

To: Columbia Valley Committee/Directors

From: Wendy Booth, Granite River Consulting

BRIEFING NOTE, February 3, 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this briefing note is to present a case for the Regional District of East Kootenay to support an interim funding request to enable the Columbia Valley Airport Society to continue operations in the short term as it restructures its operational plan.

Background

The Columbia Valley Airport Society (CVAS) incorporated as a non-profit Society in British Columbia on March 11, 1986 and transitioned to the new Societies Act on September 24, 2018.

The CVAS constitution, purposes are:

- a) to develop, maintain and operate the Columbia Valley Airport at Fairmont Hot Springs, BC;
- b) to provide airport service for the residents and visitors of the Columbia Valley and immediate district;
- c) to acquire, hold, lease, manage, rent or sell real property for the purpose of developing and maintaining flying and landing fields, airports, air harbours, terminals and hangers for the care, housing and reception and dispatch of aircraft;
- d) to apply for and obtain all such licenses and permits from municipal, provincial or other proper authority as may be requisite for the purposes of the society; and,
- e) to do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the purposes of the society.

CVAS; owns 46 acres of land; with A-2 zoning, and an OCP designation of Industrial. This property is actively being used as 6000' by 100' asphalt runway.

The adjacent terminal building is located on Fairmont Hot Springs Resort (FHSR) owned lands.

The current Board of Directors comprise of FHSR senior management and shareholders. The operations of the airport are managed by three (3) staff of FHSR. The airport has been entirely managed and funded by FHSR for since inception.

FHSR has given notice to the CVAS Board of Directors that they will cease funding the annual operations effective March 31, 2020. In 2019; this was approximately \$180,000.

There is a mortgage of approximately two (2) million which is owed to FHRS, recognizing a past capital contribution that FHSR made to the airport. There are ongoing discussions with FHRS senior management and shareholders to ensure this is not a liability for the CVAS in the future.

The three staff who; have been managing the airport have been given their termination notice by FHSR.

The Columbia Valley Airport is a key asset for the immediate service communities stretching from Canal Flats to Spillimacheen. It plays a critical role in providing public safety services of medical evacuations flights, military training in conjunction with being an important and vital base for forest fire services and search and rescue operations. Further, direct and indirect economic benefits for the Columbia Valley are achieved for tourism and industry.

Current Status

CVAS is working with Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) through the non-profit program to complete an organization assessment.

On January 24, 2020; a facilitated session took place with attendance of 23 stakeholders from various sectors including: all levels of Government, BC Ambulance, BC Forest Service, community groups, tourism and industry stakeholders.

As a result of this meeting, an interim group has formed with the goal of securing short term funding.

The three current employees have agreed to continue to work at the airport on a volunteer basis until such time as long-term funding can be secured. The details of this working relationship are being explored in terms of insurance coverage, liability, timeline and reporting.

Proposed Financial Budget

Based on past 5-year averages

Revenue	\$25,000 (primarily achieved through commission on fuel sales)
Expenses	<u>\$85,000</u> (annual overhead costs of insurance, hydro, repairs and maintenance)
Shortfall	\$60,000*
*Note: This does not include salaries, it should also be noted that for 2019, the wages and benefits were \$81,000.	

Request from the RDEK

CVAS requests that the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) provide interim funding effective April 1st, 2020 in the amount of \$60,000 a year for two years.

In addition to funding from RDEK, the interim working group is exploring other avenues of funding in both the private and public sectors.

CVAS is committed to looking for long-term sustainable funding; including; an option that would see the creation of a service area; however, it is noted that this option is not currently in the RDEK work plan.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Doug Clovechok, MLA
Columbia River - Revelstoke

January 31, 2020

Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs BC
V0B 1L2

Re: Support for the Fairmont Hot Springs Airport and Columbia Valley Airport Society

To whom it may concern,

I am taking this opportunity to speak to the importance of the Fairmont Hot Springs Airport which has been funded for many years by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort (FHSR) with oversight from the Columbia Valley Airport Society (CVAS). It is my understanding that FHSR is no longer in a position to continue their funding.

