



# Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

## ALBERNI VALLEY AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2019, 1:00PM

Regional District Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

### REVISED - AGENDA

PAGE #

1. CALL TO ORDER

Recognition of Territories.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON FOR 2019

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*(motion to approve, including late items requires 2/3 majority vote)*

4. REPORTS

- a. **ALBERNI VALLEY REGIONAL AIRPORT COMMITTEE –Terms of Reference - For Review**

3-5

*THAT the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee receive report a.*

5. REQUEST FOR DECISIONS & BYLAWS

- a. **REQUEST FOR DECISION**

Alberni Valley Drag Race Association request to return to AVRA / CBS8 in 2019

6-18

*THAT the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee recommends to the ACRD Board of Directors that the 2019 proposal by the Alberni Valley Drag Races Association (AVDRA) to return to operating the annual drag race event on the Alberni Valley Regional Airport (AVRA) runway be denied.*

*THAT the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Committee recommend to the ACRD Board of Directors that staff work with the Alberni Valley Drag Racing Association to discuss an alternate plan for locating the drag races off the runway surface at AVRA or other locations in order to support future drag race events.*

7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
8. **LATE BUSINESS**
9. **NEXT MEETING DATE**
10. **ADJOURN**



## **Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District**

### **Terms of Reference Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee**

#### **Introduction**

The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District has formed the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee to facilitate participation from local government, business and community interests within the Alberni Valley on matters associated with the development of the Alberni Valley Regional Airport.

The Airport Advisory Committee is a standing committee of the ACRD and reports directly to the Alberni Valley & Bamfield Services Committee.

#### **Definitions**

**ACRD** means the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District.

**Airport** means the Alberni Valley Regional Airport.

**AVBSC** means the Alberni Valley & Bamfield Services Committee, a standing committee of the ACRD with representation from the City of Port Alberni, Uchucklesaht Tribe Government, Huu-ay-aht First Nation and Electoral Areas “A” (Bamfield), “B” (Beaufort), “D” (Sproat Lake), “E” (Beaver Creek) and “F” (Cherry Creek).

**Board** means the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors.

**Committee** means the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee.

#### **Objective**

The Committee reviews, reports and advises the AVBSC on matters concerning the long term development of the Airport.

#### **Scope of Work**

To achieve this objective, the Committee will review and advise on the following:

- a. Promoting and marketing the Airport
- b. Encouraging the development of improved air services to the region

- c. Review and make recommendations on identified Airport matters as requested by the AVBSC
- d. Gather and provide community input with respect to Airport plans and activities impacting the community
- e. Review and provide input on issues impacting the Airport and Airport lands
- f. Advise on matters relating to Airport services such as; development planning, economic development, operations, maintenance and safety.

## **Membership**

In order to provide representation from all areas served by the Airport, as well as business and community interests, membership of the Committee is as follows:

- a. One (1) member nominated from the Tseshaht First Nation
- b. One (1) member nominated from the Hupacasath First Nation
- c. One (1) member nominated from the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce
- d. One (1) member nominated from the Port Alberni Port Authority
- e. Two (2) members at-large representing the business community in the Alberni Valley nominated by the AVBSC
- f. One (1) ACRD Director from the City of Port Alberni nominated by the AVBSC
- g. One (1) ACRD Director from the Alberni Valley Electoral Areas (Beaufort, Sproat Lake, Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek) nominated by the AVBSC.
- h. One (1) Member at Large representing electoral area "D" (Sproat Lake)

## **Appointment and Term**

Upon recommendation from the AVBSC, members shall be appointed by the ACRD Board of Directors for a two-year term.

Upon recommendation of the AVBSC, the ACRD Board may, at any time, remove any member of the Committee and any member of the Committee may resign at any time upon sending written notice to the Chairperson of the Committee.

Upon recommendation from the AVBSC, Members may stand for re-appointment by the ACRD Board at the conclusion of their term.

Non ACRD members of the Committee serve without remuneration.

In the event of a vacancy occurring during the regular term of office, the vacancy may be filled for the remainder of the term by an alternate nominated by the AVBSC and approved by the ACRD Board of Directors.

## **Chair**

The Committee shall, at its first inaugural meeting annually, elect a Chairperson from amongst its members.

## **Meeting Procedures**

The meetings of the Committee shall be called by the Committee Chairperson and shall be held quarterly on the day and time agreed to by the Committee members.

The Chair of the Committee may call a special meeting of the Committee.

A majority of the Committee members shall represent a quorum, one of whom must be a Director of the ACRD Board.

Meetings of the Committee shall be conducted and held in accordance with the ACRD's Procedures Bylaw.

ACRD staff will provide support to the Committee including preparing agendas and reports, recording minutes of all meetings and ensuring Committee agendas, minutes, etc. are forwarded electronically for circulation to all members.

## **Reporting**

Committee recommendations must be adopted by the Committee by way of motions, prior to presentation for consideration by the AVBSC.

The Committee will provide a status report to the AVBSC following each meeting.

The AVBSC will report to the ACRD Board annually on the activities of the Committee.

Regional District staff will provide advice and professional assistance to the Committee including drafting correspondence and reports.

