



Humboldt County Aviation Advisory Committee

3561 Boeing Avenue, McKinleyville, CA 95519

707-839-5401

May 9, 2016

Chairman

David Ravetti

Vice Chairman

Dom Bucciarelli

Secretary

Richard Fenton

Honorable Board of Supervisors

County of Humboldt

825 Fifth Street

Eureka, CA 95501

Members:

Tim Callison

Kyle Gabel

John McBeth

Joe Shepp

Alex Stillman

Justin Zabel

Subject: Request for a Third Party Review of County Airport Administration & Operations

Dear Chairman Lovelace and Supervisors:

The Humboldt County Aviation Advisory Committee, at their April meeting, passed the following motion in support of a proposed request to the Board of Supervisors by the local Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and the Garberville Pilots Association.

“The Committee supports the hiring of an aviation management consultant to study the County airport system, in general conformance with the attached RFP. The Committee believes that grant funding for a study such as this may be available through RREDC, the Headwaters Fund, and/or the Humboldt County Economic Development Department.”

We understand that the EAA has now forwarded their letter and the RFP “sample” to the Board at this time. I have also attached these items to this letter for your convenience.

Our Committee would like to stress the importance of an independent, third party aviation consultant review of the entire system of airports, their operation and management, as well as their future economic development opportunities. This is believed to be the best way to impartially and professionally resolve the County’s current concerns over the Aviation Division’s ongoing structural budget deficits.

We do not believe that the airports or the County will be best served by utilizing personnel without specific aviation operations and economic development expertise. We therefore respectfully request that the Board of Supervisors consider updating the attached RFP and subsequently ask staff to pursue funding sources for its implementation.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and thoughts on this matter. We remain available to answer questions or assist in any way possible.

Sincerely yours,

David N. Ravetti, Chairman

Humboldt County Aviation Advisory Committee

Attachments – EAA letter and sample RFP

May 9, 2016

Mark Lovelace, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 Fifth Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Supervisor Lovelace:

We the undersigned are general aviation pilots, aircraft owners, airport customers, and community members who believe that a robust and efficiently managed aviation system is a critical part of a healthy community and strong local economy.

As individuals and organizations that use Humboldt County's airports for business and leisure, we have become increasingly concerned over the condition of our airport facilities and the County's inability to address critical issues.

Specific issues include:

1. Deteriorating runways and taxiways.
2. Failure to maintain or upgrade County-owned aircraft hangars.
3. Inability of local general aviation pilots to secure or construct hangars for our aircraft.
4. High price of aviation gas relative to that of other north state airports. This could lead to fuel deterioration because of low flowage.
5. Lack of transparency of aviation budget, revenue and expenses.
6. Poor security at Garberville and Dinsmore airports.

We believe that these issues are a symptom of a lack of clear strategic vision on the future of the Aviation Division and a lack of transparency that results in loss of public confidence and investment. The budget deficit for aviation has been reported on extensively, but there has not been a detailed explanation as to why the Division began running a deficit in 2009 as reported in the most recent budget update.

Therefore, we call on the County of Humboldt do the following:

1. Conduct a public workshop that presents the aviation budget in a clear, open, and detailed fashion, including documentation of all sources of revenue and expenses. This should be done in a public setting, perhaps at the Humboldt County Aviation Advisory Committee.
2. Conduct a third-party system review to determine if best management practices are being used to manage the aviation system in a fiscally prudent manner.
3. Prepare a detailed business plan for the Aviation Division, looking at established programs and creative solutions to increase revenue, reduce expenses, or both.

It is our understanding that the County of Humboldt, Humboldt State University, and the Redwood Region Economic Development Commission solicited proposals for a comprehensive review and strategic plan for the aviation system (attached). We further understand that this project was unable to be implemented due to a lack of funding. We urge your Board to revisit this project and provide the funding for its completion to accomplish the actions listed above.

We, like you, are committed to the success and growth of the air service and general aviation as a vital and thriving part of the Humboldt County economy and transportation system. We stand ready to assist you in your efforts to build a first-class aviation system.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Experimental Aircraft Association, Chapter 1418, Steve Bowser, President
Garberville Pilots Association
Representing 40 General Aviation Pilots in Humboldt County

stebowsr@gmail.com

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Strategies for Increasing the Economic Contribution of the Humboldt
County Aviation System

Introduction

The Redwood Region Economic Development Commission and Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation (hereafter referred to as "Project Partners") are seeking proposals from qualified consultants to provide assistance in conducting an independent assessment and recommendations for maximizing the economic contribution of Humboldt County's aviation system

The purpose of this RFP is to seek technical expertise and assistance from qualified aviation and/or economic development consultants in conducting the study and making strategic recommendations. The study will identify:

- Aviation and airport-specific links to the local economy for facilitating economic development,
- Existing and future funding sources for development
- Services available at each facility and gaps in current or future service needs and opportunities for growth
- Existing and future technologies and their benefit to the community
- Best management and business practices for that may be applied to the County aviation system to maximize operations and economic contribution.

