

Global Aviation Forum

AGENDA

September 23, 2026

Planning the Airport of the Future – How Should Airport Leaders Plan Today for Tomorrow's Airport?

Forum Objectives: Airport leaders are making planning decisions today that will shape their organizations for decades. Yet forecasting demand, technology, regulation, passenger expectations, and business models has never been more complex. This executive forum brings together airport leaders and industry experts to examine how airports can develop flexible, resilient, and future-ready plans that accommodate uncertainty while positioning their airports for long-term success. Through a global discussion, participants will explore the planning strategies and priorities that will define the airport of the future.

10:00 – 10:05 a.m. | Welcome and Session Overview

Jorge Hernández

Chair, International Association of Airport Executives

CEO, Aerostar Airport Holdings, LLC (Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport)

Puerto Rico

10:05 – 10:15 a.m. | The Airport of the Future: What Should Airport Leaders Be Planning for Today?

Airport planning has become increasingly complex as airports navigate changing passenger expectations, evolving airline business models, technological innovation, sustainability, resilience, and long-term uncertainty. This opening discussion sets the stage by exploring the forces most likely to shape airport planning over the next decade.

Discussion Topics

- What has changed most about airport planning over the past five years?
- Which global trends are likely to have the greatest impact by 2035?
- Which long-term assumptions should airport leaders be challenging today?
- What emerging issues deserve greater attention in airport planning?

Moderator: Esther J. Kromhout MSc (*confirmed*)
Managing Director
NACO

Panelists: Steven Derengowski, CM, ACE, IACE (*confirmed*)
Director, Innovation
InterVISTAS Consulting

10:15 – 10:50 a.m. | Theme 1: How Should Airports Plan in an Uncertain Environment?

Airport master plans can no longer rely on a single forecast or static assumptions. How can airport leaders build planning processes that remain relevant as markets, technology, regulations, and passenger expectations continue to evolve?

Discussion Areas

- Moving beyond traditional master planning
- Planning under uncertainty through flexible and adaptive approaches
- Scenario planning and alternative future assumptions
- Designing infrastructure that can evolve over time
- Balancing near-term operational needs with long-term strategic objectives
- Using data, forecasting, and global best practices to strengthen planning decisions

Theme Two

Planning Priorities for the Airport of the Future

Airport leaders cannot do everything at once. Which planning priorities will have the greatest impact on creating resilient, competitive, and future-ready airports?

Discussion Areas

- Preparing airport infrastructure for future operational needs
- Planning for digital capabilities and connected airport ecosystems
- Integrating passenger experience, commercial development, and operational efficiency into long-term plans
- Incorporating sustainability, resilience, and emerging mobility into airport planning
- How planning priorities differ among hub, regional, mature, and rapidly growing airports
- Lessons that apply across different governance and ownership models

10:50 – 10:55 a.m. | Audience Q&A

An interactive discussion with attendees focused on planning challenges facing airports around the world.

Suggested Questions

- What planning challenges are most difficult to address today?
- Which trends should receive greater attention in future airport planning?
- How can airports maintain flexibility while making long-term investments?

10:55 – 11 a.m. | Closing Takeaways

Final Question:

If an airport were beginning its master planning process tomorrow, what is the one planning decision or strategic consideration that would have the greatest impact on the airport of 2035?

Each panelist provides one key takeaway.

11 – 11:30 a.m. | Breakout Discussions (Small Groups)