This small rural airport serves the community in many ways and has become an essential service for the Columbia Valley in terms of public safety. The airport is key to public safety as it provides a staging area for multiple medical evacuations, fixed wing or helicopter, as well as a base for BC Wildfire Services. The Canadian military also use the airport for training exercises. The airport also provides multiple direct and indirect economic benefits to the resource and tourism sectors.

The CVAS has recently held an emergency meeting to address the need for interim funding for the airport that will ensure it will not be closed; funding that needs to be secured by March 31, 2020. I have been advised that the CVAS is aggressively developing a business plan that will ensure long term sustainable funding.

It is my hope that this vital community asset continues to operate.

Yours truly,

Doug Clovechok
Member of the Legislative Assembly
Columbia River-Revelstoke

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362 Wallinger Avenue
Kimberley, BC V1A 1Z4
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Legislative Office - Victoria
Room 016 Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8T 2T8
Doug.Clovechok.MLA@leg.bc.ca



ROB MORRISON

Member of Parliament
Kootenay–Columbia

January 28th, 2020

Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC V0B 1L1

To Whom it may concern:

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport, which is operated by the Columbia Valley Airport Society, will no longer receive operating funding from Fairmont Hot Springs Resort.

This is a valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley that plays a vital role in the contribution to area public safety by facilitating medical evacuations while also acting as a base for forest fire support. Beyond matters of public safety, there are numerous economic benefits for the resource and tourism industries, and it is my hope that this important community asset continues to operate.

Sincerely,

Rob Morrison, MP
Kootenay–Columbia
Deputy Shadow Minister
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness





Wildfire Service

Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
VOB-1L1

Jan 31, 2020

Reference: Fairmont Airport -CYCZ

To Whom it may concern;

The Southeast Fire Centre (SEFC) is responsible for wildfire operations from the U.S. border northward to the Mica Dam and from the Okanagan Highlands/west side of the Monashee Mountains eastward to the Alberta border.

The SEFC regards the Fairmont Airport as a very important asset for its wildfire response capabilities. Located centrally in the Rocky Mountain Trench, helicopter and fixed-wing airtanker resources used in our fire control operations are routinely positioned there in preparedness for fire activity. Helicopters working from Fairmont are available to rapidly access new fire starts in the considerable amount of local wildland-urban interface areas as well as in more remote areas. These local fires benefit not only from this rapid, initial response of the helicopters but also from the proximity to return to the airport to refuel before returning to the fire to resume work -another major factor in the efficacy of wildfire air operations.

Commercial helicopter operators wanting to be hired by the SEFC for fire response are well-aware of the strategic location of this airport therefore most periods of significant fire hazard find highly capable, ready-for-hire helicopters and crew from across Canada sitting at the Fairmont Airport awaiting hire. Most helicopters that pre-position in "speculation" at this airport are medium-lift, specializing in bucketing large volumes of water onto fires. The Airport itself provides the basic conveniences for air crew (shade, toilets, coffee, water, power, security, etc.) while the fuelling services provided are acknowledged by our aircrews as highly professional cumulatively making the Fairmont Airport a desirable location for air carriers and their crews.

Ministry of Forests, Lands,
Natural Resource Operations
and Rural Development

BC Wildfire Service
Southeast Fire Centre

Location:
South end of Castlegar
Airport

Mailing Address:
208 Hughes Road
Castlegar, BC V1N 4M5
Tel: (250) 365-4040
Fax: (250) 365-9925



Wildfire Service

It is a rare year when we do not position BCWS rappel crews with their helicopter to "standby" for lengthy periods of fire hazard at Fairmont. When the hazard climbs to extreme we often have additional Initial Attack crews assigned to other hired helicopters standing-by at Fairmont.

Beyond wildfire response, the BC Wildfire Service is increasing its integration with other response agencies such as Emergency Management BC and as such, the Fairmont Airport will provide an important role in these integrated public-safety responses.

