

Southwest Airports Partnership Conference

Hosted by



November 4-5, 2026

Hurst Convention Center

1601 Campus Dr

Hurst, TX 76054

[South Central Chapter of AAAE - 2026 Southwest Airports Partnership
Conference FAQ](#)

Wednesday, November 4, 2026 – Morning Group Sessions

Time	Title	Speaker(s)
8:00am – 4:30pm	Registration	[Not Applicable]
8:30 – 9:00am	FAA Regional Updates	Ignacio Flores , Director, Southwest Region Airports Division, FAA
9:00 – 10:00am	Keynote Speaker	Jessica Sypniewski , Deputy Associate Administrator for Airports, FAA,
10:00 – 10:30am	BREAK	
10:30 – 11:00am	State Director Briefings	Perspective from the State Capitals: State Directors will have the opportunity to share with stakeholders current political/financial challenges happening within aviation policy and future direction of aviation within their respective governments. (Time allocation: about 9 min per presentation) Arkansas: Jerry Chism, Arkansas Department of Aeronautics Louisiana: Bradley R. Brandt, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development- Aviation Division New Mexico: Jessi Litz-Rowden, New Mexico Department of Transportation- Aviation Division Oklahoma: Grayson Ardies, Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission Texas: Dan Harmon, Texas Department of Transportation- Aviation Division Moderator: Cameron Bryan
11:00 – 12:00pm	FAA Office of Airports Policy Round Table Discussion	Stakeholders will have opportunity to engage with FAA Office of Airports Principal Leadership in a roundtable dialogue related to national policy changes and challenges. Speakers: William “Chuck” Garrison, Office of Airports, Planning and Programming Michael Helvey, Office of Airports, Compliance and Management Analysis Trish Hiatt, Office of Airports, Safety and Standards Moderator: Ignacio Flores

Time	Title	Speaker(s)
12:00 – 1:00pm	Lunch	

Wednesday, November 4, 2026 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Time	Safety (Moderators: TBD)	Planning & Financial (Moderators: TBD)	Miscellaneous Topics (Moderators: TBD.)	Miscellaneous Topics (Moderators: TBD)
1:00 – 2:00pm	Airport Safety & Standards Program Update Description: This session will cover Southwest Region Part 139 Certification of Airports Program oversight. Methods and Procedures for Compliance. Systems for Communicating Information about the Airport Certification Program. Speaker: Warren Realford	Financial Programs Update Description: This session provides an overview of FAA's funding programs, and will help sponsors create funding plans for key projects using the various Airports grant programs available. Speaker: Susan Johnson, Jesse Carriger	Protection My Airspace Description: Focus on how GA airports can prevent local off-airport development from penetrating critical approach surfaces and ruining their instrument approaches. Speaker: Ronson Fox, Rory Powel, TBD	Pavement Engineering Description: This session will discuss pavement engineering, with an in-depth look at pavement design methods for both asphalt and concrete. Speaker: Azra Hussain, TBD

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2:00 – 3:00pm	Airport Compliance Program Update Description: This session will cover all aspects of the FAA’s compliance program including land use inspections, latest changes/hot topics, and latest Director’s Determinations. Speaker: Gary Loftus	Draft AIP Handbook Update Description: As mandated by Congress in 2024, the AIP Handbook is being updated to reflect statutory and policy changes since 2017. Speaker: Jesse Carriger	Airport Improvement Projects with Reimbursable Agreements Description: This session will provide an update efforts to reduce FAA design review of airport construction projects based on facility and service. Speaker: Jesse King, FAA	Case Study Embracing Construction Technologies Description: This session covers new technologies utilized by Dallas Fort Worth International Airport in the development of their Pavement Maintenance Program and the construction of Terminal F. Speaker: DFW Airport Panel
3:00 – 3:30pm	BREAK			

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3:30 – 4:30pm	Case Study Vehicle Pedestrian Deviation Description: This session will discuss the trends in operational errors and best practices for reduction of vehicle / pedestrian deviations and other runway incursion initiatives. Speaker: Mike Fray	Planning and Environmental Integration Description: This session will cover practices to better integrate the planning and environmental processes to ensure airport projects are properly coordinated and NEPA documents are technically/legally sufficient and completed in a timely manner. Speaker: Steven Cooks, John MacFarlane	Grants from an ADO perspective Description: This session will review requirements needed to successfully complete a project within FAA grant guidelines. This includes pre-grant actions, general grant management, and grant closeout. Speaker: James Fuller, Roman Pinon	OEAAA & AGIS Modernization Efforts Description: Brief review of modernization Efforts Speaker: Rory Powell, TBD