The strategic plan will also serve to educate area businesses and other entities relying on airport services for their transportation or business needs. This will include an overview of the:

- Regulatory environment in which the aviation system must operate.
- Funding required and available for both capital improvements and operation
- Compliance with grant assurances concerning revenue usage and property management,
- Federal and state environmental requirements
- Federal and state land use compatibility requirements.

Through interactive dialogue, the study process should identify and prioritize current issues of concern, analyze options available to address those issues, and recommend a preferred resolution.

Background

Humboldt County's ability to diversify into new growth industries will be influenced by its desirability to support and attract new businesses there that can efficiently connect with a flattening global economy. Developing and sustaining a solid air transportation network that includes increased airline passenger and air cargo service, business/corporate aviation access, aviation-related businesses and services, and aviation dependent industries, will be critical to support this growth. Failure to recognize this need will result in further economic isolation.

Humboldt County currently operates six public-use airports: Arcata-Eureka Airport, Murray

Field Airport, Rohnerville Airport, Dinsmore Airport, Garberville Airport and Kneeland Airport. Management of the airports is through the County Department of Public Works, Aviation Division. Policy decisions regarding airport development are made by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors and must be in compliance with state and federal regulations. The airports manager and staff are located at the Arcata-Eureka Airport. Each airport is described briefly as follows:

- Arcata-Eureka Airport (ACV) – ACV’s principle role is to serve as a base of operations for scheduled airline services. In this capacity, the airport is designated as a primary commercial airport in the Federal Aviation Administration’s *National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems*. ACV also serves as a source of scheduled cargo services, a point of air access to the community, a site for emergency access to the community, a place to conduct business, and a base for Humboldt County region pilots. The airport has two runways: a 6,000-foot primary runway equipped with pilot controlled lighting and a precision instrument approach, and a 4,499-foot crosswind runway lit by prior permission and with a non-precision approach. ACV offers Jet A and 100LL fuel services and Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting facilities.
- Murray Field, Eureka (EKA) – EKA is predominantly used by general aviation aircraft. There is an FBO on the field offering 100LL fuel and pilot services. Small parcel service is conducted by FedEx and UPS. The airport has one operational runway that is 3,000 feet long. The runway is lit for nighttime operation and is served by a satellite-based (GPS) approach procedure.
- Rohnerville Airport, Fortuna (FOT) — FOT is a general aviation airport serving Rohnerville and Fortuna. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) has a base at FOT that is used extensively during fire season. The airport operates a single, lit 4,005-foot runway served by GPS approach procedures and a self-serve 100LL fuel facility.
- Dinsmore Airport (D63) — D63 provides basic air access to an isolated area in eastern Humboldt County. The airport is physically located within Kuntz Canyon near Burr Valley. The 2,510-foot runway is not lit.
- Garberville Airport (016) — 016 is a general aviation facility serving Garberville and nearby communities. The airport is used extensively during fire season by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). The 3,050-foot runway is not lit. 016 offers self-serve 100LL fuel.
- Kneeland Airport, Kneeland (019) — 019 is a mountain-top airport located approximately 11 miles southeast of Eureka. It has a single 2,270-foot unlit runway located at an elevation of 2,737 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). The high elevation often places Kneeland above the fog layer which provides a safe-haven for airplanes that cannot land elsewhere due to the foggy conditions.

More information on the Humboldt County aviation system is at www.co.humboldt.ca.us/aviation.

Scope of Services

This section identifies the essential scope elements to be included in the consultant's proposal. The response to this RFP will clearly describe the Consultant's approach in conducting this study which will include a detailed Scope of Services, Itemized Cost Breakdown or Fixed price, and Project Schedule. It is important that each task below is cost or priced separately. The Consultant may elect to quote on less than 100% of the tasks below or team up with other organizations as part of their bid. If less than 100% bid, the Consultant should provide an explanation on why they are not able to quote on the ones left out.

Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation (SPF) reserves the right to put a team of bidders together to get 100% coverage of the RFP.

