



Department of Public Works

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AGENDA TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE November 12, 2024, 2:30 p.m.

LOCATION:

Groveland Community Resilience Center
18986 Ferretti Rd., Groveland, CA 95321

This Airports Advisory Committee Meeting will be available to the public
via in-person attendance only at the above physical address

1. INTRODUCTIONS

2. PUBLIC FORUM

The public may speak on any item, not on the printed agenda. No Action may be taken by the committee. The amount of time allocated for the public forum is limited to 15 minutes total.

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- a. Consideration of approving the minutes of the meeting on October 30, 2024.

4. STAFF / COMMITTEE REPORTS

5. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- a. Presentation of and consideration of recommending acceptance of the 2024 Feasibility and Viability Study.

6. NEXT MEETING—December 2, 2024, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., A.N. Francisco Building – 3rd Floor Committee & Commissions Conference Room 3-D

7. ADJOURNMENT

LATE AGENDA MATERIAL CAN BE INSPECTED IN THE AIRPORT OFFICE AT 10723 AIRPORT RD, COLUMBIA, CALIFORNIA. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance (i.e. auxiliary aids or services) in order to participate in this public meeting, please contact the Airport Office, (209-533-6688). Notification 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting will enable the Clerk to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility to this public meeting.



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TO: Airports Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Tonya Scheftner, P.G., Airport Manager
Blossom Scott-Heim, P.E., Director

DATE: November 12, 2024

RE: 2024 Airport Feasibility and Viability Study

REQUESTED ACTION

Presentation of and consideration of recommending acceptance of the 2024 Airport Feasibility and Viability Study.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tuolumne County oversees the operation, maintenance, and development of two airports, Columbia Airport (O22) and Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45). The county sponsored airports play a critical role in enhancing regional infrastructure by providing key services that support economic growth, connectivity, and emergency response.

Pine Mountain Lake Airport, located near Groveland, is a public-use airport that is a vital part of the local economy, positioned near Yosemite National Park, one of the most visited national parks in the United States. In addition to its role in tourism, Pine Mountain Lake is central to a thriving aviation community and serves as an important base for emergency services.

Columbia Airport, located in Columbia, is a crucial airport that significantly impacts the local economy. Columbia Airport is an ideal base for firefighting aircraft and emergency services. Columbia Airport supports numerous local aviation-related businesses such as aircraft maintenance, flight training, and charters, creating jobs and contributing to the economic activity of the region. The airport has a fly-in campground and grass runway making it a favorite stop for recreational pilots who are interested in visiting the area.

Pine Mountain Lake Airport and Columbia Airport play important roles in economic opportunities and contribute critical support to public safety operations within Tuolumne County; both airports are an essential component of Tuolumne County's transportation infrastructure.

Per Board direction, an Airport Feasibility and Viability Study (Study) was commissioned in 2023 to provide an assessment of the airport system within Tuolumne County. The Study was made up of an overall assessment of Pine Mountain Lake Airport which included:

- A review of airport properties;
- An inventory of airport infrastructure;
- An evaluation of the airports ability to be included in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS);
- The airports economic impact on the local economy; and
- An airport market rent study.

In addition, components of Columbia Airport were analyzed, including:

- The airports economic impact on the local economy; and
- An airport aeronautical market rent study.

The Study provided an overall assessment of Pine Mountain Lake Airport and components of Columbia Airport, offering valuable insights with immediate, short-term, and long-term recommendations that will inform future actions. Our focus at this stage will center on the following areas:

- Economic impact analysis of both Pine Mountain Lake and Columbia Airports, highlighting their contributions to the local economy;
- Airport market rent studies for both locations, evaluating potential adjustments to better reflect current market conditions and foster economic growth;
- Review of airport properties and infrastructure to ensure optimal use and alignment with regional needs.

Additionally, we acknowledge the importance of evaluating the Pine Mountain Lake Airports eligibility for inclusion in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), and Residential Through the Fence Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that your Committee recommend acceptance of the 2024 Airport Feasibility and Viability Study.



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MINUTES **UNAPPROVED** TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Airports Advisory Committee October 30, 2024, at 2:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Jaron Brandon, District 5 Supervisor, Mark Banks, Columbia Airport User, Jim Stenger (Zoom), Columbia Airport Tenant-FBO, Joe Sobczak, Pine Mountain Lake Airport Resident/User, Jeremy Zawodny, Pine Mountain Lake Airport Resident/User

STAFF: Blossom Scott-Heim, Director of Public Works, Tonya Scheftner, Airport Manager, Traci Williams-O'Neill, Administrative Technician II

GUESTS: No Guests

ABSENT: Kathleen Haff, District 4 Supervisor, Adam Artzer, Columbia Airport Resident

CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Brandon Called the meeting of Wednesday, October 30, 2024, to order at 2:11 P.M. Quorum met.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

- a. Round table introductions, Tonya Scheftner, Airport Manager, Blossom Scott-Heim, Director of Public Works, Mark Banks, Committee Member, Joe Sobczak, Jaron Brandon, District 5 Supervisor, Jeremy Zawodny, Committee Member, and Jim Stenger, Committee Member via Zoom

2. PUBLIC FORUM

The public may speak on any item not on the printed agenda. No Action may be taken by the Committee. The amount of time allocated for the public forum is limited to 15 minutes total.