Approved by the AVBSC:	September 20, 2018
Approved by the ACRD Board:	September 26, 2018
Revised by the Board	December 12, 2018



## REQUEST FOR DECISION

**To:** Alberni Valley Regional Airport Committee  
**From:** Mark Fortune, Airport Superintendent  
**Meeting Date:** March 26, 2019  
**Subject:** Alberni Valley Drag Race Association request to return to AVRA / CBS8 in 2019

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### Recommendation:

***THAT the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee recommends to the ACRD Board of Directors that the 2019 proposal by the Alberni Valley Drag Races Association (AVDRA) to return to operating the annual drag race event on the Alberni Valley Regional Airport (AVRA) runway be denied.***

***THAT the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Committee recommend to the ACRD Board of Directors that staff work with the Alberni Valley Drag Racing Association to discuss an alternate plan for locating the drag races off the runway surface at AVRA or other locations in order to support future drag race events.***

### Desired Outcome:

To protect the significant public investment in the aviation facilities at the Alberni Valley Regional Airport (AVRA), optimizing the life cycle of this facility, while trying to accommodate the interests of the Alberni Valley Drag Racing Association (AVDRA).

### Background:

In 2016 the ACRD started the AVRA runway expansion project at an approximate cost of eight million dollars including grants funds. The main objective of this project was to increase and expand the airport infrastructure in order to allow for larger aircraft which could help with regional economic development. Further, to expand the ability to allow for both day and night operations.

In 2015, the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) notified the AVDRA that the runway expansion project at AVRA would prevent the drag races from operating at the airport in 2016 and ended the Licence of Use Agreement with AVDRA for the annual ¼ mile race event. The 2015 fee charged to the AVDRA for holding the event at AVRA was \$7,927.57, however this amount was covered by an ACRD grant-in-aid in 2016 to the AVDRA. The AVDRA also has a storage area at AVRA for their equipment and in 2016 a new location was negotiated for an annual fee of \$1,328, moving their storage area from airside to a location near the terminal building. The physical move has not yet taken place and no payment was received in 2017 or 2018.

The drag races moved into the City of Port Alberni on Stamp Ave during 2016, 2017, and 2018, offering a 1/8 mile event.

The AVDRA presented at the November 28, 2018 ACRD Board meeting, making a request to return the annual drag racing event to AVRA in 2019. The Board of Directors directed staff to work with the AVDRA on options, and report back to the Alberni Valley and Bamfield Services Committee. Staff prepared a request for decision for the February 5, 2019

Alberni Valley and Bamfield Service Committee meeting recommending that the request to return the drag races to the AVRA be denied. The Alberni Valley and Bamfield Services Committee requested that the AVDRA request be referred to the Alberni Valley Regional Airport Advisory Committee for consideration and input by the newly formed committee, and report back with recommendations to the Alberni Valley and Bamfield Services Committee.

ACRD staff met with the AVDRA on February 26, 2019 to discuss their request to return to AVRA in 2019. AVDRA's long-term vision is to develop an off-runway facility at AVRA, but has not yet developed an infrastructure plan for this facility. AVDRA indicated that by having the 1/8 mile race in the City of Port Alberni, their profits have been significantly reduced as the number of entrants and spectators have decreased. AVDRA indicated that they need three to five years at AVRA to build up necessary funds to develop infrastructure off-runway. The AVDRA indicated that their long-term vision is to improve the north end of the track allowing for a permanent venue for the AVDRA. Based on the information provided by the AVDRA, the request to return to the AVRA runway is part of a three to five year timeframe during which the association asserts it will build up funds to develop an off-runway site. Given they could not pay their rental fee in 2015, staff has concerns of the events' ability to generate the cash to execute the AVDRA's long-term plan.

AVDRA's 2019 proposal offers that they will place 'burn-out' boxes off the runway, and starting the race from the middle of the runway as shown on the attached map with a starting point that is adjacent to taxiway Alpha. This is an important part of the runway as many aircraft land in this touch down zone. After each race, cars will return to the staging area using taxiway Charlie and Bravo. To avoid the build-up of rubber on the runway surface, the AVDRA proposed to spread the cars wider on the runway, avoiding a concentrated build-up of rubber. AVDRA believes that the installation of longer burn-out boxes will reduce the amount of loose rubber on the runway surface. The impact to new infrastructure at the airport is a known risk to AVDRA and they have committed to replacing any damaged infrastructure, although a bond has not been requested by ACRD in previous years. AVDRA indicated that parking and the location of the grandstands will be the same as in previous years as shown on the attached map. Further impacts to the expanded runway from the proposed drag races are highlighted later in this report from Tetra Tech Canada Inc.

A confidential survey of AVRA tenants was conducted in February 2019 regarding a proposed drag race event on August 8-12, 2019. Of the eight organizations contacted, two were in favour of the drag races returning to AVRA and six were not supportive of the races returning to AVRA. Two tenants asked if compensation would be available if the drag races were to run on the airfield in 2019. These two tenants identified that they have planned aviation related business during the proposed drag race event and that approval of this event would negatively impact their business.

While ACRD staff has received a binder from the AVDRA with an estimated 231 general letters of support, staff has also received notice from at least one neighbour on Central Lake Road raising concerns with this proposal in relation to noise. An exemption from the Sproat Lake Noise bylaw could be requested for events that will knowingly exceed acceptable noise regulations, such as the exemption ACRD has provided in previous years for the Sproat Lake Regatta.

