Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the key findings and conclusions of the baseline assessment conducted to by ABCx2 in an effort to identify solutions to address the increasing overflights and noise impacts affecting communities surrounding the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (RMMA).

The baseline assessment was one of the first tasks in a work plan developed by the consulting team. The assessment was conducted to help understand the existing conditions at the airport and impacted communities. The operational analyses included a look at annual operations and trends, types of operations (i.e. itinerant versus local), operator types, aircraft types, airspace, flight patterns and procedures, and a focused look at the sources of aircraft activity directly impacting the Town of Superior and the City of Louisville. The analysis also included a review of land-uses and zoning around the airport.

Results of the baseline assessment indicate that operations at RMMA have been steadily trending upward, and both airport and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) forecasts suggest this growth will continue. The long-term plans for the airport include both aeronautical and non-aeronautical development, which will facilitate additional flight activity and potentially increased overflights and noise impacts for close-in communities.

A historical analysis of land-use and zoning around the airport revealed efforts by the Airport and Jefferson County to encourage zoning and development around the airport that would be compatible with the anticipated overflight activity and subsequent aircraft noise exposure. In many cases, residential development close to the airport and within critical zones (where the final approach and initial climb phases of flight occur), was discouraged. An Airport Influence Area (AIA) was established and published by Jefferson County to further encourage transparency and to discourage non-compatible development in areas that would be exposed to the greatest impacts.
Avigation easements were encouraged as a prerequisite for residential development within the AIA. However, growth of the airport has exceeded early (community) expectations, resulting in increased community concerns and noise complaints. The figure below shows the number of airport operations (take-offs and landings) and the number of households submitting complaints by year. The data clearly shows an increase in operations since 2014, along with an increase in the number of households submitting complaints.

The work conducted during the baseline assessment included collection and review of community input, collaboration with the airport, FAA air traffic control, and representatives from Superior and Louisville. An initial list of strategies to address noise impacts has been developed. This list includes operational procedures, policies and practices, in addition to community and industry outreach and engagement. This list will be refined and expanded as the work progresses. Ultimately, strategies will be categorized by implementation schedule (i.e. immediate, medium-term, and long-range) and prioritized. The ABCx2 team will work with the appropriate community and industry stakeholders on planning and implementation.
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ........................................................................................................... 1

Table of Contents .............................................................................................................. 3

Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 5

Background / History ........................................................................................................... 5
  Airport Roles: Local, Regional, National ........................................................................ 6
  Governance ..................................................................................................................... 7
  Airport Facilities ............................................................................................................ 8
    Navigational Aids ......................................................................................................... 9

Key Airport Tenants and Businesses ................................................................................. 9
  Flight Training ................................................................................................................. 9
  Fixed Base Operators (FBOs) ........................................................................................ 10
  Air Charter Services ...................................................................................................... 11
  Other Airport Businesses ............................................................................................... 11

Airspace ............................................................................................................................ 11

Annual Operations ............................................................................................................ 12
  Total (Annual) Operations ............................................................................................ 12

Based Aircraft ................................................................................................................... 16
  Sample Aircraft Types .................................................................................................. 16

Flight Patterns and Procedures ......................................................................................... 17
  Runway Selection .......................................................................................................... 17
  Local Operations .......................................................................................................... 18
  Itinerant Operations ..................................................................................................... 19

Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) .......................................................................... 20

Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STARs) ..................................................................... 21

Instrument Approach Procedures .................................................................................... 22

Overflights of Superior and Louisville ............................................................................. 22
  Superior ....................................................................................................................... 22
  Louisville ..................................................................................................................... 23
Land-Use / Zoning ......................................................................................................................... 23
Rock Creek Development, Superior ................................................................................................. 27
Community Feedback ....................................................................................................................... 28
Total Complaints .............................................................................................................................. 28
Complaints by Location ................................................................................................................... 29
Complaints by Aircraft Category ...................................................................................................... 30
Airport Noise Program (Existing) ..................................................................................................... 31
Overview .............................................................................................................................................. 31
Regional Economic and Social Impacts ............................................................................................... 32
Disclaimer .......................................................................................................................................... 35
Appendices ......................................................................................................................................... 36
Appendix 1 ............................................................................................................................................ 36
Letter from Airport to Town of Superior regarding Final Development Plan for Rock Creek dated (December 11, 1986) ................................................................................................. 36
Appendix 2 ............................................................................................................................................ 36
Letter from Airport to Town of Superior regarding proposed residential development in proximity to airport and flight corridors. (April 25, 1989) .......................................................................................................................... 36
Appendix 3 ............................................................................................................................................ 36
Letter from Airport to Town of Superior regarding proposed residential development in proximity to airport and flight corridors. (January 21, 1997) .......................................................................................................................... 36
Appendix 4 ............................................................................................................................................ 36
Newspaper article: “Superior expansion near airport is risky, Jefferco officials warn.” ............ 36
Introduction

The Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (RMMA) in Broomfield, CO, is bounded by rising terrain to the west and a mix of land-uses to the north, east, and south. The area around the airport includes non-compatible development including residential areas and schools. The airport is becoming increasingly busy, with significant growth in operations over the last 5 years. Forecasts suggest growth at RMMA will continue.

