



building communities together

2024 Business Plan South Cariboo Regional Airport (1113)

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Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.

Department/Function Services

The South Cariboo Regional Airport service was established by Supplementary Letters Patent No. 56 and became a function of the Cariboo Regional District in 1981 following successful negotiations with Block Bros Realty who originally constructed the airport to facilitate access to its subdivision development at the 108 Mile Ranch.

The airport has the longest runway (5293 feet) in the South Cariboo and is the main access point to the area for large commercial aircraft as well as medevac, RCMP and forest fire surveillance and suppression flights. A five-year contract (June 2023-2028) to manage the airport is in place with Donahue Airfield Services.

The airport offers both avgas and jet fuel for sale year-round. Currently six private hangars and four aircraft shelters are occupied by local pilots and companies on the property.

In 2013, a new self-serve fueling system was installed and accepts Visa and MasterCard. Since 2010, the airport offers GPS-based approach and departure procedures, which are published in the Restricted Canadian Air Pilot manual due to higher clearance standards imposed by Transport Canada in 2021, which the runway is unable to comply with due to off site obstacles.

Electoral Areas G, H, and L and the District of 100 Mile House participate in this service, which is funded by means of a tax applied to the assessed value of land and improvements within the sub-regional service area. The maximum requisition is \$0.312/\$1,000.

Directors for Electoral Areas G, H, and L and District of 100 Mile House are responsible for the governance of this service and act, along with up to four appointed members, as the South Cariboo Regional Airport Commission, which was established to guide airport development and operations.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

2024 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Fuel system redesign and cost estimate.
Rationale: The fuel system is a key piece of airport infrastructure and the underground tanks are now more than 30 years old, having been installed in 1990. The tanks are inspected regularly; however, planning for their eventual replacement is appropriate.
Strategy: Design consulting services will be retained to develop a replacement plan and potential new location.
- 2. Goal:** Determine the feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the Regional District hangar and airport office building.
Rationale: Solar panel technology has matured and is demonstrating good return on the capital investment in addition to the energy savings received. These savings in electrical costs would reduce the operating expenses of the airport buildings.
Strategy: Qualified solar contractors will be requested to review the site and provide a system design and cost estimate. It is expected Community Works Funding will be allocated in the financial plan in 2024 for completion of the project.
- 3. Goal:** Review the Obstacle Limitation Surface for the runway.
Rationale: Changes by Transport Canada to the minimum standards for the OLS resulted in the airport approach procedures being moved from the Canadian Airport Pilot (CAP) to the Restricted CAP. This is detrimental to private aircraft that use GPS procedures and can't access the RCAP.
Strategy: The critical issue with the OLS is the height of power poles across Highway 97 and options for relocation may be limited. If the power poles are relocated, numerous trees will also require removal to allow the runway to meet the minimum standard.
- 4. Goal:** Prepare locations and access for future private hangars.
Rationale: Only one location remains readily available for hangar construction and initial enquiries have been received for this final spot. Any additional locations will need site works to be prepared for future private hangars.
Strategy: Project will be supervised by the airport manager with support from Regional District staff. Initial discussions with the 108 Greenbelt Commission will

be required to determine if additional space can be included in the airside development. This work may be done in conjunction with the runway overlay planned for 2021 or take place ahead of the overlay if major grant funding is not received.

2025 Goals

- Goal:** Complete a master plan for airport development east of the runway.
Rationale: Development of the west side of the airport along Telqua Drive is limited by the amount of land available as well as road access. If the airport property had a direct connection to Highway 97 and utility services available on the east side of the runway, it would enable the Regional District to enter long term land agreements with major users like the Cariboo Fire Centre, and other private hangar developments.
Strategy: Design and engineering consulting services will be retained as necessary to analyze the potential options and confirm a concept plan to guide future development.
- Goal:** Install solar panels on the roof of the Regional District hangar and airport office building.
Rationale: Solar panel technology has matured and is demonstrating good return on the capital investment in addition to the energy savings received. These savings in electrical costs would reduce the operating expenses of the airport buildings.
Strategy: The project will be supervised by the airport manager with support from Regional District staff. Community Works Funding will be allocated in the financial plan for completion of the project.

Overall Financial Impact

The 2024 requisition is increased by 135% from the 2023 requisition for a total of \$971,452. This amount is required to account for the costs of short-term borrowing and ongoing allocations to capital reserves. No additional increase is planned for years 2025-2028.

