



Department of Public Works

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SURVEYING

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AGENDA
TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 22, 2025
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

LOCATION:
48 Yaney Ave, Sonora, CA
Third Floor —Committee & Commissions Room 3D

This Airports Advisory Committee meeting will be available to the public via in-person attendance only at the above physical address.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

2. PUBLIC FORUM

The public may speak on any item, not on the printed agenda. No Action may be taken by the Committee.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes from May 19, 2025, Airports Advisory Committee Meeting.

4. STAFF / COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Pine Mountain Lake Airport name change meeting (August 26, 2025)
- Proposed frequency change for Pine Mountain Lake Airport concurrent with name change.
- Columbia Airport Report on Lightning Complex Fire
- Obstacle Departure Procedure implemented by the FAA for PML Runway 27

5. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- Review and recommend amended airport fee increase option.

6. NEXT MEETING – October 14, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 48 Yaney Ave, Sonora, CA, Third Floor Conference Room- Public Works-3A

7. ADJOURNMENT



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TO: Airport Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Tonya Scheftner, P.G., Airport Manager
Blossom Scott-Heim, P.E., Director

DATE: September 22, 2025

RE: Airport Fee Increases

REQUESTED ACTION

Consideration of reviewing revised airport fee increase options (two options) and making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tuolumne County operates two public use airports – Columbia Airport (O22) and Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45)—which play a critical role in supporting general aviation, wildfire response, emergency services, tourism, and the local economy. Maintaining and improving these facilities requires consistent investment and a financially stable operating model.

In December 2024, the County accepted the Airport Feasibility and Viability Study for Pine Mountain Lake Airport and Columbia Airport (2024 Study) to evaluate long-term operational and financial health of both airports. The 2024 Study concluded that current revenues for hangar rentals are generally below fair market value, and an increase is needed to cover ongoing operational costs.

These professionals specialize in airport valuation and provided objective, industry-standard data. In May 2025, the Airport Advisory Committee (AAC) requested that airport staff (Tonya Scheftner, Airport Manager) and one member of the AAC (Joe Sobczak) reevaluate hangar and tie-down rates recommended in the 2024 Study noting that several “competitive airports” such as Calaveras (CPU) and Mariposa-Yosemite (MPI) had not been included in the Study.

In response, airport staff contacted CPU, MPI, and Oakdale Airports, and reviewed posted hangar fees for other regional airports, such as El Dorado County, Placerville, and Modesto. While nearby rates for these airports were considered, staff at several of these airports explained that many had only recently started adjusting fees after decades of little or no changes, often without annual CPI increases. As a result, Tuolumne County staff concluded these rates do not accurately reflect current market conditions and were not used as primary benchmarks. The consultant’s study was therefore used as the main guide for the proposed rates, with local conditions taken into consideration.

To assist with supplementing the local conditions, staff toured Columbia Airport hangars with the designated AAC member for an informal, on-site walk-through assessment to evaluate the facilities for additional adjustments based on access, amenities, and condition, as needed. At the request of the AAC, this information was used as the guide to develop the final proposed rates, along with consideration of local conditions.

At the May 2025 AAC meeting, staff presented three potential fee adjustment options derived from the 2024 Study. Discussion at that meeting focused largely on the overall need for potential fee adjustments and did not progress into review of the three proposed options. Since that time, staff have refined the analysis, incorporated Committee feedback, and adjusted certain hangar categories (one category adjusted upward, another downward) to better reflect local conditions alongside study recommendations. To streamline decision making, staff are now presenting two revised options for AAC consideration.

MARKET RENT

The 2024 Study emphasized the importance of implementing market-based aeronautical rental rates to improve the airports' financial independence and ensure compliance with FAA grant assurances. The County currently owns and leases 83 hangars at Columbia Airport and five hangars at Pine Mountain Lake Airport, along with multiple tiedown spaces at both airports.