It was discussed at the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting between the AVDRA and staff that a more comprehensive plan is required regarding future race operations off-runway. This layout and construction plan should include details as to how the race operation could exist at AVRA without negatively impacting airport operations and the surrounding area.

Of note is that ACRD reviewed a proposal by the Alberni Valley Motor Sports Complex Society in 2005 for an off runway motorsports facility at AVRA. The proposal included a motorsports facility located in the North West corner of the ACRD Crown Grant area, partially within the Agriculture Land Reserve. At that time the province indicated that an amendment to the Crown Grant would be required to allow for the facility, and approval would be required by the Agriculture Land Commission. There was public opposition to the proposal by neighbours and at that time, the Board did not proceed further with the motorsports proposal at AVRA.

Considering the information above and the technical details outlined below, it is recommended that the drag race event not take place at the AVRA until such time the AVDRA has the necessary resources and ability to implement a race event that does not negatively impact AVRA infrastructure.

## Technical Details:

ACRD requested the services of Tetra Tech Canada Inc. to review the implications of the allowing the Alberni Valley Drag Racing event to return to AVRA. Tetra Tech was asked to outline issues that may result from the use of airside pavements and associated areas at AVRA for drag races.

Tetra Tech outlined the following ten considerations:

- 1) Tetra Tech highlighted that compatibility with current aircraft operations is an important factor to consider. The extended runway allows for larger aircraft to land, utilizing the full length of the runway to land, but the larger aircraft also require good friction characteristics. It was highlighted that rubber accumulation on the runway can result in friction reduction. Tetra Tech queried whether staging non-aviation events impacts the reputation of AVRA as a reliable and available airport, highlighting that non-aviation events could contribute to a sense that investment at AVRA was not entirely for aviation purposes.
- 2) An annual shut down of AVRA for a drag racing event may affect decisions made by aircraft operators whether to utilize the airport on a routine basis or to get fuel. This includes potentially restricting and or negatively impacting summer firefighting activities in the area that require AVRA facilities. Tetra Tech highlights that there was an increase in forest fire activity in the area for 2018.
- 3) Impact of the drag racing events on AVRA's tenants and neighbors is a consideration that Tetra Tech recommends assessing by canvassing current tenants and users.
- 4) Tetra Tech recommend considering the impact of drag racing events on AVRA's service levels. ACRD provides information to pilots on the services available at the airport and in the vicinity, and disruption of AVRA services and facilities for non-aviation events may impact the reputation of the airport, and may reduce aircraft operator inclination to use this facility.
- 5) Tetra Tech indicated that it is difficult to quantify the impact of drag racing events on AVRA infrastructure. They stated that these events will contribute to the degradation of facilities including: asphalt surface, pavement shoulders, infield surfaces, taxiway surfaces, drainage systems, airfield lighting systems, and signage. Some of the activities identified are routine while some may only result for incidents or accidents that occur during a drag racing event.
- 6) Tetra Tech identified factors that adversely impact asphalt surfaces including: heat (spinning tires, hot engines, accidental fires), overall routine activity on pavement surfaces (loss of fine material, aggregate exposure, surface polishing), solvent or oil-based product spills and liquids applied to surfaces to facilitate burnouts, mechanical damage (fallen parts, accidents, disabled vehicle removals), rubber accumulation (surface damage and friction reduction), torqueing and/or scuffing of the surface (tire turns on warm pavement during hot summer days), accumulated rubber removal processes (dry abrasion – high pressure/volume water blasting, ultra-high pressure/low volume water cutting, or detergent and water spray), and finally on hot summer days the asphalt can potentially weep and/or absorb oils. It was recommended that friction testing be conducted after any such race events by a qualified service provider to ensure required Transport Canada friction characteristics are maintained.

Tetra Tech also highlighted that the expected lifecycle of the expanded runway is 25 years. Permitting annual drag races on the runway would reduce the life of the infrastructure by a number of years. However, exactly quantifying the number of years would be subject to the factors outlined in bullet number 6 and need to be confirmed by a qualified engineer.

- 7) Paint markings provide visual assistance to aircraft operators arriving and departing from the airport. Tetra Tech noted that some of the activities from drag race events can have a deleterious effect on paint markings including; tire burnouts, routine racing activity, rubber accumulation, rubber clean-up processes, and

mechanical damage.

- 8) Infield surfaces and facilities were improved as part of the runway expansion and are located near ecologically sensitive areas. Tetra Tech highlighted that the following drag race activities could potentially impact the infield surfaces and facilities including; race vehicle recovery routes, race monitoring and emergency personnel/vehicles, spectator seating, spectator movements, garbage, and deleterious liquid spill (fuel, oil, solvents). A comprehensive environmental management plan is recommended by Tetra Tech should this event move forward.
- 9) A 1.5 million dollar investment was made in the airfield lighting systems. To protect this investment Tetra Tech recommends removing all fixtures (edge lights, end lights, Precision Approach Path Indicators) prior to drag race events. All fixtures would need to be reinstalled after the event with some fixtures requiring recalibration.
- 10) Foreign object damage is the last concern raised by Tetra Tech. Foreign objects on an airfield can potentially cause injuries to people and/or damage aircraft or equipment. Most notably, this can include bits of rubber from the race vehicles and or pieces of asphalt from the runway. Garbage will need to be collected from paved surfaces, ditches, storm sewer gates, infield areas, leased areas, and along the perimeter fence prior to the airport re-opening.

