



**News Release**

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# **Revitalizing Danville Regional Airport's terminal building: A \$2 million renovation project completed**

Mayor Alonzo Jones joined state and local officials on Wednesday at a ribbon-cutting ceremony to formally mark the completion of major renovations to the Danville Regional Airport's terminal building.

The comprehensive overhaul, initiated in March 2022, has transformed the aviation hub, significantly enhancing both its aesthetic appeal and functional capabilities that allow the airport to support larger passenger groups and provide increased amenities for customers and pilots.

"The airport serves as a gateway to our city for many businesses and individuals visiting this region," Jones said. "The terminal building renovation project was over 60 years in the making and has positioned the airport for future growth and improved the airport's ability to provide first class customer service."

He added that a well-equipped and modern airport is a catalyst for economic growth.

"It attracts businesses, encourages tourism, and facilitates the movement of people and goods," Jones said. "By investing in our airport, we are investing in the economic prosperity of our community."

The terminal building, a fixture since its construction in 1961, underwent major interior and exterior improvements as part of the renovation. The project, made possible through state aviation funding provided by the Virginia Department of Aviation, addressed areas that had not been updated since the original construction.

Greg Campbell, director of the Virginia Department of Aviation, said general aviation airports such as the Danville Regional Airport are the front doors to their community for facilitating economic growth.



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“The Danville Regional Airport benefits everyone in the area, and not just those that use the airport regularly,” Campbell said. “Even those who never set foot in the airport are among those who share the tangible and intangible assets that exist solely because of this airport. Economic opportunity flows through the doors of the airport and into the surrounding community. Companies looking to expand use the airport to visit potential sites for corporate growth, which brings good paying jobs and quality investments.”

Campbell added that the renovations will enhance the user experience and make the area more attractive to prospective employers.

Cheryl McLeskey, a member of the Virginia Aviation Board of Directors, said the board and local airports have a shared mission in aviation development.

“I enjoy flying around to see the airports in my region and getting to know airport managers,” McLeskey said. “I see the passion they have for improving their airports, keeping them safe and desirable places to visit. I love these incredible upgrades at the Danville airport. Your terminal building renovation project will attract pilots and passengers more frequently and provide new opportunities for local tourism.”

Averett University operates an aeronautics program and a flight school at the airport, and it manages the fixed base operations, which includes the sale of aviation fuel and performing aircraft maintenance.

Tiffany Franks, president of Averett University, said the airport is an important asset to the city, region, and the university.

“The improvements we celebrate today elevate the experience for all who visit here and for all who learn here,” said Franks, noting that the university has 120 aeronautics majors who are learning the business of aviation at the airport. “Today is a very special day for all of those students and all of our aeronautics alumni who literally fly around the globe.”

She added that the university aeronautics program is expected to grow to around 200 students in the next few years.

The catalyst for initiating this transformative project was a focus group convened two and a half years ago, comprising representatives from various sectors of the aviation industry, including commercial airline service, international cargo operations and charter service. Also, the focus group included airport staff, members of the Airport Commission, Averett University's flight school, and the fixed based operations staff.

Key aesthetic elements of the renovation project include a unique canopy at the entrance, brick pavers adjacent to the new airside canopy, and framed images



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showcasing regional tourist venues located throughout the terminal building. Notably, a large aerial image of Danville's River District now graces a wall in the passenger waiting area, adding a distinctive local touch.

A reorganized passenger waiting area provides improved customer service for individual customers and large groups. For pilots, the terminal building features a new quiet area and a new pilot's shower.

Phil Hall, chairman of the Danville Airport Commission, said renovations make the terminal building more welcoming.

"There has been a lot of effort to make people who visit feel as if they are visiting a place that is warm and comfortable, and a place they want to come back to," Hall said. "It truly is the first and last impression that many people will have of what Danville is all about. We have set a new standard."

Security enhancements were integral to the renovation, featuring a wider automatic gate for bus access to the terminal ramp and sliding glass doors. A state-of-the-art card access system was installed to restrict access to the building and terminal ramp area.

These improvements collectively aim to elevate the overall experience for passengers, pilots, and aviation personnel, reflecting the commitment of Danville's terminal building to modernization, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.

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