



NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: November 18, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Justin Drinkwater, Facilities Director

SUBJECT: Acceptance of an informational presentation regarding the Nevada County Airport Land Use Evaluation

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the presentation

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND: The Nevada County Airport is a valuable asset to our County and community, often supporting aviation enthusiasts with a place to fly into and explore Grass Valley's and Nevada City's shops and restaurants. In addition, the airport is home to one of northern California's CALFIRE Air Attack Bases. CALFIRE aircraft are a critical tool in our efforts to combat the threats of wildfire and are also the primary revenue support for our County Airport by means of fuel sales. During active fire seasons revenue is high and equally so, when fire season is not as active, revenue is low. Understanding the value of the Airport it is also important to seek a means to a sustainable revenue stream in order to support the demands of owning and operating a healthy airport to ensure viability, desirability, and continuity of support to our community.

To best achieve a thorough understanding of potential revenue and service sustainability, a variety of possibilities need to be considered. Including but not limited to, future expansion of the airport property footprint and possible development opportunities which would also provide sustainable revenue support such as restaurant establishments, additional hangars, rental spaces, etc.

Aeroplex Group Partners, doing business as Ascension Group Partners, was awarded the contract (Resolution 24-341), to develop the land use evaluation. This evaluation outlines the recommendations and priorities for development and sustainability at the airport. The plan contains six properties that were analyzed for acquisition and development potential that would increase airport revenue and ensure sustainability of services and funding. The property recommendations were prioritized based on cost of development, development recommendations, and return on investment. The consultant also reviewed the Airport's rates, fee schedule, and ground leases.

Primary key findings and recommendations from Ascension Group Partners from their evaluation include:

- Acquiring three of the evaluated sites not currently owned by Nevada County when possible, as ranked by priority in the evaluation report.
- Acquire all privately owned hangers when they become available for sale.
- Lease Lot 6 (Site #2 in evaluation report) for development by third parties.

Staff recommendations for action items include:

- Draft and release a Request for Information (RFI) for Lot 6 to receive initial proposals to develop this property for both aeronautical and non-aeronautical uses.
- Investigate opportunities for resource availability to acquire privately owned hangers and real property as they become available as recommended in the evaluation and return to the Board of Supervisors with specific opportunities.

Item Initiated by: Kevin Edwards, Airport Manager

Approved by: Justin Drinkwater, Facilities Director

Submittal Date: October 27, 2025