#### **Time Requirements – Staff & Elected Officials:**

Significant staff time will be required to ensure the AVRA asset is protected should this event proceed. It is estimated that four days of staff time would be required to oversee an electrical contractor, one day to sweep the runway, and an additional three days of staff time to oversee rubber removal and line painting.

#### **Financial:**

There a number of financial considerations with the 2019 proposal. Specifically, allowing the race event to take place at AVRA on the runway infrastructure would result in following costs:

- Rubber removal \$4,000 - \$7,000
- Line painting \$3,000-\$7,000
- Remove, reinstall, and aim runway and PAPI light fixtures \$13,000\*
- Rental of a sea-can to store light fixtures \$750
- Staff time \$2700
- Total estimated costs \$23,450 - \$30,450

\* The electrical contractor that provided the cost for removal and reinstallation of the lighting does not recommend this process, given the risk of damage to the equipment.

It is recommended that, at a minimum, the full recovery of these costs be included in any use agreement for the AVRA event and that a bond be required in order to secure such funds.

#### **Policy or Legislation:**

None at this time.

Submitted by:



Mark Fortune, Airport Superintendent

Reviewed by:

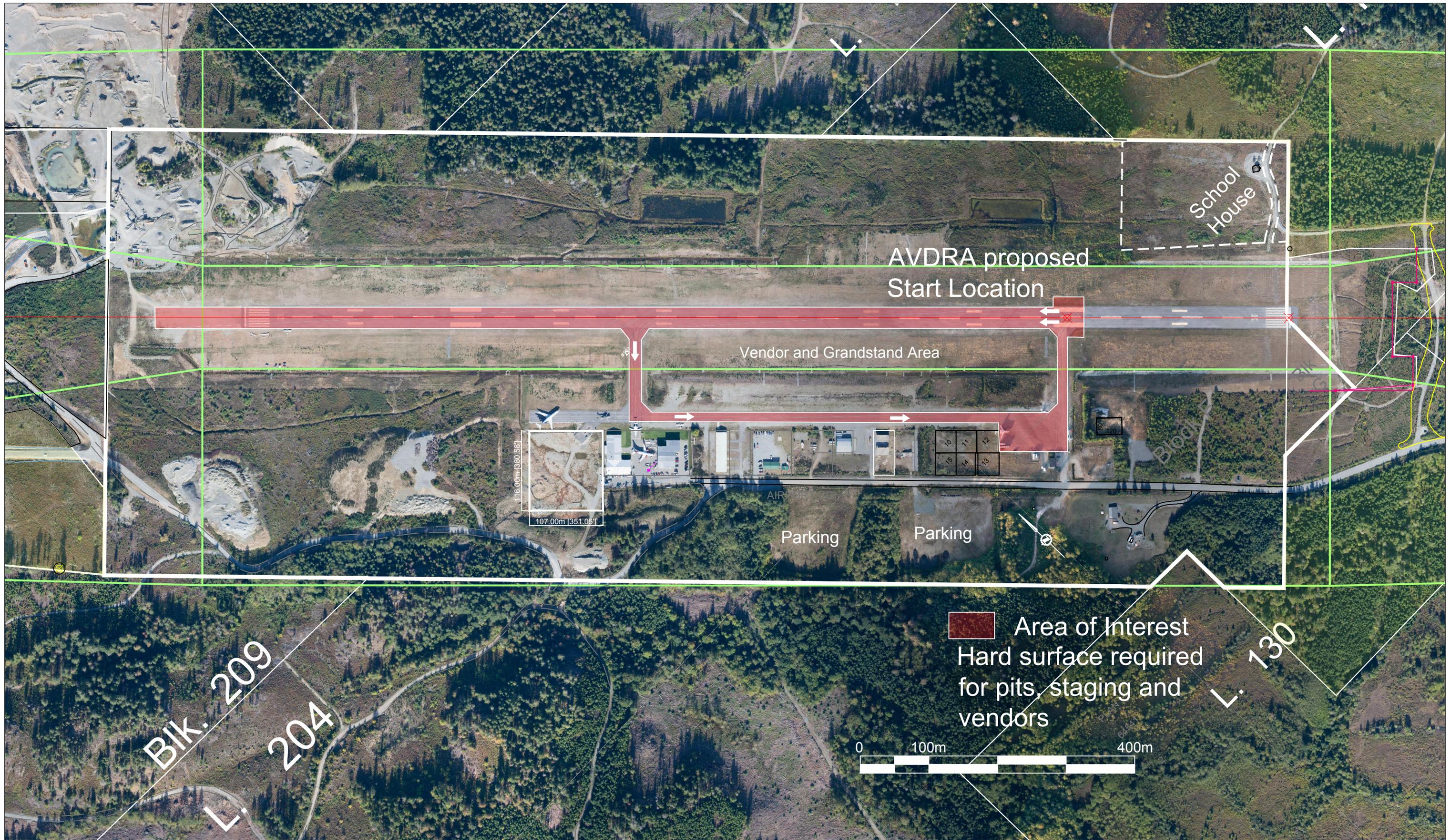


Rob Williams, MSc, General Manager of Environmental Services

Approved by:per



Douglas Holmes, BBA, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer



**To:** Mark Fortune  
Airport Superintendent,  
Alberni Valley Regional Airport

**Date:** March 14, 2019

**c:**

**Memo No.:** 1

**From:** Shawn Sutherland, A.A.E.

**File:** 704-TRN.AIRP03387-01

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**Subject:** Review of Potential Motor Sports Event Activity on the Alberni Valley Regional Airport

