

# DEN Real Estate Strategic Development Plan

<https://www.flydenver.com/realestate>

(click on DEN Real Estate Plan to download)

**Award Video**



The physical, social, and economic relationship between major airports and their host cities and regions is rapidly changing in the 21st century. This is especially true for the Denver International Airport (DEN), Colorado's largest economic generator, now connected to downtown Denver by passenger rail. Many North American cities, including Denver, developed their first commercial airports in low-density, peripheral locations. As cities grew, airport expansion became difficult due to land use incompatibilities with surrounding neighborhoods. Dutch airport planner Martis Schaafsma aptly describes this phenomenon: "the airport leaves the city...the city follows the airport...the airport becomes the city."



DEN aspires to be the global leader in airport urbanism through the creation of sustainable, human-scaled places and experiences surrounding the airport. The Sasaki led interdisciplinary design team in collaboration with DEN's Division of Real Estate created—and is now implementing—a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for development of the first 1,500 acres of DEN's 16,000 acres of non-aviation land. The plan defines the framework and vision for DEN's evolution from an efficient transportation machine, and productive economic development engine, into an airport city that exemplifies the best principles of urbanism, sustainability, and connectivity.

The SDP was made possible by the region's collaborative spirit that was critical to the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that established DEN and identified priorities for shared economic benefits from the development of the non-aviation land.

The Strategic Development Plan articulates and advances DEN's vision through strategies designed to:

- Support commercial opportunities within the visionary SDP that are environmentally, fiscally, and socially sustainable
- Integrate the natural and built environment to create unique, sustainable places and experiences that redefine airport development
- Leverage DEN's scale and location as a global port to maximize real estate assets by attracting local, regional, national, and international business
- Develop projects that contribute to creating places that benefit and support the airport, the surrounding communities, and the region
- Harness the potential of DEN's 53-square mile property to accommodate core aviation uses, commercial development, and a range of productive landscapes, including agricultural uses and energy production

The SDP guides this effort by creating a road map for transforming non-aviation airport land into a series of development districts that serve diverse local, national and global businesses. Focused initially on more than 1,000 acres situated along DEN's main access road and commuter rail line, development at DEN provides direct international airport access. The plan celebrates Colorado's unique natural amenities, siting each district within Den's from range prairie landscape in a manner that offers expansive open vistas and access to natural resources.

DEN's Division of Real Estate is using the plan to attract and shape an innovative commercial community that supports the airport and the surrounding metropolis, connects the airport to the region and the world, and celebrates natural amenities and native landscapes. The implementation process is underway at multiple development nodes. DEN's ambitious vision promises to strengthen Denver's position as a global city, while simultaneously driving local and regional economic development and job creation.