- Columbia Airport recommended fee adjustments generally range from 6% to 22% with the largest recommended fee percentage increase at 109%.
- Pine Mountain Lake Airport recommended fee adjustments are smaller, ranging 1% to 2%, reflecting rates already closer to market value.

While the 2024 Study recommended tie-down increases, staff are not recommending tie-down adjustments at this time.

Airport staff requests that the Airport Advisory Committee review and provide input on two proposed fee increase options (Option 1 and Option 2) detailed in the attached Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Version Two to be considered for implementation and passed on to airport tenants.

Based on the recommended hangar fee increase options, Columbia Airport's increased revenue for Option 1 (Immediate Full Increase January 2026, with no CPI) is projected to generate approximately \$12,150 additional revenue January 2026 through June 2026, with an additional \$19,482 projected for the 2027 fiscal year, including the annual CPI increase. Option 2 (50% increase January 2026, remaining 50% increase plus CPI adjustment July 2026) would generate approximately \$6,216 for the remaining year, with the annual increase projected to generate an additional \$25,788, including the annual CPI increase. The estimated annual increases do not include tie-downs.

Based on the recommended hangar fee increase options, Pine Mountain Lake Airport's approximate increased revenue for Option 1 (Immediate Full Increase January 2026, with no CPI) is projected to generate approximately \$228 additional revenue annually January 2026 through June 2026, with the fiscal year 2027 increase projected to generate an additional \$972, including the annual CPI increase. Option 2 (50% increase January 2026, remaining 50% increase plus CPI adjustments July 2026) would generate approximately \$114 for the remaining year, followed by \$1,086 projected for the 2027 fiscal year, including the annual CPI increase. Pine Mountain Lake Airport has rates closer to market value. The estimated annual increases do not include tie-downs.

RECOMMENDATION

Airport Staff recommend that the Airport Advisory Committee review two proposed airport fee increase options and make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Amended – Version Two

Table 1 below summarizes the recommended 2024 Study Rental Rate Conclusions for Columbia Airport and Pine Mountain Lake Airport.

Table 1. 2024 Study Recommended Rental Rate Conclusions					
Columbia Airport					
Component	Identification	Size (SF)	Current Fee Monthly	Study Recommended Fee Monthly	Total Increase Monthly
Small T-Hangar	Row A – E	784	\$193.00	\$235.00	\$42.00
	Row F – G	960	\$273.00	\$290.00	\$17.00
	Row J – K	992	\$319.00	\$302.50	(\$16.50)
Executive Hangar	Row I	2,800	\$896.00	\$1,097.00	\$201.00
	Row I - Courtney	2,800	\$1,096.00	\$1,097.00	\$1.00
Portable T-Hangar	Port-a-Port	809	\$79.00	\$165.00	\$86.00
Box Hangar	Fickel Box	2,500	\$480.00	\$667.00	\$187.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	N/A	\$66.00	\$73.00	\$7.00
	Twin-engine		\$81.00	\$95.00	\$14.00
Pine Mountain Lake Airport					
Executive Hangar	Hangars 1 & 2	1,512	\$513.00	\$523.00	\$10.00
	Hangars 3 - 5	1,440	\$492.00	\$498.00	\$6.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	N/A	\$66.00	\$70.00	\$4.00
	Twin-engine		\$81.00	\$90.00	\$9.00

The per unit per month rental rate conclusions shown above in Table 1 utilize base rental rates with adjustments made for access, amenities, and condition of hangars as determined by the consultant. Details for base rental rates and adjustments are available for review in the Airport Feasibility and Viability Study.

Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Amended – Version Two

Table 2. Airport Staff Adjusted Rental Rate Conclusions					
Columbia Airport					
Component	Identification	Size (SF)	Current Fee Monthly	Adjusted Fee Monthly	Total Increase Monthly
Small T-Hangar	Row A – E	784	\$193.00	\$220.00	\$27.00
	Row F – G	960	\$273.00	\$290.00	\$17.00
	Row J – K	992	\$319.00	\$319.00	\$0.00
Executive Hangar	Row I	2,800	\$896.00	\$1,097.00	\$201.00
	Row I - Courtney	2,800	\$1,096.00	\$1,097.00	\$1.00
Portable T-Hangar	Port-a-Port	809	\$79.00	\$165.00	\$86.00
Box Hangar	Fickel Box	2,500	\$480.00	\$667.00	\$187.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	N/A	\$66.00	\$66.00	\$0.00
	Twin-engine		\$81.00	\$81.00	\$0.00
Pine Mountain Lake Airport					
Executive Hangar	Hangars 1 & 2	1,512	\$513.00	\$523.00	\$10.00
	Hangars 3 - 5	1,440	\$492.00	\$498.00	\$6.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	N/A	\$66.00	\$66.00	\$0.00
	Twin-engine		\$81.00	\$81.00	\$0.00

Values shown in **red** represent fees where staff recommends a variance from the Study's recommended fees.

Overall, airport staff concur with the consultant's fair market assessment for both airports. Table 2 presents minor adjustments made by staff to reflect local conditions

Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Amended – Version Two

Table 3. Option 1: 100% Fee Increase Effective January 2026, CPI July 2026

Columbia Airport						
Component	Identification	Qty	Current Fee (Monthly)	Recommended Fee Monthly (Effective Jan 2026)	Immediate Increase Monthly (Dollars)	July 2026 Monthly Estimated with CPI ¹ (Dollars)
Small T-Hangar	Row A – E	25	\$193.00	\$220.00	\$27.00	\$225.00
	Row F – G	16	\$273.00	\$290.00	\$17.00	\$297.00
	Row J – K ²	28	\$319.00	\$319.00 ²	\$0.00	\$327.00
Executive Hangar	Row I	4	\$896.00	\$1,097.00	\$201.00	\$1,123.00
	Row I - Courtney	1	\$1,096.00	\$1,097.00	\$1.00	\$1,123.00
Portable T-Hangar	Port-a-Port	1	\$79.00	\$165.00	\$86.00	\$169.00
Box Hangar	Fickel Box	1	\$480.00	\$667.00	\$187.00	\$683.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	16*	\$66.00	\$66.00	\$0.00	\$68.00
	Twin-engine	1*	\$81.00	\$81.00	\$0.00	\$83.00
Pine Mountain Lake Airport						
Executive Hangar	Hangars 1 & 2	2	\$513.00	\$523.00	\$10.00	\$536.00
	Hangars 3 - 5	3	\$492.00	\$498.00	\$6.00	\$510.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	5*	\$66.00	\$66.00	\$0.00	\$68.00
	Twin-engine	0	\$81.00	\$81.00	\$0.00	\$83.00

¹CPI is an estimated placeholder using the previous year's CPI.

²Row J-K is already above the recommended rate; no immediate increase is proposed.

*Based on current number rented

Note: There are 94 total single engine and 6 total twin engine tie-downs

Option 1 proposes a one-time increase to 100% of the recommended monthly fee reported in the 2024 Study (Table 1) to all hangars effective midyear (January 2026). The fees would remain fixed through June 30, 2026, with no additional adjustments. Beginning July 1, 2026, annual fee adjustments would resume based on the CPI. Estimated hangar revenue is discussed further on the following page.

Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Amended – Version Two

Columbia Airport Option 1: 100% Fee Increase January 2026, CPI Adjustments Begin in July 2026

Under Option 1 hangar fee revenue increase from January 2026 through June 2027 by a total of approximately \$31,632.00 for Columbia Airport. Tie-down revenue is not included.

