



Legislation Text

File #: 20-573, **Version:** 1

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SUBJECT: Update to the City Council on the Merced Regional Airport and Federal C.A.R.E.S. Grant

REPORT IN BRIEF

Presentation to the City Council regarding the status of the Merced Regional Airport and proposed use of the FEDERAL C.A.R.E.S Grant awarded to the City of Merced.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council - For Information, Discussion, and Direction.

DISCUSSION

The Merced Regional Airport serves both the general aviation clientele and those seeking commercial service. The City acquired the airfield in 1932, and from 1940 to present, MacReady Field transitioned into the Merced Regional Airport (MCE).

Approximately 69 aircraft are based at the Airport. Full Fixed Based Operator services (repairs, maintenance, annual check-ups, and fuel) are available at the Airport. Hangars and tie-downs are available for lease that are handled by Airport staff. The MCE runway is approximately 5914-feet by 150-feet

Commercial service is provided by Boutique Air with flights to Los Angeles International Airport and Sacramento International Airport. Boutique Air offers service to the Merced through a Federal Aviation Administration program called Essential Air Service (EAS) which provides a subsidy to the carrier.

Two staff members staff the Airport, an Airport Manager and Airport Operations Technician up until FY 2020-2021. Now, staff includes an Economic Development Associate, transitioned from the former Welcome Center, and a portion of a Senior Management Analyst for public relations, social media, and marketing support.

The Merced Airport Master Plan, prepared in 2007, provides the framework and direction on projects regarding the Airport's growth and expansion. Projects are identified, coordinated with the Federal Aviation Administration, and then incorporated into an Airport Improvement Program (AIP.)

The Airport has been a draw on the City's General Fund with the hope of generating enough revenue to make it a self-sustaining operation. On June 15, 2020, the City of Merced accepted a C.A.R.E.S. Act Grant for the Airport in the amount of \$3,364,156. The grant is designed to assist airports with Operations and Maintenance expenses for the next four years. The grant provides an opportunity for

the Airport and City to plan and carry out future Airport Improvement Projects based on the revenues acquired during each Fiscal Year.

At their meeting of September 15, 2020, the Regional Airport Authority identified projects such as marketing, runway sweeping and maintenance, constructing restrooms near the self-serve fueling station, improving the experience at the terminal for passengers, expanding utility service to include Merced Irrigation District power, T-Hangar relocation, general hangar maintenance, and regular maintenance for the grounds in general.

As part of the presentation, Airport staff will request direction from the City Council on Airport Improvement Projects.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Airport Update and C.A.R.E.S. Presentation