*This 'Issued for Review' document is provided solely for the purpose of client review and presents our interim findings and recommendations to date. Our usable findings and recommendations are provided only through an 'Issued for Use' document, which will be issued subsequent to this review. Final design should not be undertaken based on the interim recommendations made herein. Once our report is issued for use, the 'Issued for Review' document should be either returned to Tetra Tech Canada Inc. (Tetra Tech) or destroyed.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tetra Tech Canada Inc. (Tetra Tech) was asked to review some of the implications on the Alberni Valley Regional Airport (AVRA) of allowing a seasonal motor sports event (drag races) to be conducted on airfield surfaces. Specifically, Tetra Tech was asked to outline issues that may result from the use of airside pavements and associated areas at AVRA for drag races. This brief review memo does not include considerations of the economic impact on the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD); however, it does assume that no new direct revenue for use of AVRA facilities will accrue to the ACRD from the drag race event.

## 2.0 LIMITATIONS OF REPORT

This report and its contents are intended for the sole use of the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) and their agents. Tetra Tech Canada Inc. (Tetra Tech) does not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of any of the data, the analysis, or the recommendations contained or referenced in the report when the report is used or relied upon by any Party other than the ACRD, or for any Project other than the proposed activity at the subject site. Any such unauthorized use of this report is at the sole risk of the user. Use of this document is subject to the Limitations on the Use of this Document contained in the Contractual Terms and Conditions executed by both parties.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

The ACRD commissioned a Pre-Design Report for the extension of Runway 12-30 at AVRA in September 2014. The business case for the proposed airfield expansion, and increase in the airport's levels of service, included the attraction of more and larger aircraft activity, i.e. to give AVRA more capacity and make it more available and attractive to aircraft operators. A decision was taken in 2015 by the ACRD, after public consultation, to borrow and seek grant funding to undertake the projects. Borrowing was to be paid back over 30 years. Three years of construction have brought the physical projects close to completion and pursuit of instrument approach procedures continues. Approximately \$7.5M has been invested by the ACRD in their vision of AVRA for the future.

The expected life cycle of the rehabilitated and expanded runway is at least 25 years, based on aviation activity.

A wide variety of aircraft operators presently use AVRA over the course of a year: locally based aircraft (powered and non-powered); itinerant aircraft (fixed and rotary wing); large aircraft arriving for technical conversion or maintenance; charter aircraft, diversion of scheduled aircraft due to weather (in Tofino); forest fire fighting aircraft, etc.

Drag race events were staged at AVRA in the years prior to the commencement of the expansion projects in 2015. The events have continued in the years since at a location in the City of Port Alberni. There is obviously a segment of the public that are interested in these race events.

The 2014 Pre-Design Report (page 11, Section 4.1, second paragraphs) noted that it was not necessarily assured that the event would return to AVRA in the future: *“if air traffic increases, over time, due to the larger capacity airfield, closing the aerodrome for two days or longer each year may have to be re-visited”*.

AVRA is a different facility than it was pre-2015. The investments made over the past three years were aimed at making AVRA more attractive as an airport, not necessarily as a multi-purpose venue. Decisions made on what activities should be allowed at AVRA, particularly non-aviation related activities, should consider the airport’s reputation; facilities; operations; prospects and direct revenue potential.

## 4.0 CONSIDERATIONS

### 4.1 Compatibility with current aircraft operations

Activities at AVRA should be complementary to the vision the ACRD articulated in 2014, and they should ideally advance that vision?

Current aircraft activity is different than it was in 2014 because of the investment in expansion of the airport. There are, for example, large jet aircraft using the airport that were not able to operate in the past at AVRA with its shorter runway. Landing 60,000 kg (132,000 lbs) aircraft at 125 knots (231.5 km/h) requires a paved surface with not only the necessary length, but good friction characteristics as well. Allowing non-aviation events on those paved surfaces that may degrade friction characteristics faster should be carefully considered by the ACRD.

Another consideration is whether staging of such non-aviation events impacts the reputation of AVRA as a reliable and available airport. Some aviation-related events that limit airport access, such as airshows or fly-in breakfasts, can be good reputation builders. But non-aviation events could contribute to a sense that serious investment made in the airport facilities was not entirely for aviation purposes.

### 4.2 Impact on future (potential) aircraft operations

An annual shutdown of AVRA in August may affect decisions made by aircraft operators in the future as to whether to use the airport on a routine basis, for visiting or to get fuel, etc. It could also play a role in decisions related to basing aircraft or aircraft operations at AVRA in future: private aircraft; commercial/charter aircraft; aircraft maintenance facilities; forest fire fighting operations; scheduled air carrier diversions (use of AVRA as an alternate airport); and hangar construction, etc.

