



## Connect Oregon 10 Project Grant Application

To ensure you have current program information, sign up for the [Connect Oregon electronic mailing list](#).

The *Draft Grant Agreement* and *Frequently Asked Questions* are available on the [Connect Oregon website](#).

You must complete all required fields and upload required documentation for your application to be eligible to compete.

You can save your progress via the 'Save' button in the lower right corner of the page and revisit this form as you go.

**Applications must be received by 5:00 pm on Friday, March 27, 2026.**

**Application ID**  
Region 5 Aviation

### 1. Applicant information

*Complete this information for the applicant. Provide both a designated contact and an authorized representative (if different than the designated contact) for your entity. The authorized representative is someone who is authorized to make decisions and sign a funding agreement with ODOT should your project be chosen for funding.*

**Entity/Organization/Company Name**  
Grant County, Oregon

**Address**  
201 S. Humbolt, Canyon City, Oregon 97820

**Website address**  
<http://grantcountyoregon.net>

**Contact person name**  
Haley Walker

**Contact person title**

Airport Manager

**Email**

walkerh@grantcounty-or.gov

**Phone**

(541) 575-1151

**Authorized representative name, if different from the applicant contact**

**Authorized representative title**

**Phone**

**Email**

## 2. Entity type

**Entity type**

Public

**Business registry number**

**We recommend saving your application now.** Click the save button to do so.

## 3. Project name and location

*The project name should be brief, and clearly describe the project. The name you provide will be used in summary reports and other published materials. The project location should include county and state, and if applicable, the city where the project is physically located. Provide GPS coordinates (latitude and longitude).*

**Project name**

Airport Helipads Design, Environmental, and Construction

**Check this box if the project address is the same as the address listed above.**

No

**Project address (same as previously entered)**

201 S. Humbolt, Canyon City, Oregon 97820

**Project address, (or nearest street intersection or landmark)**

72000 Airport Rd., John Day, Oregon 97845

**Latitude (degrees and decimal)**

44°24'12.06"N

**Longitude (degrees and decimal)**

118°57'42.28"W

*To find the latitude and longitude, you can use Google Maps or other mapping service. Within Google Maps, you can right-click on the location of the project, select "What's here?", to get the address and the coordinates.*

*For example, the State Capitol Building's coordinates are 44.938422, -123.030740, thus 44.938422 goes into the Latitude box, and -123.030740 goes into the Longitude box.*

**4. Mode**  
Aviation

**5. Connect Oregon region**  
Region 5

#### **6. Brief summary of project**

Project will complete design, environmental review, and construction of five dedicated helicopter landing pads at Grant County Regional Airport. The helipads will support medical transport, wildfire response, law enforcement, and general helicopter operations while improving aviation safety by keeping the helicopter activity separated from the fixed-wing aircraft operations at the airport.

#### **7. Project purpose and description**

Grant County Regional Airport serves as an important aviation transportation facility for Grant County and surrounding areas of eastern Oregon. The airport supports emergency medical transport, wildfire suppression operations, law enforcement, government aviation activity, and general aviation services that provide critical transportation access to rural communities. However, the airport currently lacks dedicated helicopter landing facilities, requiring helicopters to operate in areas primarily designed for fixed-wing aircraft. This creates operational inefficiencies and increases the potential for conflicts between aircraft types.

This project will complete environmental review, engineering design, and construction of five dedicated helicopter landing pads at Grant County Regional Airport. The new helipads will provide clearly designated areas for helicopter operations and improve safety by separating helicopter traffic from fixed-wing aircraft movements on the airfield. The project will improve the airport's ability to safely support helicopter operations that serve critical transportation functions including medical flights, wildfire suppression operations, law enforcement missions, and other public service aviation activities.

The need for dedicated helicopter facilities has been identified in the 2019 completed Airport Master Plan. The master planning process evaluated current and projected aviation activity at the airport and identified the development of dedicated helipads as an important improvement to support safe and efficient aviation operations.

Helicopter operations play a particularly important role in eastern Oregon due to the region's large geographic area and limited transportation alternatives. Helicopters are frequently used for emergency medical transport, search and rescue operations, wildfire response, and other critical services that require rapid access to remote areas. Grant County Regional Airport provides an important aviation base that supports these activities.

Wildfire aviation response is a key component of protecting Oregon's forests, rangelands, and rural communities. Helicopters are commonly used for wildfire reconnaissance, crew transport, and water or retardant delivery during suppression operations. Maintaining safe and efficient helicopter facilities at regional airports helps ensure these aircraft can be deployed quickly when needed.

The project will also support emergency medical transportation services that rely on helicopter access to transport patients to advanced medical facilities outside the region. Due to the rural nature of Grant County, helicopter medical transport is often the fastest way to access specialized medical care.

This project has independent utility. Once constructed, the helipads will immediately improve aviation safety and operational efficiency at the airport without requiring additional phases to become functional. While the airport may pursue additional improvements in the future, the helipad construction will provide immediate benefits by establishing dedicated helicopter facilities and improving airfield operations.