- **January 2026 through June 2026**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$280,368 to \$292,518
 - Increase for second half of year: \$12,150
- **2027 Fiscal Year**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$292,518 to \$312,000
 - Increase for 2027 Fiscal Year: \$19,482

Pine Mountain Lake Airport Option 1: 100% Fee Increase January 2026, CPI Adjustments Begin in July 2026

Under Option 1 hangar fee revenue increase from January 2026 through June 2027 by a total of approximately \$1,200.00 for Pine Mountain Lake Airport. Tie-down revenue is not included.

- **January 2026 through June 2026**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$30,024 to \$30,252
 - Increase for second half of year: \$228
- **2027 Fiscal Year**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$30,252 to \$31,224
 - Increase for 2027 Fiscal Year: \$972

Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Amended – Version Two

Table 4. Option 2: 50 Percent Recommend Increase January 2026, 50 Percent Remaining Plus CPI July 2026

Columbia Airport					
Component	Identification	Qty	Current Fee Monthly	Fee Increase January 2026 Monthly (50% of Recommended Fee ¹)	Monthly July 2026 (50% of Fee plus 2.4% CPI ²)
Small T-Hangar	Row A – E	25	\$193.00	\$207.00	\$225.00
	Row F – G	16	\$273.00	\$282.00	\$297.00
	Row J – K	28	\$319.00	\$319.00 ³	\$327.00
Executive Hangar	Row I	4	\$896.00	\$997.00	\$1,123.00
	Row I - Courtney	1	\$1,096.00	\$1,097.00	\$1,123.00
	Fickel Box	1	\$480.00	\$574.00	\$683.00
Portable T-Hangar	Port-a-Port	1	\$79.00	\$122.00	\$169.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	16*	\$66.00	\$66.00	\$68.00
	Twin-engine	1*	\$81.00	\$81.00	\$83.00
Pine Mountain Lake Airport					
Executive Hangar	Hangars 1 & 2	2	\$513.00	\$518.00	\$536.00
	Hangars 3 - 5	3	\$492.00	\$495.00	\$510.00
Tie-downs	Single engine	5*	\$66.00	\$66.00	\$68.00
	Twin-engine	0	\$81.00	\$81.00	\$83.00

¹ Rounded to the nearest whole dollar

² CPI is an estimated placeholder using the previous year CPI.

³ No increase in January 2026

*Based on current number rented

Note: There are 94 total single engine and 6 total twin engine tie-downs

Option 2 proposes a phased approach, with fees for all hangar and tie-downs increased January 2026 by 50% (rounded to the nearest dollar) of the recommended monthly fee reported in the 2024 Study (Table 1) with the remaining 50% increase, with CPI, in July 2026. Beginning in 2027, the annual fee adjustments would resume based on the CPI.

Tuolumne County Airports – Aeronautical Rent Study Fee Scenarios & Recommended Fee Increase Packet – Amended – Version Two

Columbia Airport Option 2: 50 Percent Recommended Fee Increase Effective January 2026, 50 Percent Remaining Effective July 2026 plus CPI

Under Option 2 hangar fee revenue increase from January 2026 through June 2027 by a total of approximately \$32,004.00 for Columbia Airport. Tie-down revenue is not included.

- **January 2026 through June 2026**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$280,368 to \$286,584
 - Increase for second half of year: \$6,216
- **2027 Fiscal Year**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$286,584 to \$312,372
 - Increase for 2027 Fiscal Year: \$25,788

Pine Mountain Lake Airport Option 2: 50 Percent Recommend Increase January 2026, 50 Percent Remaining Plus CPI July 2026

Under Option 2 hangar fee revenue increase from January 2026 through June 2027 by a total of approximately \$1,200.00 for Pine Mountain Lake Airport. Tie-down revenue is not included.

- **January 2026 through June 2026**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$30,024 to \$30,138
 - Increase for second half of year: \$114
- **2027 Fiscal Year**
 - Projected Annual Revenue from \$30,138 to \$31,224
 - Increase for 2027 Fiscal Year: \$1,086

Note: The CPI rate for July 2026 is an estimate and may be adjusted.