

# SMALL TEXAS AIRPORT WILL BE HOME TO A NEW SPACE TRAVEL CENTER



The center for the future civilian space travel will be in a small Texas airport. Midland is the 128th busiest airport in the U.S.

Midland's airport may not seem anything special taking into account its ranking as the 128th busiest in the United States. However, the small airport is **the first primary commercial airport to receive Federal Aviation Administration approval to offer space flights to the public.**

The airport was recently renamed The Midland International Airport and Spaceport and the reasons why FAA singled Midland out are several. The land surrounding the airport is sparsely populated, the airspace is mostly clear, and the existing runways are long enough to handle a vehicle taking passengers 62 miles up.

The ticket will cost \$100,000 and the space trip will be organized by XCOR Aerospace run by Andrew Nelson. The future home of XCOR's Research and Development Flight Test Center and Corporate Headquarters will be at the airport. XCOR Aerospace, the private space flight company, is building a hangar close to the Midland Terminal. Soon it will house the Lynx rocket planes, still in development.

According to Andrew Nelson, the president of XCOR Aerospace, the two-seater will be no bigger than a private jet. It will take off horizontally from the same runway as any other plane but much faster. **It will fly up to Mach 3.5, which is a 1000 meter per second (3400 miles per hour).** First rockets are to be finished at the end of 2015.

The passengers will get past the edge of space to experience 6 minutes of weightlessness before coming back to Earth. The whole flight will last 30 minutes. According to Andrew Nelson even in this development stage, more than 300 people have signed up.

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