As operations increase, noise and other impacts associated with aircraft overflights is also increasing, raising concerns of nearby residents. The Town of Superior and the City of Louisville have hired ABCx2, LLC (consultants) to help identify strategies to address this growing issue.

The consultants were tasked with strengthening collaboration between the Airport, Jefferson County (owner/operator the Airport), and Superior and Louisville. The increased collaboration will help to identify and implement strategies aimed at reducing impacts attributed to the growth of RMMA.

The approach proposed by ABCx2 started with an assessment of existing conditions including an analysis of annual operations, flight procedures and airspace, land-uses and zoning, and the existing noise abatement program at the airport. The result of this work is summarized in this Baseline Assessment Summary Report. The report will provide a starting point for exploring new policies, practices, and procedures, aimed at reducing the community impacts associated RMMA. Results of this work are also intended to encourage airport growth be sustainable, helping maintain the quality of life for residents living in proximity to RMMA.

Background / History

The Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (RMMA) is located along the northern boundary of Jefferson County. It is surrounded by residential development with the Town of Superior to the northwest, Louisville to the north, Broomfield on the east and west, and Westminster to the south.
The airport which was opened in 1960 is owned and operated by Jefferson County. Originally named Jefferson County Airport, the name was changed to Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport in 2006, reflecting its growth and changing role in the region.

**Airport Roles: Local, Regional, National**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is tasked with maintaining a plan for developing and operating a system of public-use airports in the United States. This plan is referred to as the National Plan of Integrated Airports (NPIAS) and is intended to meet the nation’s needs for civil aeronautics and national defense. In support of this mandate, the FAA provides technical and/or financial support to airports, however, the FAA does not regulate who may use the airport (i.e. which airlines or general aviation aircraft operators. Rather, the FAA is responsible for working with airport operators, state and local governments, and other stakeholders to “ensure effective planning of a safe and efficient system of airports to support the needs of the civil aviation industry” (FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems, 2019-2023). Airports within the NPIAS are eligible for federal funding under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

Airports within the NPIAS fall into one of four categories:

- Commercial Service-Primary
- Commercial Service-Nonprimary
- Reliever Airport
- General Aviation Airport

Airports serving general aviation primarily (including RMMA) are also categorized based on activity level. The five roles include:

- National
- Regional
- Local
- Basic, and
- Unclassified
RMMA is classified as a Reliever Airport with a National role. National airports are those located in metropolitan areas near major business centers. This is the largest category of general aviation facility and considered critical to the regional and national economy, while providing access to the National Airspace System (NAS).

The “Reliever Airport” category indicates the airport relieves congestion at a commercial service airport and provides local and regional access to the NAS. In the context of RMMA, the airport is a reliever to Denver International Airport. Front Range Airport in Aurora and Centennial Airport in Centennial are also classified as reliever airports for Denver International.

**Governance**

RMMA is owned and operated by Jefferson County. Jefferson County is governed by a Board of County Commissioners which provides strategic direction to the airport. An Airport Advisory Board provides input to the Commission and airport management. The official role of the Airport Advisory Board is to;

> “Advise the Board of County Commissioners regarding airport matters including serving as a feedback mechanism regarding the Airport, build awareness of the Airport and its role in the economic health of the region, develop Airport advocacy, educate users/tenants/neighbors about operating guidelines, create opportunities to engage the public, and ensure good neighbor practices by the Airport.”

The Airport Advisory Board is made up of seven members plus an alternate. Members include: two neighboring business owners, two Jefferson County residents, one neighboring property owner, one neighboring jurisdiction, and one airport tenant. Day-to-day management and operation of the airport is overseen by an Airport Manager and staff.

Aviation is highly regulated and RMMA is subject to regulatory and operational requirements imposed by the FAA, State of Colorado (Department of Transportation) and Jefferson County. Aircraft and flight operations are regulated primarily by the FAA.
Airport Facilities
RMMA is made up of three runways. The “primary” runway, 12L-30R, is 9000 feet in length and 100 feet wide. The “parallel” runway, 12R-30L is 7000 long and 75 feet wide. The “crosswind” runway, 3-21, is 3,600 feet long and 75 feet wide. Runway designations are based on their magnetic heading rounded to the nearest 10° with the last number dropped. A runway oriented with a 300° compass heading is designated 30. A runway oriented with a 30° heading would be designated as Runway 3.

