

Airport master plan nearing completion

Public input taken for conceptual 20-year plan

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

A two-year process to develop a 20-year master plan for the Grant County Regional Airport is winding down, according to Ron Lundbom, John Day mayor and Grant County Regional Airport Commission chairman.

The 20-year plan is conceptual only and must go through a public process that could be finalized by the end of March. T-O Engineering of Boise, Idaho, has been taking input from pilots, the Forest Service and other community stakeholders since 2015 to determine what type of airport is needed, based on the kinds of aircraft that have used the airport in the past and might use the airport in the future. Taxiways already exist for development of future hangars north of the main terminal.

A ConnectOregon grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation paid for the master plan, which the airport needs to qualify for Federal Aviation Administration money.

"The airport so far has received about \$10 million from ConnectOregon," Lundbom said, adding that in a twist, "FAA money served as a match for the ConnectOregon money," instead of the other way around.

Another source of funding for airports is the Critical Oregon Airport Relief program, which is funded by an increase in aircraft fuel taxes in 2015. COAR money can be used for engineering, design and construction of runways, taxiways and aircraft parking areas at public-use airports in Oregon.

The Grant County Regional Airport master plan will address various safety-related issues, including airspace encroachment issues and fencing to keep out deer, Lundbom said. One goal is to move the airport's two underground fuel tanks to the surface to address environmental concerns.

Because of FAA concerns about runways that crisscross, Grant County's two runways eventually must be "decoupled," Lundbom said. When that happens, Runway



A new master plan is being created for the Grant County Regional Airport, pictured here.

Eagle file photos

9/27 will be lengthened to the northwest to make up for the difference.

One proposed change involves siting for the Forest Service's single-engine air tankers (SEAT), which resemble crop dusters. There are concerns that the fire-fighting aircraft damage other planes by spraying loose gravel with their strong propeller wash.

One idea in the conceptual master plan is to move the SEAT planes west of Runway 17/35 with a new taxiway to separate them from the hangars north of the main terminal.

Grant County currently is seeking \$469,996 from the FAA and \$47,000 from COAR to address deteriorating aprons near the current SEAT base area. The funding would pay for design and engineering work that could take place in 2019, Lundbom said.

The Forest Service leases most of the airport space, and lease negotiations between the county and the Forest Service will take place this year.

Runway 17/35 is 5,220 feet long, 60 feet short of a mile, a "magic number" for aircraft safety concerns, Lundbom said. Lengthening the runway another 60 feet,



A worker with TaylorNW, the Bend contractor to rebuild a runway at Grant County Regional Airport, runs a rotomill to crush the asphalt on the east-west runway, filling a dump truck in this file photo from 2014.

however, may be difficult because of steep terrain and a public road at each end.

Runway 9/27 is 4,471 feet long. It was extended 950 feet in 2008 and was rebuilt in summer 2014 with a new base and asphalt. Three-quarters of the funding for the \$2 million project came from ConnectOregon, with the rest coming from the FAA.

Grant County Regional Airport was constructed in 1961 with one paved 4,500-foot north-south runway and one gravel east-west runway. The terminal consisted of a 1,500-square-foot two-bedroom home that also served

as the administrative office. Runway lights and a beacon were added in 1962.

A \$5.3 million terminal was completed in September 2010. The Forest Service, which had been operating out of several deteriorating and cramped modular buildings at the airport for more than 30 years, now occupies the second floor of the 17,752-square-foot terminal.

Funding for the terminal project came from the FAA, ConnectOregon and the Forest Service. Some taxiway work, a ramp and some fencing were included in the overall project.



Grant County Regional Airport in John Day was busy with aircraft coming and going and refueling for all the wildfire activity in the area in August 2015.

Michael B. DesJardin
Dentistry, PC
Preventive, Restorative & Endodontics

New Patients Welcome!
208 NW Canton
John Day
541-575-2725
mbddental@live.com
michaeldesjardindmd.com

Balance Today with Retiring Tomorrow

No matter where you're starting from, COUNTRY can help you achieve financial security in retirement. It starts with listening to your situation. Then we help you build a straightforward plan with step-by-step guidance. Call me to get started today.

Debbie Ausmus
245 South Canyon Blvd.
John Day, OR 97845
OPEN WED. & THUR.
9 am - 5 pm
541-575-1113
24 hrs/7 days wk

debbie.ausmus@countryfinancial.com

ATTENTION GRANT COUNTY VETERANS:

Are you using or interested in learning about Choice Card Medical Care?

See your Grant County Veteran Services Officer today for more information, located at Grant County Court House.

Hours: M-F 10-4

Katee Hoffman

★ Call 541-620-8057 for an appointment ★

36628

Thank you

We would like to give a huge heartfelt thank you to all who had a part in the bake sale fundraiser for Tanner. The proceeds will go towards medical expenses. Thank you to each and every one who helped with organizing it, for their time and effort. Thank you for making the delicious baked items and to those who purchased them. Your support is deeply appreciated.

The Moodenbaugh Family

40351

GUHS Volleyball Championship Celebration!

The public is invited to stop in and congratulate the GU Lady Pros on their OSAA 2A Volleyball Championship Title!

Sunday, February 18, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
at the Outpost Restaurant in John Day

40522

A man wakes up in the morning after sleeping on an ADVERTISED BED, in ADVERTISED PAJAMAS.

He will bathe in an **ADVERTISED TUB**, shave with an **ADVERTISED RAZOR**, have a breakfast of **ADVERTISED JUICE**, cereal and toast, toasted in an **ADVERTISED TOASTER**, put on **ADVERTISED CLOTHES** and glance at his **ADVERTISED WATCH**. He'll ride to work in his **ADVERTISED CAR**, sit at an **ADVERTISED DESK** and write with an **ADVERTISED PEN**. Yet this person hesitates to advertise, saying that advertising doesn't pay. Finally, when his non-advertised business is going under, **HE'LL ADVERTISE IT FOR SALE.**

Then it's too late.

AND THEY SAY ADVERTISING DOESN'T WORK? DON'T MAKE THIS SAME MISTAKE

Advertising is an investment, not an expense. Think about it!

Blue Mountain Eagle
MyEagleNews.com
Don't get left behind, call today! Kim Kell 541-575-0710

40393