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AGENDA TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 12, 2026
10:00 AM – 11:00 PM

LOCATION:

48 Yaney Ave, Sonora, CA
Third Floor — Conference Room – Public Works – 3A

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.

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Consideration of approving the minutes of the meeting on November 17, 2026.

4. STAFF / COMMITTEE REPORTS

5. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- a. Review and recommend the updated Airport Capital Improvement Plan (Columbia Airport).

6. NEXT MEETING – February 9, 2026, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 48 Yaney Ave, Sonora, CA, Third Floor Conference Room- Public Works-3D

7. ADJOURNMENT



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MINUTES
UNAPPROVED
TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 17, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Steve Grier, District 4 Supervisor; Mark Banks, Jeremy Zawodny, Joe Sobczak, Jim Stenger

COUNTY STAFF: Tonya Scheftner, Airports Manager; Misty Gamez, Administration Technician II

ABSENT: Blossom Scott-Heim, P.E., Director of Public Works

CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Grier called the November 17, 2025, 2025, meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

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.

One member of the public present.

With no comments, Supervisor Grier closed the public forum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Consideration of approval of minutes from October 6, 2025, Airports Advisory Committee Meeting.

Supervisor Grier requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Supervisors Airports Advisory Committee Meeting on October 6, 2025. No changes or additions were requested. A motion was made by Committee Member, Supervisor Grier, motion passed 5-0.

STAFF/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) Master Plan and VASI system update.

Tonya Scheftner reported that the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) has been submitted to the FAA. The 2026 plan for Columbia Airport includes a new automated weather observation system (AWOS) and a master plan update. She has a meeting with the FAA to discuss the scope of work for the master plan update, noting CAL FIRE's interest in relocating the air attack base within the airport footprint. The FAA is expected to provide 95 percent funding, with the state matching 2.5 percent of the remaining percent.

Jim Stenger noted past delays in master plan implementation; Tonya Scheftner explained new FAA requirements, including GIS surveying and revised separation standards related to Cal Fire tanker operations.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded further discussion will occur at the January meeting.

B. Pine Mountain Lake Airport & Name & Frequency Change

Tonya Scheftner reported the airport is proposed to be renamed Groveland Yosemite Airport and a radio frequency change is also proposed to reduce congestion and improve safety. Tonya Scheftner is coordinating with FAA planners to package the name change and frequency request together for efficiency, although there is no guarantee of a parallel timeline for implementation of each. Joe Sobczak provided detailed frequency research across the region.

Discussion ensued.

Committee members, including Chair Steve Grier, supported submitting both the name and frequency requests together for efficiency and emphasized this would reduce congestion and improve safety.

C. Replacement of the Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS)

Tonya Scheftner reported that Columbia's existing AWOS equipment may be sold.

Supervisor Grier inquired about relocating Columbia's existing AWOS to Pine Mountain Lake (PML).

Tonya Scheftner advised against relocation as equipment is outdated.

Staff and committee members discussed whether components, such as the ceilometer that—

could be reused at PML. Compatibility will be evaluated with the AWOS technician and SayWeather vendor.

PML currently has a SayWeather advisory system, which provides useful local information but is not an FAA-certified weather system. The committee discussed how this capability can be incorporated into communication planning by utilizing remarks.

Discussion ensued.

Supervisor Grier paused discussion and asked the public for questions. Member of the public, Andy Aldrich, asked for clarification regarding statute miles of visibility.

A roundtable discussion followed.

Supervisor Grier motioned to move to the next agenda item.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Tonya Scheftner reported that the **Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI)** for Runway 17 is operational for the first time in several years. One relay replacement remains outstanding, after which the FAA will perform tilt verification. Removal of the NOTAM is anticipated following that verification.

NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled Board of Supervisors Airport Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on January 12, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor Grier adjourned the meeting at 10:26 a.m.



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TO: Airport Advisory Committee Members

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

DATE: January 12, 2026

RE: Tuolumne County Airport Capital Improvement Plan for Columbia Airport

REQUESTED ACTION

Review and approve the updated Airport Capital Improvement Plan (Columbia Airport) and direct staff to submit the plan to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Columbia Airport - Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP):

Each year Tuolumne County Airports compiles a list of potential capital improvement projects to review with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the State of California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics. It is a requirement to submit these plans to the two agencies in order to be eligible for Federal and State funding. The Columbia Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) was reviewed with the FAA who provided input on the projects considered highest need and most likely to receive grant fundings for the funding years 2026 through 2031. This Airport Capital Improvement Plan for Columbia Airport is considered a living document, and a similar plan was submitted to the FAA and approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 17, 2025. The ACIP presented here has an updated scope based on further input from the FAA and consulting teams – with an emphasis on the projects submitted for the 2026/2027 grant funding cycle.