A letter-designation is used when there are multiple runways with the same heading. For example, if an aircraft is landing on Runway 30, they will fly a heading of 300 degrees and since there are two parallel runways, the “R” is used to designate the runway on the right side. The runway on the left side is designated with an “L”, Runway 30L.

The airfield also includes a set of taxiways, which provide access between the runways and the ramps (or terminal), aircraft parking, and other airport facilities and services.

Figure 1. RMMA Airport Layout. (Adapted from RMMA Airport Diagram, Federal Aviation Administration)
Navigational Aids
Navigational aids on the airfield help guide pilots to the airport and during approach and landing. All runways at RMMA are equipped with Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI) systems, which provide visual guidance to pilots during approach and landing. The PAPI consists of four lights adjacent to the runway at the approach end. The system provides the pilot with information about the aircraft position relative to the intended approach path (i.e. aircraft is above or below the approach path).

An Instrument Landing System (ILS) is installed on Runway 30R. An ILS provides highly accurate course, distance, and glidepath information. An ILS is especially important during poor weather conditions where visibility is limited. There is also a VOR/DME approach procedure to Runways 30L and 30R and RNAV (GPS) approaches available to Runways 30L, 30R, and 12L.

Key Airport Tenants and Businesses

Flight Training
Airport operations can be classified in a number of ways. Local versus itinerant operations refer to the origin or destination of the flight. Flights that remain in the “local” area, that is, in proximity to the airport are classified as “local” operations. “Itinerant” operations are those that originate from outside the local airport (i.e. at another airport) or departures that leave the local area.

Local operations are common with flight training operations. These include touch-and-goes, low approaches, and airport pattern operations. General aviation activity makes up the majority of operations at RMMA and flight training represents the bulk of those operations. For 2018, local operations (i.e. touch-and-goes) made up 56% of total operations. Figure 2 shows that the majority of operations at RMMA in 2018 were “local operations”, likely primarily touch-and-goes which is consistent with the concerns and complaints from the community.
Currently there are five flight schools on the airport. These include both fixed-wing (airplane) and helicopter training facilities:

- McAir Aviation
- Teebird Enterprises
- Western Air Flight Academy
- Rocky Mountain Flight School
- Colorado Heli-ops

**Fixed Base Operators (FBOs)**

Fixed base operators (FBOs) provide a variety of aircraft services. Typical services include aircraft fuel, maintenance, aircraft rental, flight charters, flight instruction, aircraft parking, and hangar space. RMMA currently hosts two FBOs:

- Signature Flight Support
- Sheltair
Air Charter Services
RMMA is also home to a number of air charter services. These companies provide passenger services to airports across the United States and internationally. Flight charter operators based at RMMA include:

- Mountain Aviation
- Denver Air Connection

Other Airport Businesses
In addition to the companies mentioned, there are many additional businesses providing aviation-related services, support businesses, as well as non-aviation organizations. According to the Airport’s website, there are close to 70 businesses and tenants located on the airport.

Airspace

RMMA is located approximately 20 miles west of Denver International Airport (DEN) just outside the boundary of DEN’s Class B airspace. Figure 3 (below) highlights the airspace around RMMA, Denver Airport to the east, and significant terrain to the west of RMMA. The terrain to the west has a significant impact on flight operations in and out of the airport and limits the flexibility air traffic controllers have in managing the airspace around the airport.

Figure 3: Regional Airspace. (Source: www.vfrmap.com)
RMMA operates within Class D airspace when the air traffic control tower is open (6AM-10PM daily). When the control tower is closed, the airspace reverts to Class G at which time, air traffic services are limited.

“Ground control” and “Tower” air traffic services are provided by the FAA at the air traffic control tower based on the airport. These services are for aircraft on the airport surface or within the airport’s airspace. “Approach” and “Departure” control services are provided by DEN TRACON (air traffic facility located at DEN). These pertain to aircraft further out but heading to or from RMMA. Air traffic facilities at both RMMA and Denver International work together to manage aircraft operations in the area. Flight paths for aircraft flying to and from RMMA may be impacted by DEN air traffic. Arrival and departure procedures associated with DEN bring aircraft to and from Denver in the airspace above RMMA. This activity can also impact operations at RMMA.