Task 1: *Proposal Refinement and Contract Execution*

The selected consultant will have 30 days following selection to negotiate a refined proposal and execute a contract. The Consultant acknowledges and accepts the basic contract terms included in Appendix A to this RFP. Any questions related to those terms are to be directed to:

Steven Karp, Director
Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation
1 Harpst Street
Arcata, California 95521
karp@humboldt.edu
707-826-4190

- Conduct a meeting with Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation (SPF) to solicit the input necessary to refine the proposal.
- Prepare a refined scope, fee, and schedule based on the input received during the scoping meeting.
- Execute a contract and Notice to Proceed (NTP)

Task 2: *Stakeholder Involvement*

SPF will establish a stakeholder committee to obtain guidance as the study progresses and to provide an educational overview of airport-specific business practices and limitations. It is anticipated that between three and five on-site meetings involving the stakeholder committee, the County Board of Supervisors, and one public information session.

Task 3: *Assess Current and Potential Economic Impact of Each Airport*

Work with Humboldt County, SPF, tenant businesses, and local economic development and/or business organizations to determine direct impacts, spin-off (i.e., multiplier) impacts, and combined impact of the County's airports. Subtasks necessary to complete this task may include the following:

- Collaborate with Humboldt State University, Department of Economics, to obtain initial assumptions and economic data specific to the County.
- Interview County Aviation Manager (may be written questionnaire) to help identify the

economic profile of each airport and to develop a list of appropriate contacts at each airport.

- Assemble data of on-airport employment such as employment, salary, and other benefits for both County and Tenant businesses.
- Develop a database of airport tenants for determining their direct contributions to the County's economy.
- Collect and analyze commercial passenger data: business versus leisure travel, ratio of local and visitor passengers, travel frequency, and gather spending information.
- Collect and analyze general aviation (GA) visitor data: comparable analysis to commercial passenger information to determine the nature and economic reach of GA visitors.
- Work with SPF to determine spin-off activities affecting off-airport industries in the region (e.g., multiplier impacts).
- Prepare a draft white-paper report summarizing economic profile of each airport to include: direct impacts, induced impacts, and combined economic output. The report will also summarize the main contributors to the local economy and include a profile of visitor spending.
- Refine the report based on input received from the technical committee.

Task 4: *Airport Funding and Financial Overview*

Document current airport funding programs, anticipated funding available for each program, restrictions on how funds may be used, planned capital improvements, and current financial reports (revenues and spending). Analyze the current funding and financial data in comparison to similar airports. Identify potential new funding opportunities and the efforts involved in obtaining those funds. Task includes overview of the following items:

- Airport Improvement Program (AIP)
- Current Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) for each airport
- California State Airport Funding
- Other Federal Programs
- Other State Funding Programs
- Local Funding
- Operations and Maintenance
- Enterprise Fund
- Current Revenues
- Current Expenses
- Historic Trends
- Comparative Analysis
- New Programs
- Future Trends

Task 5: *Supporting Economic Growth*

This task is to identify how the aviation system currently contributes to economic growth within the county, the degree to which those efforts are consistent with County Growth plans, and to identify specific opportunities for economic growth. This task includes a review of the following items:

- Discuss the airports' ACIPs and management plans and how they relate to economic

- development and growth.
- Make specific recommendations on actions that can be taken to maximize the economic impact of the aviation system.

Task 6: *Develop Strategic Initiatives to Expand Airport Services and Aviation-Related Business Activity*

For each of the six airports, identify and evaluate the adequacy of services available to travelers and other users. Then focusing specifically on Arcata-Eureka Airport, Murray Field Airport, and Rohnerville Airport, assess the growth potential within those service areas. Identify efforts the airport can take to expand the reach of those business services. Explore potential new services and the steps to obtain those services. Task to specifically address:

- Strategies and incentives to increase grow scheduled passenger service, both frequency and destinations
- Opportunities to grow air cargo and steps to maximize air cargo operations
- Strategies to increase revenue through passenger serving enterprises and other income generating activities at ACV.
- Assessment of Air Service Development efforts, specifically airline recruitment efforts, marketing programs for passenger service via ACV, local use of the airport, aviation-related business development, and non-aviation commercial leases.
- Investments, programs and policies to increase the use of the airport by general aviation.
- Growing and attracting airport services such as fixed base operators and aviation-related businesses.
- Increasing aviation related lease revenue for hangars including the potential for owner-built hangars.
- Recommendations on how to increase lease revenue for non-aviation commercial property controlled by the Aviation Division.

Task 7: *Airport Technology Overview and Needs*

Provide an educational overview of various airport technologies, including: airplane technology, runway technology, air traffic control tower and terminal facilities. Include a discussion of the community benefits of each, which items may be necessary now or in the future, and the steps to acquire those technologies or facilities. The discussion will specifically the necessity, advisability and impact of investments in:

- Upgrading instrument approach procedures
- NexGen navigation systems on County Airports
- Air Traffic Control Tower
- Expanding and/or improving airline terminal building facilities
- Expanding and/or improving general aviation facilities.