If desired, I am available to discuss the matter further.

Sincerely,

Dan McBee

Senior Wildfire Officer Aviation

Southeast Fire Centre

Email: dan.mcbee@gov.bc.ca

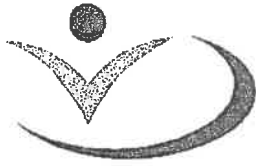
Phone: 250-365-4010

Ministry of Forests, Lands,
Natural Resource Operations
and Rural Development

BC Wildfire Service
Southeast Fire Centre

Location:
South end of Castlegar
Airport

Mailing Address:
208 Hughes Road
Castlegar, BC V1N 4M5
Tel: (250) 365-4040
Fax: (250) 365-9925



Interior Health
Every person matters

Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
V0B 1L1

January 31, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport, which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society, will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

Interior Health has been actively using the airport in Fairmont as we work with BC Emergency Health Services to transport patients in and out of the Columbia Valley for medical care.

This is a valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley, and an essential service for public safety. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley as it allows for medical evacuations and is also an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry.

It is my hope and desire that this important community asset continue to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being looked into and ideally secured in time.

If you would like to discuss further, please let me know.

Kind Regards,

Terri Domin RN BN MN
Executive Director, Clinical Operations, East Kootenay
Interior Health Authority
Terri.domin@interiorhealth.ca

Hello Director Clovechok,

It has come to my attention the Fairmont Hot Springs Airport may be at risk of closing. As the Detachment Commander of the Columbia Valley RCMP this news is concerning to me.

In my role with the RCMP, public safety is paramount and the availability of an airport in Fairmont Hot Springs is an important asset in terms of emergency planning. The RCMP utilizes rotary wing and fixed wing aircraft for operational and administrative duties including, but not limited to, the transportation of tactical response units, investigative units, explosive disposal units, radio repeater maintenance and search and rescue operations. Given our distance from our District headquarters in Kelowna and our Division headquarters in the Lower Mainland, which is where the majority of our assist units are located, air services are an essential component to our duties. Although the Invermere Airport is often utilized, my fear is that should the Invermere Airport become unavailable at any given time, our area would be inaccessible by fixed wing aircraft which could detrimentally impact public safety.

Thank you for allowing me to present my perspective on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Sergeant Darren KAKUNO
Detachment Commander Columbia Valley RCMP / Government of Canada
Office: 250-342-9292
Fax: 250-342-0197
Email: darren.kakuno@rcmp-grc.gc.ca



651 Hwy 93/95
PO Box 1019
Invermere, BC V0A 1K0

P 250-342-2844
F 250-342-3261
E info@cvchamber.ca

www.TheColumbiaValley.com

Representing the communities of:

- ▲ Invermere
- ▲ Brisco
- ▲ Edgewater
- ▲ Spur Valley
- ▲ Canal Flats
- ▲ Radium Hot Springs
- ▲ Spillimacheen
- ▲ Wilmer
- ▲ Panorama
- ▲ Windermere
- ▲ Fairmont Hot Springs

Board Members

Andrea Tubbs, President
Dee Conklin, 1st Vice
Cris Leonard, 2nd Vice
Nancy Hetherington, Treasurer
Paul Stackhouse, Secretary
Clarissa Amaro
Megan Adams
Rhiannon Tutty
Nicole Morgan
Rod Turnbull
Charlene Rivard
Colin Hardwick
Richard Unger

The Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce is an organization within the business community promoting and supporting responsible commerce through effective advocacy, communication, networking and education on behalf of its membership.



Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC, V0B 1L1

January 31, 2020

Re: Fairmont Airport Operations & Funding

To Whom It May Concern,

Representing over 270 businesses, The Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce would like to express our strong support for the Columbia Valley Airport Society and the operation of the Fairmont Airport.

It has recently come to our attention that the airport, which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society, will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

This is valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley, an essential service for public safety. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley, it provides medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry.