The 2023 requisition was the same as the 2022 requisition.

The requisition was also increased by 10% per year from 2014 until 2018. The South Cariboo Regional Airport Commission recommended these increases to accommodate a larger transfer to capital reserves to help rebuild the fund following a draw for the purchase of land and in anticipation of major future infrastructure replacement costs.

The long-term capital plan, completed in 2012 by EBA Engineering Consultants, identifies more than \$3.4 million in capital investments over the next 5-15 years for the airport.

Currently, the average annual capital and major repair expenditure planned for the airport is \$30,000-\$45,000 plus \$15,000-\$20,000 for runway maintenance. Major projects are undertaken by financial planning several years in advance and supported by grant funding where possible.

The service has projected capital reserve funds of about \$1.11 million at the end of 2023. Transfers out of reserves may be required for 2023-2024 to facilitate the airside rehabilitation project, which was completed with support from significant infrastructure grant funding. In years three to five of the financial plan \$1.2 million is allocated back into reserves to assist with future major capital projects.

Fuel sales provide significant revenue for the airport; however, they are highly unpredictable based on commercial and local forest fire fighting activity. The Regional District includes a mark-up of \$0.30 per litre to support airport operations and improvements. Preliminary net revenue for 2024 is estimated at \$22,500 based on a long-term average of 75,000 litres for annual sales. This additional revenue will support capital works at the airport and help manage short-term requisition increases.

Revenue from landing and tie-down fees is retained by the airport manager under the renewed management and operations contract signed in 2018.

Private hangar development at the airport, through Use and Occupancy agreements, generates revenues of \$12,489, but there is only limited potential to increase significantly beyond the current level unless new property is made available at the site.

Significant Issues & Trends

The critical business plan goal for the airport and the Regional District was achieved with completion of the airside rehabilitation project. The scope of the asphalt overlay also included a full replacement of the airside electrical system, upgrades to the runway lighting and replacing the VASI navigational lighting with a PAPI system. All lighting was upgraded to LED resulting in significant energy savings. These capital projects, along with the AWOS replacement, which occurred in 2018, were identified in a long-term capital plan completed in 2012 by EBA Engineering Consultants. Completing these works addresses the majority of priority capital projects identified by EBA and ensures the long-term viability of airport infrastructure.

Demand for private hangar space has returned following several low-interest years, probably due to broad economic issues at all levels. As such, there is the potential for a renewed emphasis on preparing space for hangars. Hail damage to aircraft led to construction of a four-bay private sunshade structure and it is expected that interest in this approach to protecting aircraft will expand.

As of August 31, airport movements in 2023 totaled 767, a decrease of approximately 24% from 2022 due in part to the runway closure on August 8 for the airside rehabilitation project. Included in these figures for 2023 are 16 medevac flights, a decrease of 14 medevacs for the same period in 2022, but still illustrating the ongoing importance of the airport to the well-being of local residents. In 2022, the airport had a total of 1,287 movements; 41 of these were medevacs.

The Cariboo Regional District is a signatory on the Province of BC/UBCM Climate Action Charter and has committed to continuing work towards carbon neutrality in respect of corporate operations.

Measuring Previous Years Performance

Goal: Initiate a runway overlay and remarking project.

- Completed. Grant funding and short-term borrowing were utilized to deliver this important project ensuring the long-term viability of the airport.

Goal: Replace the airside electrical system including all runway and navigational lighting.

- Completed. A full electrical system upgrade to LED lighting was completed in conjunction with the airside rehabilitation.

Goal: Fuel system redesign and cost estimate.

- Not completed. Project was deferred until after the airside rehabilitation.

Goal: Review the airport management and operation contract.

- Completed. A new five-year contract was signed with Donahue Airfield Services.

Goal: Determine the feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the Regional District hangar and airport office building.

- Not completed. Project was deferred until after the airside rehabilitation.

Goal: Review the Obstacle Limitation Surface for the runway.

- Not completed. Project was deferred until after the airside rehabilitation.

Goal: Prepare locations and access for future private hangars.

- In progress. It is expected this work may be completed during the airside rehabilitation, subject to contractor capacity.

Other Accomplishments:

The airport manager hosted a very successful fly-in event on June 4.

The BC Wildfire Service once again was stationed at the airport in May in response to an early season wildfire.