Thursday, November 5, 2026 – Morning Concurrent Sessions

Time	Safety (Moderators: TBD)	Planning & Financial (Moderators: TBD)	Miscellaneous Topics (Moderators: TBD)	Miscellaneous Topics (Moderators: TBD)
8:00 – 9:00am		Case Studies for Section 106/Tribal Consultation and Adverse Effect Determinations Description: This session provides real world case studies of airport projects which required in-depth Section 106 consultation for adverse effects to eligible properties. Effective tribal consultation will also be discussed. Speaker: Darwin Messer, Roberto Ramos, Keith Ellis	Alternative Project Delivery Methods Description: A deep dive into Design-Build (DB), Progressive Design-Build (PDB), and Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) frameworks for airport sponsors to keep capital projects on time and within budget. Speaker: Noemi Cuevas, Sarah Young, TBD	Avoiding Common Mistakes in OEAAA & AGIS Description: A joint panel featuring FAA and seasoned consultants discussing the most common mistakes that cause delays in Form 7460-1 airspace reviews and AGIS survey approvals. Speaker: Rory Powell, Jeremy Dennis, James Fuller (backup)
9:00 – 10:00am		NEPA Updates and Streamlining Efforts Description: This session will cover updates to NEPA and FAA's environmental processes, including efforts to streamline the NEPA process. Speaker: John MacFarlane, Kristi Ponozzo	Flight Procedures Office Update Description: This session will give an overview of the Flight Procedures Office responsibilities, procedures development and data submissions. Speaker: Beth Ann Senk -TBD	Counter-UAS (C-UAS) Strategies for Regional Airports: Description: Building on the cyber security and drone updates by addressing the latest physical detection and mitigation strategies for unauthorized drone activity near airfields. Speaker: Jason Knipp

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10:00 – 10:30am	BREAK			
10:30 – 11:45am	Runway Incursion Mitigation (RIM) Technology: Case study Description: Presenting case studies on low-cost, high-impact situational awareness technologies (like enhanced LED signage or surface surveillance tools) tailored for non-hub or general aviation airports. Speaker: Azra Hussain, Frank Snell, TBD	PFC Revisions & Updates Description: This session is a brief refresher on the requirements of the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) program. Bring all your questions. We will run through the application process and day-to-day issues. Speaker: Ben Gutery	Flight Procedures Office Update Description: This session will give an overview of the Flight Procedures Office responsibilities, procedures development and data submissions. Speaker: Beth Ann Senk	Emerging Entrants – AAM and UAS National Perspective Description: The aviation industry is experiencing expedited growth in new and innovative aircraft design and operations. This presentation will go over the various efforts that the FAA Office of Airports has undertaken to ensure that proper infrastructure guidance is available to both operators and facility owners when it comes to these two concepts. Speaker: Jonathan Torres, FAA, AAS-200

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11:45 – 12:45pm	LUNCH			

Thursday, November 5, 2026 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

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12:45 – 1:45pm	GA Runway Safety Area (RSA) Inventory and Determinations Description: This session will discuss the process for to collect inventory data and completing RSA determinations. Speaker: Daniel Bly, Andrew Tamanaha	Buy American Description: This session will examine the Buy American / BABA requirement and the process for receiving a waiver. If you have foreign-sourced materials or equipment, you will need to know this if you are using AIP-type funding. Speaker: Ben Guttery, TBD	Counter-UAS (C-UAS) Strategies for Regional Airports: Description: Building on the cyber security and drone updates by addressing the latest physical detection and mitigation strategies for unauthorized drone activity near airfields. Speaker: Jason Knipp	ADIP - Streamlining Airport Data Updates to ensure Safety and Accuracy within the National Airspace System (NAS) Description: This presentation will provide an ADIP website demo and will cover updates and new functionality of the FAA's Airports Geographic Information System to include the 1) AGIS (survey projects) 2) Digital 7480/Obligated Airport Updates & 3) Runway Airspace Management (RAM) Modules within ADIP. Speaker: Ronson Fox, TBD

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1:45 – 2:45pm		Maximizing Discretionary Grants Description: Strategies for positioning competitive regional projects for federal funding opportunities beyond traditional entitlement allocations. Speaker: Brittan Smith, Sarah Able, Kathy Franklin		CASE STUDY Cyber Security Description: This session provides an overview of Airport Cyber Security treats and provide practical lessons learned Speaker: Michael Falteisek, Division Manager- Mission Advisory Services & FAA Aviation Cyber Initiative (ACI) Lead, FAA
2:45 – 3:00pm	BREAK			

Time	Title	Speaker(s)
3:00 – 4:00pm	eIPP Project Updates	Overview: This session provides an overview of several new proposals to test electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) "air taxis" and advanced cargo drones. Speaker: Panel discussion Moderator: Ignacio Flores