Brown Aviation Strategies

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Longmont Airport Noise and Governance

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The Core Issue

Aircraft noise is experienced locally, but authority is divided. The FAA controls navigable airspace, flight rules, aircraft and pilot regulation, and national aviation-system safety. A municipal airport sponsor controls airport property, leases, facilities, local program administration, finance, communication, and certain proprietor functions—subject to federal preemption, grant assurances, and applicable federal procedures.

> **BAS principle:** Airport-community conflict cannot be addressed effectively through isolated noise procedures. It requires FAA-informed governance, measurable performance, transparent communication, technical expertise, financial capacity, and continuous community engagement.

What the Consultant Record Shows

- Approximately **88% of total 2025 operations** occurred during the VNAP preferred 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. window.
- Approximately **65% of total operations** used preferred Runway 29.
- The 88% figure is not specifically a touch-and-go or training-activity measure.
- Runway-use results must be interpreted with wind and safety conditions.
- Broader flight-path, altitude, pattern, operator, complaint-response, and community-outcome measures require sustained analysis.

> **Major finding:** A comprehensive voluntary noise-abatement program is not necessarily effective unless its objectives, conformance, and outcomes are measurable.

This finding does **not** conclude that Longmont's VNAP is ineffective. It identifies the evidence needed to demonstrate performance.

July 28 Council Direction

- **Unanimous:** Return by the end of Q3 2026 with VNAP implementation options, data measures, technical advisory-group analysis, operator-specific analytics, targets, complaint tracking, resident feedback, and public reporting.
- **6–1:** Improve AWOS, website, and third-party communications, including quiet-hours, touch-and-go, and saturated-pattern information.
- **4–3:** Return with an all-of-the-above financial package, including lease, rate, development, and $3-per-1,000-pound landing-fee models.

No motion enacted a landing fee, mandatory curfew, touch-and-go prohibition, or other operating restriction.

Financial-Control Issue

The published rates-and-charges study projected negative working capital beginning in 2028. City budget staff orally stated that carryover had been duplicated and that a corrected five-year balance remained positive while declining. Until a corrected exhibit is obtained, neither the published negative series nor an unverified replacement series should be treated as the current forecast.

Lessons for Colorado

1. Explain authority before proposing remedies.
2. Pair every objective with conformance and outcome measures.
3. Normalize operational data for wind, weather, safety, and data quality.
4. Use complaints for investigation and pattern identification, with clear statistical limits.
5. Connect commitments to staffing and funding; separate financial sustainability from noise deterrence; and correct public information visibly.

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