**Annual Operations**

**Total (Annual) Operations**
An “airport operation” can be a landing or a take-off. Training operations such as “touch-and-goes” represent both a landing and a take-off, therefore a touch-and-go represents two airport operations. Operations at RMMA have grown over the last five years (2013-2018) and FAA forecasts suggests this growth will continue. A nine-year review of the annual operations at RMMA is included in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Air Carrier</th>
<th>Air Taxi</th>
<th>General Aviation</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Civil</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total Operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,706</td>
<td>52,422</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>62,821</td>
<td>58,441</td>
<td>1,101</td>
<td>59,542</td>
<td>120,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4,601</td>
<td>55,145</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>60,289</td>
<td>58,583</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>59,064</td>
<td>119,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5,819</td>
<td>52,792</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>59,344</td>
<td>58,674</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>59,621</td>
<td>118,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5,279</td>
<td>51,573</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>57,764</td>
<td>55,837</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>56,871</td>
<td>114,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>5,136</td>
<td>53,268</td>
<td>1,293</td>
<td>59,797</td>
<td>53,032</td>
<td>2,581</td>
<td>55,713</td>
<td>115,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>5,524</td>
<td>54,464</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>61,179</td>
<td>62,272</td>
<td>2,019</td>
<td>64,320</td>
<td>125,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>6,093</td>
<td>64,889</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>72,360</td>
<td>67,619</td>
<td>1,737</td>
<td>69,356</td>
<td>141,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5,973</td>
<td>66,042</td>
<td>1,087</td>
<td>73,115</td>
<td>90,411</td>
<td>2,243</td>
<td>92,654</td>
<td>165,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>5,067</td>
<td>66,081</td>
<td>1,136</td>
<td>74,333</td>
<td>93,125</td>
<td>2,682</td>
<td>95,807</td>
<td>170,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: RMMA Operations Data. Source: Federal Aviation Administration Ops-Net.
Itinerant versus Local Operations

The FAA quantifies airport operations as either “itinerant” or “local.” Itinerant operations include arrivals originating at other airports or outside the local airport traffic pattern and departures by aircraft leaving the local airport traffic pattern (i.e. flying to another airport). Local operations are those conducted within the airport traffic pattern (i.e. touch-and-goes, practice approaches, and low approaches). Local operations are a common component of flight training and a dominant percentage of the operations at RMMA. A review of annual operations at RMMA shows slow but consistent growth in itinerant operations and faster growth in local operations. This training (and practice) is required by Federal Aviation Regulations for both new pilots as well as those getting advanced training and for maintaining their pilot certifications. Practice landings and taking-offs must also be conducted during nighttime conditions (between sunset and sunrise).

FAA categorizes itinerant operations by operator category including air carrier (scheduled passenger service), air taxi (unscheduled/charter), general aviation, and military. Local operations are classified as civil or military.
Total operations are trending upward with local operations growing at a faster rate than itinerant operations. Itinerant operations by each operator type are shown in Figure 6. The graph shows the majority of itinerant operations at RMMA are conducted by general aviation.
Local operations are also growing as shown in Figure 7 below. General aviation operations make up the majority of local operations and while the number of military operations seems to be growing, it remains a small percentage compared to civil operations.

![Local Operations (Civil versus Military)](chart1.png)

Figure 7. Local operations, civil versus military. (Source, FAA Ops-Net data).

Most of the military operations occurring at RMMA are “local” operations.

![Military Flight Operations](chart2.png)

Figure 8. Military flight operations. (Source, FAA Ops-Net data)
Based Aircraft

Over 70% of aircraft based at RMMA are small, single-engine, general aviation aircraft. These are common with flight training and consistent with the high level of flight training activity at the airport. Multi-engine aircraft and jet aircraft make up 25% of the fixed-wing aircraft, and helicopters make up the remaining 5%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aircraft Type</th>
<th>Based Aircraft</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Engine</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Engine</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jet</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helicopter</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>425</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. RMMA based aircraft. Source: FAA, RMMA Airport 5010 (2017 data)

For illustrative purposes, samples of each fixed-wing aircraft category are depicted below.

Sample Aircraft Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Engine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Single Engine Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Single Engine Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multi-Engine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Multi-Engine Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Multi-Engine Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Jet Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Jet Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9. Sample aircraft types by category. Source: Cessna Aircraft.
Flight Patterns and Procedures

Runway Selection
Runway 30R-12L is designated as the “primary” runway, meaning when conditions allow, this is the main runway to be used. At 9,000 feet in length, Runway 30R-12L is the longest runway at RMMA and the runway used most often by aircraft landing or departing the airport. Training and “local” operations are typically conducted on the shorter parallel runway, 30L-12R.

Runway selection is based primarily on wind conditions. Aircraft typically take-off and land into the wind. Small aircraft and those conducting touch-and-go activities will often use the shorter parallel runway (30L-12R). This enables safe and efficient use of the airport and airspace with training and practice operations on the parallel and arriving and departing aircraft (itinerant) using the Primary runway. While these are typical conditions, training activity (i.e. touch-and-goes) may be conducted on the primary runway. Similarly, based on conditions, air traffic control may have arrivals and departures use the parallel runway. In most cases, larger and faster aircraft such as turboprop and jet aircraft will use the primary runway due to its extra length.

