



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0667, **Version:** 1

Planning and Building Department, Airports Division, recommending the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign a budget transfer adjusting the budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22 to reallocate \$28,200 from salary savings to professional services in the Placerville Airport budget and to reallocate \$39,000 from the Placerville Airport General Fund contribution using salary savings to professional services in the Georgetown Airport budget, as outlined in Attachment A, to provide upfront funding to achieve cost savings for the Placerville Airport and Georgetown Airport Obstruction Removal Projects, and to advance a few additional Airport Capital Improvement Program projects, as required by the Federal Aviation Administration.

FUNDING: General Fund.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

Planning and Building Department (Department), Airports Division, requests a budget transfer adjusting the budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 to reallocate \$28,200 from salary savings to professional services in the Placerville Airport budget and to reallocate \$39,000 from the Placerville Airport General Fund contribution using salary savings to professional services in the Georgetown Airport budget to achieve significant cost savings for multiple planned Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) projects. As well, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) now requires the County to provide upfront funding for preliminary scoping, surveys, and other analyses required for the environmental process for obstruction removal, beacon and beacon tower replacement, and other ACIP projects. Historically, the FAA grants fund 90% of eligible project costs, and if the County were successful in receiving competitive State of California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics grants, those would fund 5% of the FAA grant amount. These funds are received on a reimbursement basis as each project progresses, typically within a fiscal year. With the FAA now requiring the County to provide upfront funding for several projects, staff anticipates that the FAA will reimburse the County 90% of eligible project costs in the next federal fiscal year grant cycle and that the County will be awarded the FAA grants during FY 2023-24.

Attachment B outlines the projects and tasks that require upfront County funding. Due to recent changes in FAA requirements, as well as recent additional FAA requirements, staff were recently made aware that these project tasks need to be completed in FY 2021-22. Attachment B also identifies some minor expenses for smaller project elements that the County needs to pay for in the current fiscal year for which there is no FAA grant available. If the County does not provide the upfront funding for the obstruction removal and beacon and beacon tower replacement projects, as well as the drone surveys, outlined in Attachment B, then the County will be unable to obtain FAA design and construction grants for those ACIP projects.

The County's airport engineering consultant, Brandley Engineering, recommended accelerating the Placerville On-Airport Obstruction Removal Project to a combined design and construction FAA grant in 2023. Previously, the plan was to move forward with a design grant only for 2023, followed by a construction grant for 2024. However, Brandley Engineering indicated that the County would achieve significant cost savings for the Placerville and Georgetown obstruction removal projects if the

projects are bid together, combined into one bid package. In addition to the upfront funding required for the environmental process for both obstruction removal projects, this strategy requires the County to provide upfront funds for the design of both of these projects, which has been included in staff's FY 2022-23 budget request. As with the environmental project costs discussed above, staff anticipates that the FAA will reimburse the County 90% of eligible design project costs in the next federal fiscal year grant cycle and that the County will be awarded the FAA grants during FY 2023-24. If the County does not accelerate the Placerville obstruction removal project to be designed and bid with the Georgetown obstruction removal project, the design and construction costs will increase.

The more than 50-year-old airport beacon and beacon tower at the Georgetown Airport need to be replaced. The existing beacon is difficult to maintain and replacement parts are often difficult to obtain. The existing tower is old and has significant safety concerns. The proposed project includes installing a new beacon on a new tip-down tower in the same location as the existing tower.

The FY 2021-22 Placerville Airport budget has sufficient salary savings from the vacant Airport Operations Supervisor position to fund the professional services expenses outlined in Attachment B for both airports. The Department recently received approval to recruit to fill this vacant position and anticipates that the recruitment will open very soon.

In order to meet the FAA's grant deadlines to obtain the above-referenced two obstruction removal grants and the Georgetown beacon and beacon tower replacement design grant in the next FAA grant cycle, and to keep other projects on track, Brandley Engineering emphasized the importance of the County fronting the expenses outlined in Attachment B in the current fiscal year.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board may elect not to approve the budget transfer as proposed for FY 2021-22, resulting in delays to the removal of obstructions at both airports and the County being out of compliance with FAA regulations, and delays to the replacement of the beacon and beacon tower at each airport. This could result in nighttime operations being shut down at each airport. If the County does not provide the upfront funding for the obstruction removal and beacon and beacon tower replacement projects, as well as the drone surveys, outlined in Attachment B, then the County will be unable to obtain FAA design and construction grants for those ACIP projects.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

N/A

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Chief Administrative Office, Auditor/Controller

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this item would: 1) increase appropriations for professional services by \$28,200 and decrease salaries by \$28,200 in the Placerville Airport budget; 2) increase the General Fund contribution and appropriations for professional services by \$39,000 in the Georgetown Airport budget; and, 3) decrease the General Fund contribution and salaries by \$39,000 in the Placerville Airport budget in FY 2021-22. Staff anticipates that the FAA will reimburse the County 90% of this

upfront County funding for eligible project costs in the next federal fiscal year grant cycle and that the County will be awarded the FAA grants during FY 2023-24. As funding is being transferred between the Airports accounts, there is no increase to net county cost.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

The Clerk of the Board will obtain the Chair's signature on the original budget transfer and will forward the budget transfer to the Auditor/Controller for processing.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Public Safety, Good Governance

CONTACT

Chris Perry, Assistant Director
Planning and Building Department