2018 saw increased forest fire fighting aviation activity owing to the proximity of AVRA to the fire events. Aircraft were more convenient to fuel and so could carry more water to the fires with greater frequency. Also, since the runway extension was completed, the scheduled air carrier serving Long Beach Airport has used AVRA as an

alternate on some occasions when weather in the Tofino area prevented them from landing at their intended destination.

The evolution of a more commercial airport operation would see AVRA charging market-based fees for use in the future. Landing fees and parking fees, in addition to lease payments and fuel sales form the backbone of traditional direct revenues at commercial airports in Canada. Routine annual disruption of airport operations, in future, for non-aviation activities, may adversely affect AVRA's potential operating revenue.

### 4.3 Impact on AVRA Tenants and Neighbours

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It is not clear whether the ACRD has consulted with AVRA's current tenants and users, i.e. those who lease space from the ACRD, regarding the impacts of shutting it down for a number of days in the height of the summer. Their views, particularly with the newly expanded airside facilities being able to accommodate more and large aircraft, would be valuable input.

Such an event held in the middle of summer may serve to disrupt planned activities of these tenants and users, or, as seen in the forest fire example of 2018, disrupt critical aircraft operations at an important time.

Another consideration is that an event not conducted at AVRA for three years, including large crowds and consistently loud noise over a number of long days/nights may not be favourably received by business and private operations on leased airport property or those bordering AVRA.

### 4.4 Impact on AVRA Levels of Service

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In addition to the runways, taxiways and aprons available for aircraft operators at AVRA, the ACRD also provides information to pilots on other services available in the vicinity. Information published in official Aeronautical Information Publications, including the Canada Flight Supplement, tell aircraft operators of these services: telephone; food; taxicabs, medical facilities, rental accommodation and car rentals.

Work continues on obstacle management in the vicinity of the airport to accommodate future levels of service at AVRA. Once road construction projects at either end of the runway is completed, and additional trees are removed, AVRA will accommodate night aircraft operations. Certification of an instrument approach procedure that has been designed for AVRA will be possible once the obstacle management tasks have been completed. These additional levels of service represent a significant increase in the availability and capacity of the airport for aircraft operators in the near future.

Disruption of AVRA services and facilities for non-aviation events may impact on the reputation of the airport; and, may reduce aircraft operator inclination to use AVRA on an itinerant or other basis.

### 4.5 Impact on AVRA Infrastructure

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Although difficult to precisely quantify, the staging of drag race events is going to contribute to the degradation of facilities over time and with recurrence of the events: asphalt surface, pavement shoulders, infield surfaces, taxiway surfaces, drainage systems (ditches/inlets/outlets), airfield lighting systems and signage. The activities will contribute to the reduction of the useful life of the AVRA airside facilities. Some activities identified below are routine for racing events, while others may only result from incidents, accidents or other non-routine occurrences during the events.

### 4.5.1 Paved Surfaces

Asphalt surfaces may be adversely affected by a number of different racing event factors:

- Heat – spinning tires, hot engines/drive trains just above the surface, accidental fires, etc.;
- Overall routine activity on pavement surfaces - loss of fines, aggregate exposure, and surface polishing;
- Solvent or oil-based product spills and liquids applied to surfaces to facilitate burnouts;
- Mechanical damage – fallen or failed parts, accidents along the runway, disabled vehicle removals;
- Rubber accumulation (surface damage and friction reduction);
- Torqueing and/or scuffing of the surface (tire turns on warm pavement during hot summer days);
- Accumulated rubber removal processes: dry abrasion; high pressure/volume water blasting; ultra-high pressure/low volume water cutting; or detergent and water spray; and
- On hot summer days asphalt can potentially weep and/or absorb oils, which speaks to potential impacts of non-aviation activity even beneath the surface of the recently installed pavement surfaces.

If the race event takes place, for any portion, on the paved surfaces at AVRA, any remedial work necessary, and to the satisfaction of the ACRD, should be the responsibility of the event organizers. This would include friction testing by a qualified service provider so that deterioration of the runway surface characteristics can be tracked year by year. Standards related to friction characteristics and testing for runways can be found in Transport Canada document TP312 5<sup>th</sup> Edition *Aerodrome Standards & Recommended Practices*, Section 9.1.2.

The expected life cycle of the rehabilitated and expanded runway is at least 25 years. Allowing drag races on the runway annually would reduce the expected life cycle by years. Estimating how many years would require pavement specialists and engineers to evaluate the race activity anticipated: event duration; frequency; length of track; number/type of racing vehicles; size/type of tires; liquids used to aide burnouts; duration of burnouts; duration of races themselves; route of return to start; service/emergency vehicle activity on the runway during the course of each race weekend; rubber removal method; average temperatures during race events; etc.

This info would be needed to quantify the deleterious effects of the drag racing over time, in order to fairly estimate the number of years the racing activity might take off the expected life cycle of the new runway.

