2025 Colorado Aviation ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

Individual Airport Economic Impact Report

Durango-La Plata County (DRO)

Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) is a commercial service airport in southwest Colorado, located 15 miles southeast of Durango that also supports general aviation activities including business jets. The airport is served by two airlines that offer flights to four destinations around the country. DRO has a single asphalt runway (03/21) that is 9,201 feet long by 150 feet wide and is equipped with a precision instrument approach. The airport is currently completing a multi-phase terminal development project to add additional gates, expand the arrival hall and baggage claim, relocate the TSA screening checkpoint, and expand concessions and dining options for passengers. DRO is a gateway for commercial and general aviation visitors to the San Juan Mountains, Durango Silverton Railway, Mesa Verde National Park, Purgatory Ski Resort, Fort Lewis College, and the wider Four Corners region. DRO is an access point to New Mexico, which is approximately 20 miles south of the airport. In addition to commercial service, frequent activities at DRO include air cargo, business/corporate flying, aerial/ wildland firefighting, and air ambulance operations.

Top Activities

- Commercial Service
- Recreational Flying
- Flight Training
- Aerial/ Wildland Firefighting
- Aerial Medical Operations



Economic Impacts of

Durango-La Plata County (DRO)

Durango-La Plata County is one of 66 public use airports that contribute to the State's aviation economic impact. To understand how DRO and other airports support economic activity, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Division of Aeronautics undertook the 2025 Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study (CEIS). The study determined that DRO generated the below total economic activity in 2023. Of the $342.1 million of total business revenues generated by DRO, $165.2 million were generated by on-airport activities and $176.9 million generated by visitor spending.[1]

1,993 total jobs

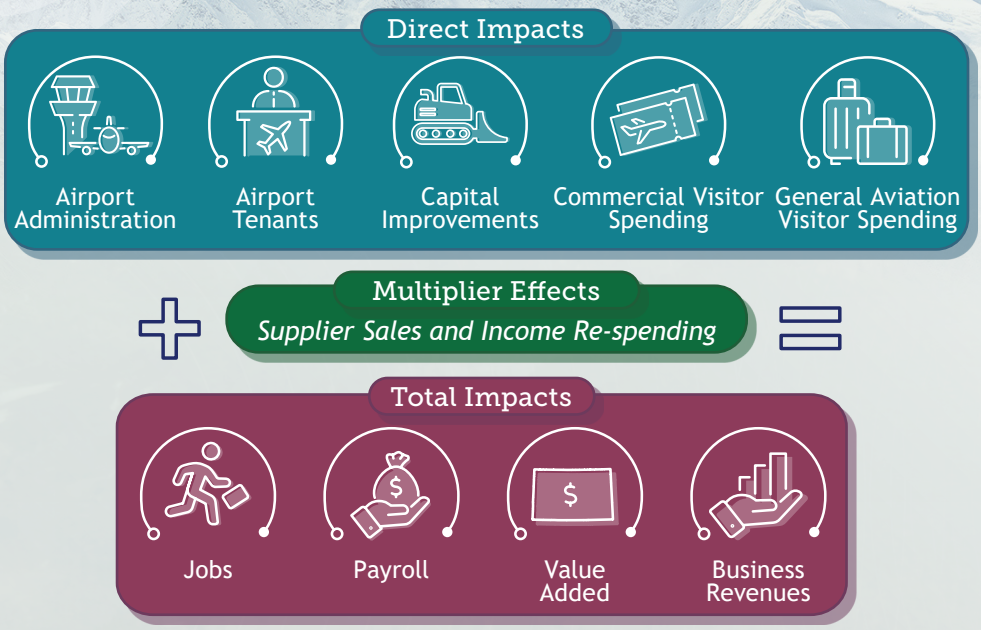
$111.8M total payroll

$199.7M total value added

$342.1M total business revenues

[1] *Totals may not sum due to rounding*

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What is Economic Impact?

Two types of economic impacts are generated as a result of airport activity: Direct Impacts and Multiplier Effects (supplier sales and income re-spending). Direct impacts come from the activities of the airport administration, on-airport tenants, capital improvement spending, and spending by visitors arriving on commercial and general aviation aircraft. Multiplier effects are generated when portions of direct revenues are used to purchase goods and services from Colorado businesses (supplier sales), and when income earned by workers in airport-supported jobs is spent at Colorado businesses (income re-spending). Total Impacts represent the summation of the direct impacts, supplier sales, and income re-spending effects for the state.

Economic Impact Measures

Economic Impacts are communicated by the total jobs, payroll, value added, and business revenues generated by each airport. These are defined as:

Jobs
Total number of people employed, both full-time and part-time.

Payroll
Total employment compensation, including wages, benefits, and taxes paid on behalf of employees.

Value Added
Total contribution to the Gross State Product. It includes all payroll, profits, and business taxes paid.

Business Revenues
Total expenditures for airport administration, capital projects and tenant sales of goods and services, as well as visitor spending in Colorado's hospitality-related sectors. Also referred to as "output," "sales," or "economic activity/impact."

Statewide Aviation Economic Impacts

Colorado's 66 public use airports range from small GA airports to a major international airline hub, all of which contribute to the state's economy. The impacts of on-airport activities and visitor spending associated with each airport, combined with the statewide impacts of off-airport air cargo operations, helped Colorado's aviation system generate $68.9 billion in total economic activity (business revenues) in 2023.

348,466 total jobs

$23.5B total payroll

$40.3B total value added

$68.9B total business revenues

For more information on the Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study, please visit our webpage at *https://www.coloradoaviationsystem.com/*