It is our hope and desire that this important community asset continues to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being looked into and ideally secured in time.

Should you require any more information or wish to connect with us, our contact details are shown below. We hope you will consider supporting this worthy community economic development initiative.

Pete Bourke
Executive Director – Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce
Phone: +1.250.342.2844
Email: ExecutiveDirector@cvchamber.ca

**Columbia Valley
Community Economic Development**



Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
V0B 1L1

January 27, 2020

Re: Letter of Support for the Columbia Valley Airport Society

To Whom it may concern,

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided significant funding for many years.

This is a valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley, and an essential service for public safety. The airport provides critical medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry.

It is for these very important reasons that this community asset must continue to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31, 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being researched and, ideally, secured in time.

If you would like to discuss further, please let me know.

Kind Regards

Ryan Watmough BSc MBA
Columbia Valley Community Economic Development Officer

Columbia Valley Community Economic Development Office

Email: cvced@rdek.bc.ca • Phone: 250-409-7011

A service of the Regional District of East Kootenay



January 30, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

It has recently come to our attention that Fairmont Hot Springs Resort have given notice to the Columbia Valley Airport Society that they will stop providing operating funding at the end of March which would force the immediate closure of the Fairmont Hot Springs Airport.

This is of great concern to our organization for a number of reasons. One, the airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley as it is frequently used for medical evacuations. Two, it is an important base for forest fire support in our region. Three, it is used by Search & Rescue and DND for training.

In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for our community and the valleys tourism industry, and it is important infrastructure to promote for business attraction and development.

It is our belief that this important community asset must continue to operate. We understand that an interim committee has been formed with the initial task to find interim operational funding for the next 3 to 6 months to be able to keep the airport open. Further, they will analyze the airport operation and develop a long-term plan for its continued operation. We fully support any and all efforts to secure interim funding before the March 31st deadline that would enable the airport to continue operations. Our organization would also offer its full support to developing a long-term plan to ensure the airport continues to be available for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Stackhouse".

Paul Stackhouse
President P:
902-526-3888

c/o 5-4992 Fairmont Frontage Road, Fairmont Hot Springs, BC V0B 1L1



4992 FAIRMONT FRONTAGE ROAD
PO BOX 10002
FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS BC V0B 1L0
fairmontcommunity@gmail.com
<http://fairmontcommunityassociation.org>

January 31, 2020

Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
V0B 1L1

To Whom it may Concern:

It has recently come to our attention that the Fairmont Airport, of which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society, will no longer receive operating funding from Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

Some members of the Fairmont Community Association have been actively using the airport in Fairmont as they reside in the area and have friends, colleagues and family visit. Having the convenience of access to the airport was pivotal in their decision to own property in Fairmont and the loss of it would have a direct impact on their lifestyle and attraction to retain property here.

The airport is a valuable community asset for the entire Columbia Valley, and an essential service for public safety. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley, it provides medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry.

It is our hope and desire that this important community asset continues to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being looked into and ideally secured in time.

If you would like to discuss further, please let us know.

Yours truly,

Colin Guild, President



COLUMBIA EAGLE RESORT

8945 Strathearn Drive
Edmonton, Alberta T6C 4C8
Telephone 780 440 1056 fax 780 440 1161
Email address twaynefranchuk@gmail.com

January 30, 2020

Columbia Valley Airport Society

5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC V0B 1L1

To Whom it may concern

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport, which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

Columbia Eagle Resorts has been using the airport in Fairmont for our consultants and resource people and their related over the past 15 years as well as our own use for principals of the company own aircraft.

This has been, and will continue to be, an extremely valuable asset for the safety and development of the Region of the East Kootenays of the Columbia Valley. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley, it provides medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct current economic and future benefits for the resource and tourism industry and related social and business services.

It is my hope and desire that this important community asset continues to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being researched and be secured prior to the tentative announced closure of the facility.

If you would like to discuss further, I am available at your convenience.

Yours truly

T.Wayne Franchuk
President. Columbia Eagle Resort Inc.