ACIP Specifics:

The Columbia Airport Capital Improvement Plan entails proposed project work to be commenced at the Columbia Airport for the next five years. The plan may change from year to year to reflect changes in the needs at the airport. At the time of this printing, there are no foreseen changes to the overall structure of the Columbia Airport Capital Improvement Plan. Any change or update to the ACIP will be brought back to the AAC and Board for approval. The Columbia ACIP details projects spanning five years exceeding \$10 million. Based on enhanced Federal Funding Initiatives, the anticipated local match for these grants is 95 percent for projects scheduled in 2026, followed by 90 percent for those planned between 2028 and 2031. It is anticipated the State of California will fund up to 5 percent of the local match, therefore, the total local match for each project would be 2.5 to 5 percent of each project, depending on the year.

Overall, the Columbia Airport Capital Improvement Plan seeks to address safety and compliance issues, as well as maintain vital airport infrastructure. At the culmination of this five-year plan, it is anticipated that the airport will have replaced an Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS), updated the required Airport Layout Plan with Aerial GIS survey (a requirement by the FAA to continue grant funding), Pavement Management Plan, and rehabilitation of Runway 17/35 pavement along with associated upgrades to the outdated lighting infrastructure including an update from a Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) system to a Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI). Each project specified for the next five years is considered critical for maintaining safe and effective airport operations.

The projects that are coming up in the next grant cycle include replacement of the outdated AWOS system and an update to the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) with AGIS. The ALP with AGIS is a regulatory requirement to access funding, as well as a long-term planning tool. The total cost of these upcoming projects is estimated at \$815,000. The FAA will fund 95 percent of the \$815,000 project costs. The County's share would be approximately \$41,000 (rounded up). However, it is anticipated that the State will reimburse roughly half of the remaining 5 percent, reducing the County's actual out-of-pocket cost to approximately \$20,500. It should be noted that Columbia Airport could lose up to \$300,000 in Federal Funding if these projects are not initiated in the 2026 fiscal year due to FAA funding rules (funding not used becomes expired every four years).

Tuolumne County Airports is not submitting an Airport Capital Improvement Plan for Pine Mountain Lake Airport to the FAA pending resolution of the Residential Through the Fence issues at Pine Mountain Lake Airport.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

County costs are estimated at \$20,500 for the proposed 2026 project costs assuming the State Match and can be absorbed in the current budget.

RECOMMENDATION

Airport Staff recommend that the Airport Advisory Committee approve the updated Airport Capital Improvement Plan (Columbia Airport) and direct staff to submit the plan to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Tuolumne County Airports: Columbia Airport

*Airport Capital Improvement Plan
(ACIP)*

Federal Fiscal Year 2026-2031

Summary

Listed in the following table is a summary of Airport Capital Improvement projects:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FAA FY	FAA Environmental Action
AWOS Replacement	2026	CAT EX
Airport Layout Plan Update with AGIS	2026	CAT EX
Pavement Management Plan	2027	CAT EX
No Projects Planned	2028	CAT EX
Design Phase: Runway 17/35 Rehab with Lighting/Wiring Rehab and Upgrade VASI to PAPI	2029	CAT EX
Construction Phase I: Runway 17/35 Rehab with Lighting/Wiring Rehab and Upgrade VASI to PAPI	2030	CAT EX
Construction Phase II: Runway 17/35 Rehab with Lighting/Wiring Rehab and Upgrade VASI to PAPI	2031	CAT EX