No Public Comment

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- a. Approval of minutes from September 25, 2024
 - i. Motion by Mark Banks, second by Jeremy Zawodny, unanimous approval

4. STAFF /COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Tonya Scheftner

Reported on the Pine Mountain Lake Airport Day on October 5, 2024, the Young Eagles event on October 12, 2024, flew over forty-one Young Eagles, with over fifty percent female.

This week, submitting the 2025 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant application

Hosting three additional Chinooks at Columbia Airport, CalFire, US Army, and the US Forest Service.

5. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

a. Presentation of the 2024 Airport Feasibility and Viability Study

Blossom Scott-Heim, Director of Public Works read the purpose statement for the Airports Advisory Committee, outlining its role in advising the Board of Supervisors on Tuolumne County Airport issues, including development, operations, and usage. The committee serves as a sounding board and a catalyst for developing recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. This collaborative approach ensures that airport concerns and ideas are effectively communicated and addressed.

Blossom Scott-Heim presented the 2024 Airport Feasibility and Viability Study.

Committee Chair Jaron Brandon opened technical questions from the committee members.

Jeremy Zawodny – How many aircraft are officially based at Pine Mountain Lake Airport?

Joe Sobczak – Question on the Market Rent opinion: why are Pine Mountain Lake and Columbia Airport Different? Is there a way to translate total economic impact into airport funding?

Mark Banks—I have questions related to the methodology for capturing the revenue, as there are missing areas. Are property taxes on airplanes and hangars captured? I want to ensure that all of the spending in Tuolumne County is correctly captured in the study, questioned how the revenue from the Public Works – Roads Department is captured. I spoke to ensure the County supports the Airport by providing the FAA grant match of 10%.

Jim Stenger – Via Zoom, Spoke to the approved fire house at Columbia, and that revenue should be accounted for.

Committee Chairman Jaron Brandon Supervisor District 5, Question on the compound growth rate calculation. Questioned how the campground is included as an amenity to the airport.

Public Comment

A member of the public: spoke about the inaccurate based aircraft information. Property tax revenue issues a significant value to any airport home is the useability of the airport.

A member of the public: spoke concerning the economic impact of the air ambulance at Pine Mountain Lake. Objected to the name of the study. Spoke to ensure the inclusion of flight instruction operations at both airports.

Karen Reyes: commented that not every home-based hangar business was interviewed in 2023.

A member of the public: spoke to the incompatibility of the hangar rent situation and the dichotomy related to the rents. He was not interviewed for the study.

A member of the public: spoke about the jobs and income at Pine Mountain Lake. Forty Jobs and almost seven million dollars into the economy—that sounds like a pretty important airport to maintain. Recommended putting into list form all of the issues with the study and direct staff to look into them.

A member of the public: spoke about the county's desperate need for funding and how it can be easy for outside advisors to recommend overpricing the hangar rather than improving the airport. Try to keep aviation as accessible as we can to our local population.

Diane Sunday: There are two concerns regarding the study. The consultants spent two days up here, and the use of Mono County is for reference fees. The campground is a gem and unlike any other venue, keep as aviation use only for safety reasons and deterioration of the site. She is flabbergasted that a wedding was held at the campground. If they want to pay for security and the going rate for a wedding facility of approximately \$5000.00 then maybe allow the use.

Del Chase: Spoke about his experience as a county employee and seeing these kinds of reports, the cost vs information contained to the County of \$200,000.00; if we invested that money in the airport rather than consultants, it would go a long way. Any use at the campground other than fly-in or aviation use is absurd.

A member of the public: The FAA does not fund Pine Mountain Lake Airport. Do they fund Columbia Airport? Then, I recommend paying close attention to the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) and grant assurance. If you start using the property for inappropriate purposes, you are putting that funding at risk. New regulations indicate the FAA does not want residential uses on the airport, and the recommendations are a buffer between airport property and private property.

End of Public Comment

Committee Discussion:

Jim Stenger: Regarding the consultant choice, these are the same consultants who completed the Airport Master Plan in 2018 and in 1997, used them at least four

times. Rent increases as a lessor is a limit to a 5% increase and a 3% increase for a total of about 8%. Homeowners Association at PML all pay into the association fees. If they are paying into the Homeowner's Association, why are they not helping to maintain an amenity of PML neighborhood?

Joe Sobczak: The Pine Mountain Lake homeowners association does not benefit the airport.

Committee Chairman Jaron Brandon, Supervisor District 5: Is this something the Pine Lake Association would be willing to consider? For clarification allowed the following comment.

A member of the public: The County owns the airport, Pine Mountain Lake Association owns the taxiways that lead into it, and the taxiways and easements are an amenity of the homeowner's association.

Joe Sobczak: Do we have the ability to make changes to the study before the acceptance.

Mark Banks: We can accept the study while pointing out the discrepancies found in the report.

Jeremy Zawody: It's important to note the study's errors for future reference. We appreciate everyone who read and participated in the public forum.

Committee Chairman Jaron Brandon, Supervisor District 5: Spoke in agreement that language could be updated, including all of the comments for future reference.

6. **NEXT MEETING** – November 12, 2024, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Groveland Community Resilience Center—18986 Ferretti Rd. Groveland.

7. **ADJOURNMENT** 3:46 p.m.