As noted, air traffic controllers determine the runway to be used based primarily on wind speed and direction. When wind speeds are 5 knots (5.8 miles per hour) or above and wind direction is between 210 degrees and 30 degrees, Runways 30L and 30R will typically be used. When wind speed is 5 knots or above and wind direction is between 30 degrees and 210 degrees, Runway 12L and 12R will typically be used. It should be noted that these are generalities and other factors can play a role in runway selection. For example, if the winds are variable (changing), air traffic control may not change the runways in use. Runway use is usually based on sustained conditions.
The crosswind runway, 3-21, is often used by helicopters. This allows access into and out from the airport with minimal impacts to the fixed-wing flight patterns. Fixed-wing use of the crosswind runway is less common and dictated primarily by higher wind conditions.

Local Operations

“Local” operations are those conducted within the airport traffic pattern (i.e. touch-and-goes, practice approaches, and low approaches). Local operations are a common component of flight training and represent the majority of operations at RMMA. A review of annual operations at RMMA shows slow but consistent growth in itinerant operations and faster growth in local operations. This training (and practice) is required by Federal Aviation Regulations for both new pilots as well as those getting advanced training and for maintaining their pilot certifications. Landing and taking-off must also be conducted during nighttime conditions (between sunset and sunrise) as required by Federal Aviation Regulations.

The flight patterns associated with local operations can vary based on a wide number of factors and conditions. Factors include the aircraft type and weight, pilot technique, weather and wind conditions, and the number and mix of aircraft types in the pattern. More aircraft in the pattern will generally result in a larger pattern to ensure appropriate spacing among aircraft.
Figure 11 (below) is intended to illustrate the general concept of a local (airport) traffic pattern. Airport traffic patterns are typically rectangular running parallel to the runway being used. When conducting touch-and-goes, as an example, the aircraft takes off, turns to fly parallel to the runway, then turns again to line up for landing. The examples are not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. As noted, the actual pattern(s) flown will depend on a number of factors and will vary. The figure below illustrates local traffic patterns for Runways 12R and 30L.

Figure 11. Generalized examples of “closed-traffic patterns. Actual conditions will vary.

Itinerant Operations
As is the case with local operations, the flight patterns associated with itinerant operations have commonalities and differences. When taking off, all fixed-wing aircraft depart maintaining runway heading during the initial climb. The altitude and/or distance from the runway at which the aircraft turns depends on many factors. Typically, aircraft will climb to between 400-500’ above ground level (AGL) before turning. This can vary based on a number of variables and conditions. Aircraft type and weight dictate aircraft performance which impacts how quickly aircraft climb. Weather also plays a role. Higher outside temperatures reduce performance, as can wind speed and direction. Pilot technique and air traffic instructions may also play a role. These variables result in variations in flight patterns for aircraft arrivals and departures. However, the initial take-off and climb and the final approach portion of landings are generally consistent. The distance from the runway that the aircraft makes it’s turn depends on how quickly it can ascend.
Slower, heavier aircraft may maintain runway heading for longer before turning, than will lighter, faster aircraft.

**Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs)**
Due to terrain west of the airport, departures using Runways 12L and 12R (southeast) are typically assigned a heading by air traffic control between 350° clockwise to 150°. Departures using 30L and 30R are typically assigned a heading between 350° clockwise to 113°.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Runway 30L/R Departure Headings</th>
<th>Runway 12L/R Departure Headings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

![Figure 12](image-url)  
Figure 12. Departure headings will typically be within the range of yellow depicted based upon the runway used.

Figure 13 is an example of a flight procedure used by pilots. The COORZ departure is used by departures heading west. However, the graphic circled above indicates departures off of Runways 30L and 30R (northwest) make an immediate turn to the east. Departures off of 12L and 12R (southeast) following runway heading until assigned a heading by air traffic control. All of the published departure procedures for RMMA utilize the same general pattern initially. Factors that can influence the heading assigned by air traffic include intended destination, wind and weather conditions, and other air traffic in the area. With terrain to the west and DEN airspace to the east, managing operations in and out of RMMA can be a complex task.
The graphics below are intended to illustrate how the flight procedures apply to RMMA.

**Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STARs)**
Arrival procedures transition aircraft from cruise altitude down to the approach into the airport. There are several arrival procedures serving DEN which are shared with other general aviation airports in the area. Typically, these terminate around 9,000 feet and miles from the airport. Due to the altitude, aircraft on these procedures have minimal noise impact on the communities surrounding RMMA. However, aircraft on these arrival procedures can impact air traffic instructions to aircraft at lower altitudes and closer to RMMA.
Instrument Approach Procedures

Airport approach procedures take aircraft from the arrival phase of flight through to landing. For RMMA this is typically from around 9,000 down to the runway. Most of the instrument approach procedures into RMMA include a final approach path of approximately six miles. Final approach is where the aircraft lines up with the runway. This gives pilot ample time to prepare the aircraft for a safe landing. Instrument approach procedures are typically used by itinerant aircraft flying to RMMA from another airport. Aircraft performing touch-and-goes and other “local operations” may use a shorter final approach. As is the case with other phases of flight, the length of the final approach, flight path, altitude, and speed, may vary based on a multitude of factors including aircraft type, windspeed and direction, pilot technique, type of approach, and other air traffic.

Overflights of Superior and Louisville

Of particular interest are the conditions leading to overflights of Superior and Louisville. An analysis was done to provide general information about the operations and conditions most likely to result in overflights of Superior and Louisville. The information provided is not intended to be all-inclusive or to describe every scenario in which an aircraft will overfly Superior or Louisville. Instead, it is intended to provide general information about the typical conditions under which overflights may be expected.

Superior

The Rock Creek Community is located along the extended centerline of Runway 30L and 30R (and 12R and 12L). Due to the community’s proximity to the airport overflights are common.

Closed traffic operations (i.e. touch-and-goes) often result in overflight of Rock Creek. Based on the standard airport traffic pattern, aircraft in the closed-traffic pattern will normally fly in proximity to Rock Creek when Runway 30L and 30R or 12L and 12R are in use. Conditions such as the number of aircraft in the pattern increase the likelihood of overflying Rock Creek because the pattern will be larger when accommodating more aircraft. When smaller numbers of
aircraft are in the pattern (i.e. 1-3) it is possible for Rock Creek to be avoided in certain conditions (i.e. cold weather, strong headwind, higher performing aircraft, etc.).

Aircraft departing under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) using Runway 30L and 30R frequency overfly Superior. Typically, aircraft maintain runway heading until reaching 400-500 feet before turning north and departing the area. IFR aircraft landing on Runway 12L and 12R will also typically overfly Superior. Aircraft are typically either flying a visual approach or a GPS approach which curves in from the northwest. This results in overflights of Superior to a final approach within 2 miles of the runway end.

**Louisville**

Louisville is approximately 3 miles north of the airport and not aligned with the runways. Aircraft using on visual approaches to Runway 12L or 12R may overfly Louisville. Aircraft departures using Runway 30L or 30R are likely to overfly Louisville resulting in noise impacts. An analysis of flight procedures and flight operation suggests jet departures are a common source of overflights for Louisville.

Because Louisville is not below the extended centerline for the runways at RMMA, typical approaches (straight-in visual approaches and instrument approaches) do not overfly Louisville. There is one RNAV (GPS) approach procedure to the airport (Runway 12L). Use of that procedure will bring aircraft in over Louisville, but this procedure is less common than visual approaches in good weather (clear skies and good visibility).

**Land-Use / Zoning**

The airport is located in the City of Broomfield and surrounded by multiple cities, towns, and counties, each with their own land-use and zoning authority. The RMMA Airport Master Plan updates, completed in 1988 and 2011, cite the efforts by the Airport and Jefferson County to encourage land-use planning within the region that would be compatible with the airport and airport operations.
The documents also note that as far back as 1988, zoning and land-use development surrounding the airport were a concern. This is because much of the proposed, or expected development, included residential development, even in areas with exposure to aircraft noise and overflight activity, both of which was expected to increase.

Figure 15. Regional map with RMMA and locations of Superior and Louisville

In 1984, Jefferson County published a Land-Use plan identifying areas adjacent to the airport that would be exposed to high levels of overflight activity and aircraft noise. This area is defined as the Airport Influence Area (AIA). The purpose of designating an AIA is to inform local land-use jurisdictions of the likelihood of overflight activity and aircraft noise, and to encourage compatible development in these areas. The following is an excerpt from the land-use plan:

“Ensure that land use in the Airport Influence Area is compatible with the general aviation function of the Jefferson County Airport and does not expose people or property to harm or damage from aircraft accidents or high noise levels.”
Jefferson County appears to have recognized the potential for residential encroachment and the impacts associated with non-compatible development close to the airport and flight corridors. This was reinforced in the 2011 master plan update, which included publication of the Airport Influence Area and Critical Zones. See map in Figure 16.