1.0 Entitlement & Airport Infrastructure Grants (AIG)Forecast Table

Funding Year	Project Description	Total Project Cost	Entitlement Accrual	Entitlement Amount Available	Entitlement Amount Utilized	AIG Accrual	AIG Amount Available	AIG Amount Utilized	BIL Amount Requested	Federal Share	Local Share*
2026	AWOS	\$265,000	\$0.00	\$600,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$585,000	\$251,750	\$0.00	\$251,750	\$13,250
2026	ALP with AGIS	\$550,000	\$0.00	\$600,000	\$522,500	\$0.00	\$448,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$522,500	\$27,500
2027	Pavement Management Plan	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$227,500	\$81,000	\$0.00	\$333,250	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$81,000	\$9,000
2028	No Projects	\$0.00	\$150,000	\$296,500	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$449,500	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2029	Design Phase: Rehabilitate Runway 17/35 and Rehab lighting/wiring and upgrade VASI to PAPI	\$2,200,000	\$150,000	\$474,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$333,250	\$333,250	\$1,646,750	\$1,980,000	\$220,000
2030	Construction Phase I: Rehabilitate Runway 17/35 and Rehab lighting/wiring and upgrade VASI to PAPI	\$3,813,221	\$150,000	\$624,000	\$624,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,807,899	\$3,431,899	\$381,322
2031	Construction Phase II: Rehabilitate Runway 17/35 and Rehab lighting/wiring and upgrade VASI to PAPI	\$3,660,129	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,144,116	\$3,294,116	\$366,013

*Local share is calculated using a conservative worst-case scenario, excluding potential State Match funding (2.5%-5%).

2.0 Breakdown of Project Expense Per Year

PROJECT	FUNDING SOURCE(S)			
	FAA FY	Full project	95% Federal	5% Local*
Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS)	2026	\$550,000.00	\$522,500.00	\$27,500.00
Airport Layout Plan (ALP) Update with AGIS	2026	\$265,000.00	\$251,750.00	\$13,250.00
	FAA FY	Full project	90% Federal	10% Local*
Pavement Management Plan	2027	\$90,000.00	\$81,000.00	\$9,000.00
No Capital Improvement Projects	2028	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Design Phase: Runway 17/35 Rehab/Rehab Lighting/VASI to PAPI	2029	\$2,200,000.00	\$1,980,00.00	\$220,000.00
Construction Phase I: Runway 17/35 Rehab/Rehab Lighting/VASI to PAPI	2030	\$3,813,221.00	\$3,431,899.00	\$381,322.00
Construction Phase II: Runway 17/35 Rehab/Rehab Lighting/VASI to PAPI	2031	\$3,660,129.00	\$3,294,116.00	\$366,013.00
Total		\$10,463,351.00	\$9,456,515.00	\$1,006,835.00

*Local share is calculated using a conservative worst-case scenario, excluding potential State Match funding (2.5%-5%).

3.0 Proposed Future Improvements 2026-2031

Project Guide

Projects contained within this document illustrate the projects as well as give detailed information about the respective tasks. These projects are laid out sequentially in the order that they are expected to happen.

2026 – Development Grant – AWOS

The Need

The AWOS, while operational, has received an end-of-life notice by the manufacturer in October 2014. Parts are no longer made for the AWOS and are difficult to come by as repairs are necessitated. The replacement is essential in maintaining safety, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency at our airport.

1. Safety Concerns

The AWOS provides real-time weather data essential for pilot decision making. Accurate and reliable information on windspeed, visibility, temperature, and barometric pressure significantly reduces the risk of weather-related accidents. Replacement of the AWOS is recommended.

2. Regulatory Compliance

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other regulatory bodies require airports to maintain operational and accurate weather systems for both safety and compliance, particularly for airports that serve commercial operators.

3. Financial Considerations

Delaying the replacement increases long-term costs. Repairing an outdate AWOS system is expensive, and replacement parts are increasingly hard to source.

Environmental

CEQA: Cat/Ex

NEPA: Cat/Ex

Finance

The proposed project will be financed through 95% AIG funds as well as a 2.5% state and 2.5% local match. Current estimate for the project total is \$265,000.00.

Project Scope

The proposed project would install a new AWOS.

2026 – Development Grant – Airport Layout/Master Plan with Airport Geographic Information Systems GIS Update

The Need

An Airport Layout/Master Plan (ALP) Update with AGIS integration is required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for future grant funding and compliance. It provides a roadmap for infrastructure improvements, community engagement, and project alignment with FAA standards.

AGIS integration is a relatively recent FAA requirement, designed to ensure airports maintain accurate, digital geospatial data for improved safety, compliance, and planning. Incorporating AGIS into the ALP Update aligns the airport with modern standards, supports NextGen technology initiatives, and enhances access to federal funding opportunities by meeting this critical regulatory expectation.

Environmental

CEQA: Cat/Ex or IS/MND

NEPA: Cat/Ex

Finance

The proposed project will be financed through 95% AIP funds as well as a 2.5% state and 2.5% local match. Current estimate for the project total is \$550,000.00.

