

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-1292 Honoring the Retirement of Penny May

WHEREAS, on June 3, 2025, Penny May, Denver International Airport's (DEN) Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer, announced her retirement from the City and County of Denver, effective June 30, 2025, after more than 28 years of dedicated and impactful public service to the people of Denver; and

WHEREAS, Penny's distinguished civic career began in 2003 as a City Council Aide, followed by service as the Denver City Council's Deputy Liaison for Special Projects, where she coordinated complex legislative initiatives and neighborhood outreach; and

WHEREAS, her commitment to good government next led her to become Director of Excise & Licenses (2009–2011), modernizing the City's regulatory framework, and then Executive Director of Denver Human Services (2011–2015), where she strengthened safety net programs that serve tens of thousands of Denver residents each year; and

WHEREAS, Penny subsequently served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Mayor Michael B. Hancock (2015–2018), advising on citywide policy and operations across three mayoral administrations, before joining DEN in December 2018 as Deputy Chief of Staff; and

WHEREAS, at DEN she quickly rose to Acting Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer (2020–2021) and, in September 2021, was appointed to the permanent role, where she guided all commercial strategy, including the airport's industry leading concessions, airline affairs, air service development, business technologies, and business operations functions; and

WHEREAS, Penny's leadership helped shape DEN's culture through initiatives in diversity, employee engagement, and strategic planning, and during her tenure the airport secured and launched new nonstop international service to Paris, Dublin, Istanbul, and Rome; and

WHEREAS, a champion for equity and small business, Penny integrated Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) requirements into every DEN competitive procurement, resulting in more than 2,100 contracts awarded to certified local small businesses since 2020, while modernizing procurement systems and reducing average contract execution times from 293 to 118 days; and

WHEREAS, under her guidance the Concession Master Plan introduced the Small Business Enterprise Concessions (SBEC) certification, awarding seven SBEC contracts and welcoming 40 new brands to DEN – 26 of them home grown in Denver; and

WHEREAS, her remarkable journey – beginning with a degree from the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science and culminating as one of the most respected leaders in Denver's civic and aviation communities – exemplifies versatility, vision, and an unwavering dedication to public service.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council hereby recognizes and honors Penny May for her extraordinary contributions and lasting legacy. We extend our heartfelt gratitude and our warmest wishes for a joyful and well-deserved retirement.

Section 2. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to Penny May.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL September 8, 2025

PRESIDENT