The RMMA Airport Influence Area (AIA) encompasses the land around the airport where aircraft overflights, noise, and other potential impacts associated with aircraft operations are likely. Officially, Jefferson County defines the Airport Influence Area as:

“a planning boundary around an airport which includes property within the environs of the Airport, where particular land uses either are influenced by or will influence the operation of the airport, in either a positive or negative manner. The boundary considers factors such as noise contours, traffic pattern areas, approach zones, and runway protections zones.”
Airport Influence Areas are common in land-use planning around the United States. The terminology can vary but the definition and application are generally the same. The intent is usually to encourage and in some cases mandate, land-use planning and development that is compatible with aircraft overflight activity, noise, and other potential impacts associated with aircraft operations. Often, noise-sensitive development (i.e. residential development) is discouraged or prohibited in these areas. When residential development is permitted, it often requires aviation noise and impact disclosures, avigation easements, or other forms of mitigation as a requirement for permit approval and/or home purchase. In such cases, the intent is to ensure prospective home-buyers are aware of the potential for aircraft overflight, noise, and associated impacts.

Jefferson County requires home builders within the AIA (and within the county) to grant an avigation easement prior to development approval. The easements become attached to the deed and are included in title documentation and is intended to ensure homebuyers are aware of the exposure to aircraft overflights and noise. Jefferson County’s authority is limited to development within the, so outside their jurisdiction they may only make recommendations.

Portions of the Town of Superior are located within the RMMA Airport Influence Area, including all of Rock Creek. The Town of Superior mandated granting of an avigation easement to Jefferson County as a condition of residential development in the area which is now the Rock Creek community. In addition to Rock Creek, there are large portions of Broomfield and Westminster within these areas. Louisville is not inside the RMMA AIA or critical zones.

Overflight activity and noise exposure is especially prominent along the extended centerlines for airport runways. These can extend as far as ten miles from the runway end and are the areas where final approach and landing as well as initial take-off and climb out occur. Operations are typically concentrated in these areas.
Rock Creek Development, Superior

A large portion of the Town of Superior is located within the RMMA AIA. The Rock Creek community is the portion of Superior that receives the most overflight activity. As noted, this is due to the close proximity to the airport and in particular, it’s location along the extended centerline of the runway. The Rock Creek Community is located below the approach paths to Runways 12L and 12R and departure paths for Runways 30L and 30R. Rock Creek is also overflown by aircraft in the traffic pattern.

The Rock Creek community is also situated within the Airport Critical Zones, which is the area along the ends of the runway where aircraft overflights and noise impacts are likely to be highest.

Both the Airport and Jefferson County appear to have made an effort to collaborate with local land-use jurisdictions to encourage compatible land-uses around the airport, especially in locations expected to experience the greatest impacts from aircraft overflights and noise.

Designation of the RMMA Airport Influence Area and Airport Critical Zones are intended to inform land-use authorities, developers, and prospective home-buyers of the potential impacts associated with the airport. According to Airport records including the Airport Master Plan updates, the Airport and Jefferson County work collaboratively with neighboring towns and counties regarding land-use and zoning.

Avigation easements are required for residential development in many of the areas surrounding the Airport. While there are legal implications associated with avigation easements, the greatest value is often seen as the opportunity to disclose, and ensure an understanding of the potential impacts by developers and prospective home-buyers when considering building or purchasing a home in locations known to be susceptible to aircraft noise and other impacts. Examples of notifications and media coverage related to the proposed development of the Rock Creek community is included in the appendices.
Community Feedback

Total Complaints
Both airport operations and noise complaints have been steadily increasing over the last 8 years (2011-2018).

The rise in complaints from 2017 to 2018 raised questions regarding the cause of the growth in complaints. A deeper look into the complaint data revealed that in 2017, a single household was responsible for nearly 50% of the annual noise complaints. Of the 1,735 submissions in 2018, 865 came from a single household in Superior.

Figure 19 shows the number of complaint submissions and the number of households submitting those complaints.
Complaints by Town / City
The level and volume of complaints typically correlates, to some degree, to the level of noise exposure and/or overflight activity in a specific area. Complaints are usually higher in areas closest to the airport, where aircraft are typically low(er) and the frequency of overflights is higher. These factors combined typically result in higher noise exposure and therefore more complaints.

On the other hand, residents that are informed about the airport and expected overflight activity levels and who choose to live close to an airport are often those who are less sensitive to overflights and noise. Sensitivity to aircraft noise varies greatly among individuals and often, residents within a community may be highly annoyed while others in the same area experience no annoyance at all. Because of this, noise complaints should be viewed as a source of information but not a direct indication of exposure or impact.
Over the study period, noise complaint volumes were relatively flat until 2018. Average monthly submissions ranged from 3 to 316. Superior had the highest average with 316. That included 1,734 complaints in 2018, up from 571 submissions the prior year, with 50% coming from a single household. Louisville accounted for the second highest volume of complaints with an average of 103 per month over the 8-year study period.

