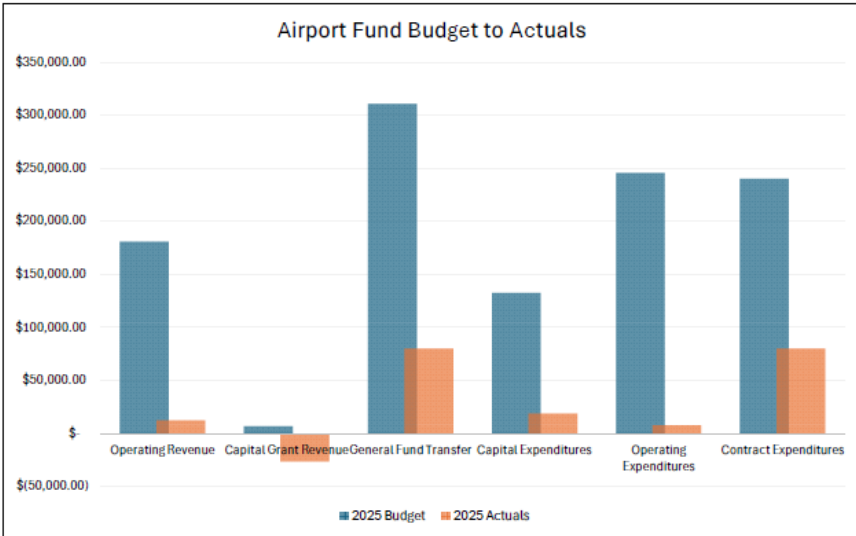
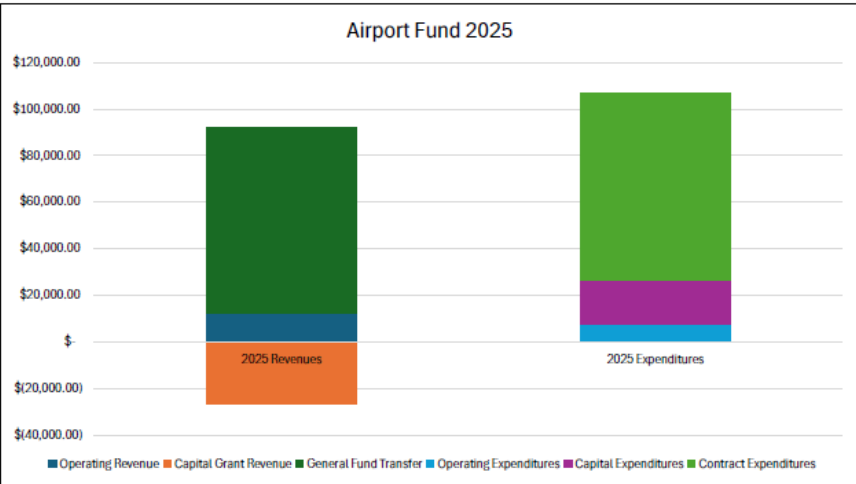




# Budget/Finances

## Quarterly Airport Report Q1 Update

The Airport Fund's capital grant revenues are currently negative due to the accrual of grant funding back into the 2024 fiscal year. As a self-supporting fund by statute, the Airport Fund is obligated to repay any transfers from the Town's General Fund. This includes the \$240K it received in 2024.



