



ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT
REGIONAL DISTRICT

News Release

For Immediate Release

August 25, 2015

The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the Alberni Valley Airport (AVRA) Expansion project has received the consent of electors to borrow a portion of the \$7.4 million project to expand and improve the AVRA.

The goals of the AVRA Expansion Project are to extend the runway length to 5,000 feet and its width to 100 feet, to install a medium intensity lighting system, and to develop a GPS approach to better guide aircraft onto the runway. With these improvements, more and larger aircraft will be able to use the airport, greatly increasing its capacity to support the growing Vancouver Island aerospace industry and bring new jobs to the Alberni Valley.

Some of the project's immediate benefits include expanded activity by the Coulson Group, who will be adding jobs as they expand their C-130 Hercules modification business, along with the manufacturing of firefighting tanking systems and introduction of a chartered air medical business. A business case study commissioned by the ACRD also demonstrates additional benefits an expanded airport will bring to tourism, aerospace, transportation, resource industries, and other economic development sectors.

"There is a strong relationship between transport infrastructure and economic development," said ACRD Board Chair Josie Osborne. "The AVRA expansion project is an investment into a public asset that will help grow and diversify the regional district's economy, and it should have support from all levels of government."

After successfully completing an Alternate Approval Process that concluded on August 6, 2015, the Board of Directors adopted the two bylaws required to proceed with borrowing up to \$6 million of the \$7.4 million project. The ACRD has applied to the federal Gas Tax Strategic Priorities fund for 2/3 of the project's value. If the application is successful, the ACRD would need to borrow \$2.5M (costing the average homeowner with a \$200,000 home about \$7.00 per year for 30 years). If the application is not successful, the ACRD Board of Directors will need to look to other sources of funding or grants, and may ultimately need to make a decision whether to borrow the full amount of \$6M (costing the same homeowner above a total of about \$16.80 per year for 30 years). The outcome of the federal funding application is not anticipated until mid to late Fall 2015, and subsequent Board decisions will be considered in public meetings.

For further information on the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Runway Expansion Project visit the Regional District website at www.acrd.bc.ca or contact Russell Dyson, CAO rdyson@acrd.bc.ca.