![Annual Complaints By Location](image)

Figure 19. Complaints by location. (Source: RMMA)

**Complaints by Aircraft Category**

The airport provides complaint data on their website going back to 2011. The data includes complaint by aircraft type, broken down by quarter. A review of the reports (2011-2018) revealed that in some quarters, jet operations caused the majority of complaints, but most of the time, propeller aircraft were the major issue for residents.

A more detailed review of complaint data for 2016-2018 revealed the majority of complaints each year were associated with propeller aircraft operations. Figure 21 (below) shows the complaints by aircraft type. The values are based on percentage of total complaints.
It should be noted, 2018 data includes the 865 complaints submitted by a single household, all of which were attributed to propeller aircraft.

**Airport Noise Program (Existing)**

**Overview**

The Airport’s existing noise program (RMMA Fly Quiet) is intended to, “balance the needs of our community” and to “minimize noise from aircraft operations and reduce any negative effects on the surrounding areas.” (Source: Jefferson County website, https://www.jeffco.us/1694/Fly-Quiet-Program).

Airports do not have the authority to regulate flight operations, however they may recommend procedures and practices intended to reduce community noise impacts. The RMMA Fly Quiet program includes the following recommendations to pilots:
• Avoid flying over noise-sensitive areas when practical.
• Fly high and tight patterns, not low approaches.
• Follow the PAPI.
• Maintain pattern altitude of 6,500 feet for singles and 7,000 feet for twins, jets, and helicopters.
• No intersection takeoffs.
• Runway 30R is designated the “calm wind runway” under the recommended noise abatement procedures.
• Engine maintenance run-ups are not allowed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., except in an emergency. (Note: engine run-ups may be regulated by the airport).

While not mandatory (except for the restrictions on engine run-ups), these recommendations can be effective in reducing noise impacts. In support of encouraging awareness and participation in the Fly Quiet program, the airport staff visit flight schools and other tenants advising them of the noise program elements and the importance of minimizing noise impacts to the extent possible.

Airport noise program information is also disseminated via the Airport’s website which includes program elements as well as a map noting “noise sensitive areas” which should be avoided when possible. Reference to the airport’s noise abatement program and a contact phone number for noise program information is also referenced in the Airport Facility Directory which provides airport information to pilots. (See Figure 21).

Regional Economic and Social Impacts

The core focus of this analysis was on the negative impacts of RMMA and the associated aircraft operations with the ultimate goal of identifying strategies to reduce those impacts on the community. However, it is important to recognize the positive impacts, both economic and social, for the state, region, and local area.
Some of the greatest positive local and regional impacts of an airport are economic in nature. Airports can act as a regional economic engine promoting both economic and job growth.

According to a study sponsored by the Colorado Department of Transportation, RMMA is directly responsible for more than 800 jobs. Those are jobs attributed to the airport itself (airport management and staff) and airport tenants (flight schools, Federal Aviation Administration, restaurants, etc.). That’s over 800 individual jobs contributing millions of payroll dollars to local residents and ultimately the local economy.

Access to convenient air service is often a consideration for corporate relocation. Corporate aviation facilities for Ball Corporation, Level 3 Communications, Leprino Foods and Pilatus are based at RMMA.

In addition to economic impacts, airports provide facilities that support public safety agencies including law enforcement and the military. RMMA is home to a U.S. Forest Service Tanker Base which supports the Forest Service’s role fighting wildfires.

The economic benefits associated with tourism is another benefit of a local airport. According to the Colorado Department of Transportation, 141,000 visitors arrive in Colorado via RMMA.
These visitors spend money in the local area on food, lodging, transportation, and in retail stores strengthening the local economy. In addition to money spent on local businesses, RMMA operations are linked to the generation of close to $13 million in state and local tax revenues annually.
Disclaimer

The contents of this material reflect the views of the authors and/or ABCx2, LLC. Neither the Town of Superior nor the City of Louisville make any warranty or guarantee, or promise, expressed or implied, concerning the content or accuracy of the views expressed herein. Copyright 2019 ABCx2, LLC. All Rights Reserved. Approved for Public Release - 190425. Distribution is at the discretion of the Town of Superior and/or the City of Louisville.
Appendices

Appendix 1
Letter from Airport to Town of Superior regarding Final Development Plan for Rock Creek dated (December 11, 1986)

Appendix 2
Letter from Airport to Town of Superior regarding proposed residential development in proximity to airport and flight corridors. (April 25, 1989)

Appendix 3
Letter from Airport to Town of Superior regarding proposed residential development in proximity to airport and flight corridors. (January 21, 1997)

Appendix 4
Newspaper article: “Superior expansion near airport is risky, Jeffco officials warn.”