### 4.5.2 Paint Markings

Airfield surface paint markings serve the specific purpose of providing visual assistance to aircraft operators arriving and departing at the airport. Some of the activities related to the drag race events can have a deleterious affect on the paint markings:

- Tire burnouts;
- Routine racing activity (tire wear on paint);
- Rubber accumulation
- Rubber clean-up processes (some methods noted in 4.5.1 above); and
- Mechanical damage (accident related)

If the race event takes place, for any portion, on the paint marked surfaces at AVRA, any remedial work necessary, and to the satisfaction of the ACRD, should be the responsibility of the event organizers.

### 4.5.3 Infield Surfaces & Facilities

Recent investments made by the ACRD in expanding the airfield also included significant improvements to the infield grounds around the runways/taxiways and the stormwater drainage systems across the airfield. Seasonally

significant weather events have proven to be a challenge and the ditches, culverts, intakes and outfalls that collect and distribute this stormwater are located near ecologically sensitive areas. A number of drag race related activities could potentially impact on these infield surfaces and facilities:

- Race vehicle recovery routes;
- Race monitoring and emergency personnel/vehicles;
- Event officials and associated vehicles;
- Spectator seating;
- Spectator movements (pedestrians, strollers, pets, mobility assistance vehicles, etc.)
- Garbage;
- Deleterious liquid spills (fuel, oil, solvents)

Race event activities could lead to damage to the infield surface or drainage systems and, potentially, the release of materials (particularly liquids) into the sensitive watercourses adjacent to AVRA. A comprehensive environmental management plan should be provided by the event organizers and approved by the ACRD, if the races go ahead.

#### 4.5.4 Airfield Lights and Signs

An investment of \$1.5M has been made in airfield lighting systems to serve AVRA over the next few decades. All lights and signs are installed on frangible mountings to limit damage in the event of an aircraft incident or accident. Protecting this investment from unintended damage during the drag racing activities proposed for the runway area would require the careful removal of all fixtures (edge lights, end lights, PAPI units, RILs) prior to the event. Once the event was over, the units would have to be carefully reinstalled and, in some cases re-calibrated.

This work should only be done by qualified and experienced people and the cost should be borne by the event organizers.

#### 4.5.5 Foreign Object Damage (FOD)

A universally recognized airfield issue is Foreign Object Damage (FOD) whereby debris on the airfield can potentially cause injuries to people and/or damage to aircraft or equipment. A multi-day drag racing event, including multiple competitors and their equipment, as well as large crowds of spectators will create a FOD problem on the airport. Event set-up, staging, race area activities, recovery paths and spectator area activities (entry, bleachers, concessions, exit) will undoubtedly result in a garbage management challenge. FOD on paved surfaces (runway, taxiways aprons), in ditches, storm sewer grates, infield areas, leased areas, and along the perimeter fence must be completely eliminated before the airport can safely re-open the facilities that aircraft operations depend on.

Post-event inspection by AVRA officials, and remediation as necessary by event organizers, would be necessary before the airport can be opened for aviation activities: all costs should be borne by event organizers.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The ACRD must determine how best to protect the significant public investment in aviation facilities at AVRA, and optimize the life cycle those facilities, while repaying the significant amount borrowed to expand and improve them. The wear and tear of an annual multi-day drag racing event on these new facilities is hard to quantify precisely, i.e. how much it will affect the 30 years it will take to repay the borrow funds. It is clear though that the non-aviation activities will affect the useful life of these improvements to aviation infrastructure. There does not yet appear to be

a mechanism in place for the drag race event itself to contribute to the amortization of the significant cost of the improvements: direct revenue to the ACRD for use of AVRA to conduct the event, for example.

Focusing on aviation uses for the airfield facilities over the next three decades may be the most prudent way to maximize the life cycle of the improvements made. It may be better to keep the airside at AVRA for exclusive use of the varied types of aircraft operators that use the airport now, and increasingly will in the future. This was the prime consideration for the ACRD to make the significant investment it did at AVRA in the first place. It is our considered opinion that the years of service the ACRD could expect for the investment made in the new runway would not be achieved if these non-aviation activities are allowed on the runway.

If the drag races are invited back to AVRA, it may be challenging to disinvite the event in future as aircraft activity, both frequency and size, increases and renders the racing event an inconvenience to mid-summer air traffic. Perhaps there are other potential locations to be considered for the racing event in the area, if the City of Port Alberni venue used over the last three years is not available in the future.

However, should the ACRD decide to sanction the race events at AVRA, they should consider measures to protect the airside facilities and repair them if damage occurs as a result of the events. A clear operating agreement with the event organizers could be put in place to protect the ACRD facilities at AVRA. In addition to insurance provisions, this agreement could include such measures as pre-event damage deposits; cost recovery for removal/replacement/recalibration of airfield lights/signs; cost recovery for inspections before and after events, including friction testing; and other measures that would be appropriate.

In closing, though, it is recommended that the ACRD keep the AVRA airfield for aviation related activities, particularly in the interest of protecting its significant investment over the next three decades.

## 6.0 CLOSURE

We trust this advisory memo meets your present requirements. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,  
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## Our History & Past Successes

The Alberni Valley Drag Race Association (AVDRA) began in 2001. The drag race association was born out of a passion for drag racing and a desire to highlight the beauty of Vancouver Island as a viable destination race location and the only 1/4 mile race track on Vancouver Island.