Airport Fund 2025 Q1 Report			
Description	Budget		Actuals
Beginning Fund Balance	\$	131,894.00	\$ 131,894.00
Revenues:			
Total Operating Revenue	\$	(180,848.00)	\$ (12,290.87)
Fuel Flowage Fees	\$	(5,250.00)	\$ (769.71)
Investment Income - Pooled	\$	(525.00)	\$ -
Investment FVA - Pooled	\$	-	\$ -
Lease/Rental Income	\$	(54,306.00)	\$ (10,500.00)
FBO Fees	\$	(42,660.00)	\$ -
Aviation Gas Taxes - Colorado	\$	(8,400.00)	\$ (1,021.16)
Miscellaneous Income	\$	(69,707.00)	\$ -
Total Capital Grant Revenue	\$	(6,595.00)	\$ 26,354.24
Transfer from Grant Fund - AWOS/Wind Cone Reloc	\$	-	\$ 26,354.24
Transfer from Grants Fund - West Ramp & TWY Cons	\$	(6,595.00)	\$ -
Total General Fund Transfer	\$	(310,696.58)	\$ (80,000.00)
Projected General fund Transfer - Contract	\$	(240,000.00)	\$ (80,000.00)
Projected General fund Transfer - Operations	\$	(64,542.34)	\$ -
Projected General fund Transfer - Capital	\$	(6,154.24)	\$ -
Projected Use of Fund Balance			
Total Revenue/Sources	\$	(498,139.58)	\$ (65,936.63)
Reconciliation with Expenditures:			
Total Capital Expenditures	\$	132,389.00	\$ 18,835.60
Construction - AWOS/Wind Cone Reloc	\$	-	\$ -
Construction - Vault Building	\$	50,000.00	\$ -
Construction - West Ramp & TWY Cons	\$	132,389.00	\$ 18,835.60
Capital Offsetting Revenue:			
Operating Revenue - Capital Use	\$	-	\$ (4,380.98)
Capital Grant Revenue	\$	(6,595.00)	\$ 26,354.24
Projected General fund Transfer - Capital	\$	(6,154.24)	\$ -
Projected Use of Fund Balance	\$	(119,639.76)	\$ (40,808.86)
Total Operating Expenditures	\$	245,390.34	\$ 7,909.89
Advertising & Publishing	\$	2,625.00	\$ -
Bank Charges	\$	-	\$ -
Bldgs/Grounds Maint Services	\$	89,250.00	\$ -
Bldgs/Grounds Maint Supplies	\$	2,500.00	\$ -
Consultation Services	\$	22,000.00	\$ -
Legal Services	\$	3,300.00	\$ -
Maintenance Contracts	\$	26,250.00	\$ -
Membership Dues	\$	3,261.00	\$ -
Permits, Licenses & Other Fees	\$	111.00	\$ 140.00
Postage	\$	105.00	\$ -
Printing & Copy Services	\$	735.00	\$ -
Insurance	\$	12,010.76	\$ 753.00
Indirect Cost Allocation	\$	20,867.58	\$ -
Travel & Conferences	\$	2,625.00	\$ -
Tools & Equipment	\$	10,550.00	\$ -
Utilities	\$	49,200.00	\$ 7,016.89
Operating Offsetting Revenue:			
Operating Revenue - Operations	\$	(180,848.00)	\$ (7,909.89)
Projected Use of Fund Balance	\$	-	\$ -
Projected General fund Transfer - Operations	\$	(64,542.34)	\$ -
Total Contract Expenditures	\$	240,000.00	\$ 80,000.00
Contract Offsetting Revenue:			
Projected General fund Transfer - Contract	\$	(240,000.00)	\$ (80,000.00)
Total Expenditures	\$	617,779.34	\$ 106,745.49
Ending Fund Balance	\$	12,254.24	\$ 91,085.14

# Budget/Finances

## Options to charge fees for planes using runway, but not based at ELK:

### A. Common Fee Types:

- A. Landing Fees (*charged per landing*)
- B. Touch-and-Go Fees (*per operation, bundled for flight schools/users*)
- C. Transient Ramp Fees (*parking or short-term use*)
- D. Operating Access Fees (*annual or monthly fee*)

### B. How to Track Usage:

- A. Self-reporting Agreements (*require flight schools to report/remit*)
- B. ADS-B Tracking Tools (*paid services to track aircraft and automate billing*)
- C. Cameras/Observers/CTAF Logs (*labor-intensive*)
- D. FBO Coordination (*to track and invoice*)

### C. Legal & Policy Notes:

- A. Publicly posted and non-discriminatory
- B. Excluded from airport based at ELK
- C. Coordinate with AEDAB & Town Council before implementing

# Budget/Finances

## Recommended actions to improve fiscal return from ELK:

- A. Update Through-the-Fence (TTF) Fee Structure (per 2023 ABS study):
  - A. Increase TTF fee from \$600 to \$1,000 for each lot
  - B. Update structure to impose TTF fee on all 55 lots with access
- B. Develop new commercial hangars on Airport Property:
  - A. Seek development partner to negotiate ground lease for ELK property
  - B. Third party develops, manages and leases new airplane hangars
  - C. Town receives ground lease revenue for improved land from operator
- C. Other Fees/Revenues:
  - A. Updates to landing/touch-and-go fees (per previous slide)
  - B. Increase fuel fees, FBO fees, and other airport-related revenues





# Strategic Planning Documents

- [Erie Airport Master Plan](#) (2016)
- [Erie Airport Economic Development Strategy](#) (2024)
- [Erie Airport Economic Impact Study](#) (2024)
- [Erie Airport Crosswind Runway Evaluation](#) (2024)
- [Erie Airport Hangar Market Study Phase 1 Report](#) (2022)
- [Erie Airport Hangar Market Study Phase 2 Report](#) (2022)
- [Erie Airport Economic Impact Report by CDOT](#) (2020)
- [Erie Airport Terminal Building Facility Assessment](#) (2022)
- [Erie Airport Roadway Connection Study](#) (2022)
- [Erie Airport Strategic Business Plan, FBO Alternatives & Rate Study](#) (2023)
- [Erie Airport Management Agreement with Vector Air Management](#) (2023)

# Questions & Discussion

Todd Fessenden, Utilities Director  
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