Task 8: *Airport Regulatory and Fiscal Environment*

Purpose is to identify and describe the regulatory and fiscal environment under which an airport must operate, to assess the relative performance of the County's current system, and to answer common questions raised by users and policy makers concerning the priority of implementing various improvements. The discussion will include the following:

- Part 139 Airport Certification Requirements
 - Emergency Response

- Airport Inspections
- FAA Prioritization of ACIP projects
- Security Requirements and Oversight
- State Certification and Inspection Requirements
- Environmental Regulation and Compliance
- Fiscal environment including federal and state funding priorities.
- Recent examples to compare different airport and user perspective
- Availability and appropriateness of airport minimum standards and the degree to which these should vary between airports.

Task 9: Identify Best Management Practices and Make Recommendations for County Aviation System.

This task will present best management practices for airports and aviation systems similar in size and scope to the Humboldt County Aviation System. Using this as a base, the consultant will describe the current management structure and address the advantages and limitations of that structure compared to other common structures in use throughout the country. The discussion will include applicable State requirements in exploring the range of possible organizational structures. In addition to the global system, this task will also address the size of current staff, the adequacy of staffing levels, and training requirements. This task will include the following:

- Identify the best management practices of similarly sized airports and aviation systems.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of common airport management structures (e.g., municipal structures, airport authority structure, special district, and privatization) compared to the one currently in place.
- Explore potential changes that may be possible within the current County government structure that could enhance airport economic and business responsiveness.
- Identify the management positions needed to effectively manage the County's airport system.
- If a new structure is recommended, assess the potential cost impacts of that structure. Address how additional costs should be assessed and measured to overall economic improvement performance.
- Recommend a means for updating airport performance goals on a regular basis.

Task 10, Narrative Report

Based on the analysis associated with Tasks 3 through 9, prepare a white paper summarizing the existing conditions, identified gaps that should be addressed, and specific recommendations for improving the economic reach of the airport's and County. It is anticipated that the report will be vetted through three iterations: an administrative draft submitted upon completion of the technical work, a draft that is submitted to a larger group of stakeholders beyond the stakeholder committee, and a final version that incorporates comments received. At a minimum, the report will specifically include the following sections:

- Purpose and Background
- Current Airport Operations and Economic Impact
- Gap Analysis
- Strategic recommendations on how to increase the economic impact of the aviation system.

Submittal Requirements

Firms responding shall submit six (6) copies of the information that shall include the items listed below:

- Include company organization structure, company history, and background, size of company, and recent experience in airport economic output analysis, experience and familiarity with non-hub and general aviation airports that focus on economic development strategy. Indicate who in the firm performed these related projects, and list the locations and owner's representative where the work took place.
- Description of consultant team including names, classification and qualifications of key personnel and an organization chart showing how the team will work together. Include outside consultants necessary to complete all the tasks associated with this RFP. Summarize the areas of expertise of key personnel.
- Client references that include current address and phone numbers of people to contact for references. References should be specific to individual team members. References are important to us; again, please make sure that the telephone numbers are current and complete.
- Discuss your approach to completing projects and describe your ability to meet schedules and to complete projects within budget.
- Provide a detailed cost proposal and basic assumptions used in developing those costs.
- Include any other information useful in making this consultant selection.
- Completed "Statement Certifying Insurance Coverage" that the required insurance coverage will be obtained by the consultant.
 - Endorsements to the general liability policy naming the State of California, the California State University, the Board of Trustees, Humboldt State University, the Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation, and the employees, officers, agents and volunteers of each as additional insured parties;
 - The dates of inception and expiration of coverage shall be specified;
 - Minimum liability coverage of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage liability combined, with a general aggregate of at least twice the per occurrence amount;

Selection Process and Criteria

Selection will be based primarily on team qualifications performing similar work and overall approach for conducting this study. Costs will be considered in context with the project approach included in the proposal and may be amended following selection and subsequent scope refinement. Specific details criteria include:

- Recent experience in airport consulting/ planning services such as airport management, airport operation, airport strategic planning, and airport financial/business planning and policy development.
- Knowledge of various airport management structures and applicable federal and state laws.
- Recent experience in conducting airport economic analysis including direct and multiplied calculations using local economic factors.
- Project approach that most effectively and efficiently meets the project objectives included in the Introduction and Background section of this RFP: analyze, educate, and

recommend. Costs will be used as a measure of efficiency.