When the drag race first began, it was held at the Alberni Valley Regional Airport and brought a significant amount of economic viability to the community through destination tourism, which directly increased the sales of local restaurants, pubs, hotels, gas stations and small businesses.

In addition to bringing economic viability to the Alberni Valley, the drag race also fosters a strong sense of community through volunteerism and cross-pollination of local businesses and services available throughout Port Alberni.

## Mission & Vision

The Alberni Valley Drag Race Association strives to bring the sport of drag racing to the Alberni Valley and to increase opportunities for economic growth, cultural capital, volunteerism and destination tourism.

## Our Current Challenges and Roadblocks to Success

In 2016, the AVDRA was forced to leave its original location at the airport and relocate the race to downtown Port Alberni on 3rd Ave. Since the race has relocated, the AVDRA has suffered a substantial loss in revenue, community support, tourism and volunteerism. The new location is far from ideal as it only offers an 1/8 mile "track" which is not designed to be raced on as it one of the main streets used for local traffic and thus proposes a plethora of logistical and safety issues for racers and attendees. Subsequently, because the track is now smaller several classes of vehicles, namely the faster pro vehicles can no longer race at the new location as the track is not long enough and the road quality is not suitable for vehicles of this speed to race at the new location.

It is for the reasons listed above and other reasons that will be outlined in this proposal, that the AVDRA is seeking to submit this formal proposal to the Regional Council in hopes to persuade Council to allow the drag race to return to the Alberni Valley Regional Airport.

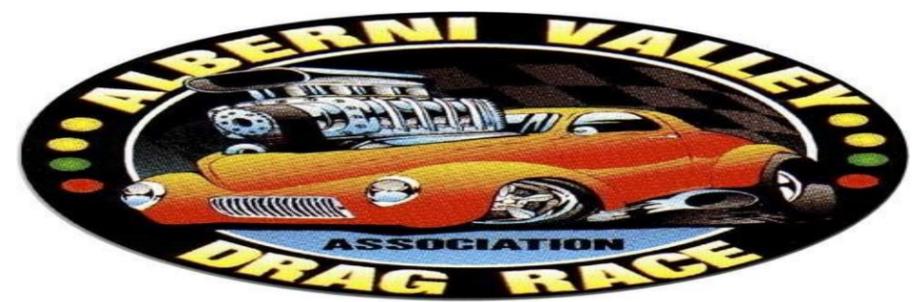
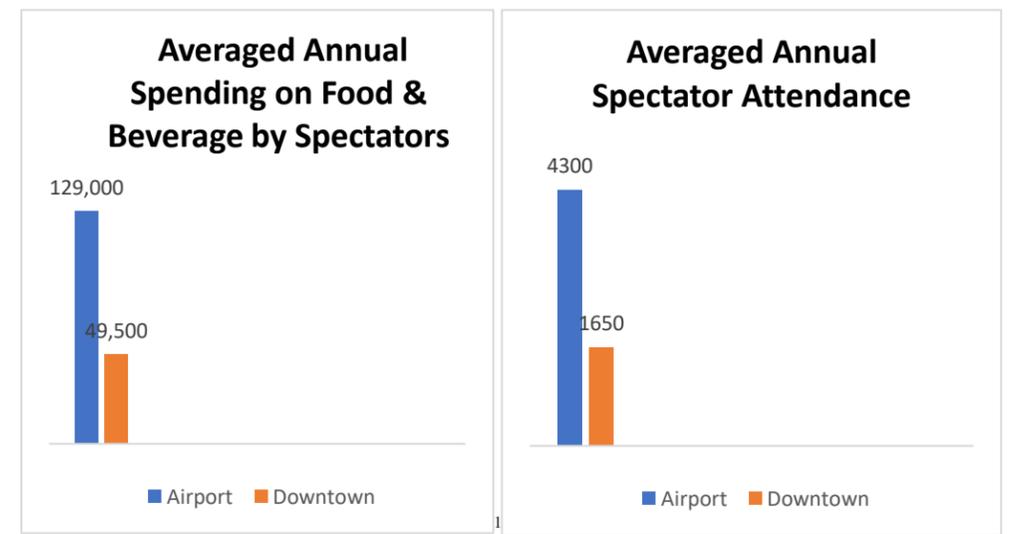


Figure 1: Thunder in the Valley Drag Race at its Original Location - note each trailer or umbrella represents a vendor

## Our Path Forward

In order to restore economic, and cultural capital to the AVDRA and the Alberni Valley, the Thunder in the Valley Drag race must be allowed to return to its original location at the airport. Relocating the drag race to the airport in and of itself does not require a specific timeline or additional money, but rather permission only to return. For the 2019 race season, the AVDRA would like to race from the middle of the current runway and focus long term, on improving the North end of the track which would be used as a permanent purpose driven venue for the AVDRA.

## Thunder in the Valley Stats at a Glance



The AVDRA would like, with the partnership of the Regional District, to build a permanent venue for the AVDRA, which would focus on its annual Thunder in the Valley 1/4 mile drag race and would expand its racing portfolio to include 2-3 more annual races that would only be an 1/8 mile but run on the 1/4 mile track, which would bring additional substantial economic and cultural viability to the Alberni Valley. Our vision for the new track would include building several burnout boxes and any needed additional roadways or infrastructure.