There's more to the mountains.



Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
V0B 1L1
January 31, 2020

To Whom it may concern

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport, which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

Panorama Mountain Resort has seen the direct benefits of the airport for many social, economic and public safety reasons.

This is valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley, an essential service for public safety. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley, it provides medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry.

It is my hope and desire that this important community asset continues to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being looked into and ideally secured in time.

Kind Regards

Steve Paccagnan – President & CEO



Columbia Valley Airport Society

5225 Fairmont Resort Road

Fairmont Hot Springs, BC

VOB 1L1

February 1, 2020

To Whom it may concern

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport, which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

RK Heliski guests has been actively using the airport in Fairmont as we have a proven history of dealing with over 52 different countries visiting BC to recreate and take part in our unique BC adventure activity of heliskiing and boarding.

This is valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley, an essential service for public safety. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley, it provides medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry.

It is my hope and desire that this important community asset continues to operate. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being looked into and ideally secured in time.

If you would like to discuss further, please let me know.

General Manager

RK Heliski


Graham Holt

Box 695

Invermere, BC V0A 1K0 Canada

1-800-661-6060 tf / 250-342-3889 p / 250-342-3466 fx



GREYWOLF

GOLF COURSE

Greetings,

It is disappointing to hear that the Fairmont Airport, an important asset to the Columbia Valley, is struggling to continue operations.

Like other businesses that depend on tourism, discontinuing operation of this valuable asset could seriously hinder the future of the Columbia Valley's economic growth. In addition, the Airport provides a necessary avenue for emergency responders.

The public safety and economic outlook of the Columbia Valley will be affected by this change.

I am hopeful that short term funding is implemented before the deadline in order to continue operations. I understand longer term funding is being looked into but as a business owner and member of the community this news is very concerning.

Sincerely,

Dane Thorogood
General Manager/Owner
Greywolf Golf Course

Greywolf Golf Course
Box 122, 1860 Greywolf Drive Panorama, British Columbia V0A 1T0
Phone: (250) 341-4100 www.greywolfgolf.com

Gerard Developments Ltd.

February 2, 2020

Columbia Valley Airport Society
5225 Fairmont Resort Road
Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
V0B 1L1

To Whom it May Concern:

It has recently come to my attention that the Fairmont Airport, which the runway is owned by the registered non-profit Columbia Valley Airport Society will no longer receive operating funding by Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. It is our understanding that the resort provided funding for many years.

Gerard Developments Ltd. is the parent company for Sunrise International which owns Copper Point Resort and Invermere Inn and Suites. Our ownership and guests have been actively using the airport in Fairmont. Our ownership visits the property using personal and chartered aircraft. Our guests use the airport to come to the property from various regions that make it difficult to drive from.

This is valuable community asset for the Columbia Valley, an essential service for public safety. The airport is key to public safety in the Columbia Valley, it provides medical evacuations and is an important base for forest fire support. In addition, there are many direct and indirect economic benefits for the resource and tourism industry. Without the airport, it is my view that the economic impact would be quite significant. It is also my view that the economic impact or regular commercial air transportation at the airport could significantly enhance the economic performance in the region. As a case in point, the current ownership of Copper Point and the Invermere Inn wouldn't have acquired the assets if the airport wasn't there. They traveled on more than one occasion to assess the assets and if they wouldn't have been able to have done so as easily the acquisition wouldn't likely have transpired. This is a similar issue that other investors would have.

We understand that interim funding is being requested from RDEK. We trust that this matter will be considered thoroughly. Furthermore, we believe that bigger undertaking should be pursued to have RDEK operate the airport and subsidize regular commercial transportation for a few years to kick start this, similar to what other communities have done. We are hopeful that interim funding can be in place before the March 31st 2020 deadline, which will enable the airport to continue operations. We understand that longer term sustainable funding is being looked into and ideally secured in time.

If you would like to discuss further, please let me know.

Kind Regards



Rus Matichuk, CEO

Gerard Developments Ltd.