Project Scope

The proposed project would develop an updated Airport Layout/Master Plan with AGIS.

2027 – Development Grant – Airport Pavement Management Plan (APMP)

The Need

An airport pavement management plan is essential for determining the best approach to rehabilitate or reconstruct critical infrastructure, such as Runway 17/35. By using Pavement Condition Index (PCI) surveys and structural evaluations, the APMP provides critical insights into current conditions, identifying issues such as cracking, rutting, or surface wear. This data allows us to determine whether targets rehabilitation, such as crack sealing or overlay is sufficient, or if a full reconstruction is necessary to address deeper structural deficiencies.

The APMP is a requirement of the FAA for eligibility to access runway rehabilitation/runway reconstruction grant funding. With accurate condition assessments, the APMP supports cost effective decision making, ensuring the runway rehabilitation or reconstruction meets both immediate operations needs and long-term performance goals.

Environmental

CEQA: Cat/Ex

NEPA: Cat/Ex

Finance

The proposed project will be financed through 90% AIP funds as well as a 5% state and 5% local match. Current estimate for the project total is \$90,000.00.

Project Scope

The proposed project consists of an Airport Pavement Management Plan which will create an updated inventory of all pavement surfaces, assessing their condition through methods like Pavement Condition Index (PCI) surveys, and identifying maintenance or reconstruction needs. The scope ensures compliance with FAA standards, integrates pavement management into the airport's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and provides a roadmap for ongoing inspections and maintenance.

2029 – Development Grant – Runway 17/35 Rehabilitation/Lighting Design Phase

The Need

The design phase for runway 17/35, which is the main runway for Columbia Airport is critical to address its aging infrastructure. The project also includes replacing the outdated runway lighting and wiring systems to enhance operational safety and reduce maintenance costs.

Additionally, upgrading from the outdated (and inoperable) Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) to the Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) will provide more precise guidance for pilots, improving approach safety and aligning with FAA recommendations. Completing these upgrades together as a project will streamline the implementation, reduce financial impacts of the projects if they were completed separately, and was recommended by the FAA to combine.

Environmental

CEQA: Cat/Ex

NEPA: Cat/Ex

Finance

The proposed project will be financed through 90% AIG and BIL funds as well as a 5% state and 5% local match. Current estimate for the project total is \$2,000,000.00.

Project Scope

The proposed project consists of design for the reconstruction, rehabilitation, and resealing of Runway 17/35 as well as the design for the replacement of the outdated electrical and lighting for Runway 17/35. The project will additionally replace the VASI to a PAPI on both approach ends of Runway 17/35.

2030 – Development Grant – Runway 17/35 Rehabilitation/Lighting Construction Phase I

The Need

The first phase of construction will address the core structural needs of Runway 17/35. This includes either rehabilitation or full reconstruction of the runway surface, depending on the findings from the Pavement Management Plan and the Design Phase. Concurrently, outdated runway lighting and wiring in the areas under construction will be replaced with modern, energy-efficient systems. This phased approach was recommended by the FAA.

Environmental

CEQA: Cat/Ex

NEPA: Cat/Ex

Finance

The proposed project will be financed through 90% AIP funds as well as a 5% state and 5% local match. Current estimate for the project total is \$3,813,000.00.

Project Scope

Phase I will focus on the rehabilitation or reconstruction of Runway 17/35 to address structural needs and restore surface integrity. This phase will also include replacing outdated runway edge lighting and wiring in the areas under construction to enhance safety and reliability.

2031 – Development Grant – Runway 17/35 Rehabilitation/Lighting Construction Phase II

The Need

The second phase will complete the runway lighting replacement and wiring updates across the remaining sections. This phase will also include the installation of the Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) system, replacing the outdated VASI. By addressing lighting and navigation aids separately, this phase minimizes the impact of flight operations and ensures that the new systems integrate seamlessly with the rehabilitated runway.

Environmental

CEQA: Cat/Ex

NEPA: Cat/Ex

Finance

The proposed project will be financed through 90% AIP funds as well as a 5% state and 5% local match. Current estimate for the project total is \$3,660,129.00.

Project Scope

Phase II will complete the remaining runway lighting and wiring upgrades and replace the outdated VASI system with a modern PAPI system, providing enhanced visual guidance and aligning with FAA safety standards.