The project will benefit aviation users, emergency service providers, and communities throughout Grant County and eastern Oregon by improving safety, increasing operational efficiency, and strengthening the

role of Grant County Regional Airport as a critical aviation transportation asset.

Supporting documentation for the project is included in the Grant County Regional Airport Master Plan, which identifies the development of dedicated helicopter landing pads as a recommended improvement to support airport operations and future aviation activity.

### 8. Useful life (years)

30 years. The proposed helicopter landing pads are expected to have a useful life of approximately 30 years. The project will construct paved helipads designed to accommodate routine helicopter operations and constructed in accordance with accepted airport engineering and pavement design standards.

Airport pavement infrastructure commonly has a service life exceeding 20 years when properly designed and maintained. The Federal Aviation Administration identifies typical design life ranges of 20–30 years for airport pavements depending on aircraft loading, pavement structure, and maintenance practices (FAA Advisory Circular 150/5320-6, Airport Pavement Design and Evaluation).

The helipads will support relatively light aircraft loading compared to runways used by larger fixed-wing aircraft, which can extend pavement life when routine maintenance is performed. With standard airport pavement maintenance practices such as periodic sealing, crack repair, and surface preservation, the expected useful life of the helipad pavement is conservatively estimated at 30 years, exceeding the 20-year useful life requirement specified in the Connect Oregon grant agreement.

## 9. Project schedule

Answer whether milestones above have been met; fill in projected start and completion dates. For planning purposes, we anticipate executing funding agreements within 3 months of projects being awarded by the Oregon Transportation Commission. Funding agreements are anticipated to be executed in Summer 2022, with construction needing to begin within one year from agreement execution, and be completed within three years of execution. Project schedule should demonstrate how the project will meet this requirement. Milestones 4 and 5 should reflect the dates the plans are ready and a construction contract is awarded for the first construction contract to complete the project.

- Scoping and planning means the development of the project size and scope, determination of operational requirements, and required public comment periods.
- Right-of-way and land acquisition means the process of securing land for the project site, including purchases, leases, eminent domain/condemnation, and the acquisition of required easements.
- Permits means the process of securing any required permits, approvals, or permission from any local, state, or federal agency.
- Final plans/bidding engineering documents means the development of any structural or operational documents required to advertise and build the project.
- Construction contract award means the securing of a contract to build, install, or otherwise prepare the project for operations or use.
- Project completion means construction or installation is complete and the project is ready for operation or use.

**Milestone 1: Scoping and planning**

**Has the milestone been met?**  
No

**Projected start date of milestone work**  
10/1/2026

**Projected milestone completion date**  
1/4/2027

<b>Milestone 2: Right of way and land acquisition</b>	<b>Has the milestone been met?</b> Yes	<b>Projected start date of milestone work</b>	<b>Projected milestone completion date</b>
<b>Milestone 3: Permits</b>	<b>Has the milestone been met?</b> No	<b>Projected start date of milestone work</b> 12/1/2026	<b>Projected milestone completion date</b> 5/3/2027
<b>Milestone 4: Final plans/bidding engineering documents</b>	<b>Has the milestone been met?</b> No	<b>Projected start date of milestone work</b> 1/4/2027	<b>Projected milestone completion date</b> 6/30/2027
<b>Milestone 5: Construction contract award</b>	<b>Has the milestone been met?</b> No	<b>Projected start date of milestone work</b> 7/1/2027	<b>Projected milestone completion date</b> 9/30/2027
<b>Milestone 6: Project completion</b>	<b>Has the milestone been met?</b> No	<b>Projected start date of milestone work</b> 9/30/2027	<b>Projected milestone completion date</b> 7/31/2028

**10. Will the project's construction schedule be constrained by environmental considerations (bird-nesting, fish-spawning seasons, temperature or weather)?**  
Yes

**If yes, then please explain and provide limitation dates**  
Construction may be limited by weather typical in eastern Oregon, including freezing temperatures and winter conditions that affect paving and earthwork. Construction will generally occur between April and October. If environmental review identifies nesting birds, ground disturbance may be restricted during the nesting season (April 1–July 31) unless surveys confirm no active nests are present.

**11. Who was responsible for determining the project schedule and what is their level of expertise? (i.e. city or consulting engineer, construction project manager, city staff, etc.)**

The project schedule was developed by Grant County staff in coordination with experienced aviation planning and engineering professionals. The schedule reflects standard timelines for airport design, environmental review, and construction based on industry practices and similar airport improvement projects, ensuring a realistic and achievable delivery timeline.

## 12. Project property control

*Property used for a Connect Oregon project must be committed for such use for 20 years following construction. If the property is not yet secured, describe the steps and timeline to complete the transaction(s). Note: All property transactions must be completed 60 days prior to OTC final selection of projects.*

**Identify the method of control for project property**

Wholly or partially owned by applicant

**Provide the steps and timeline to complete the acquisition or lease transactions:**

**13. Describe any project risks or barriers to being ready for construction and your plan to address the risks/barriers**

The primary risks to project delivery include environmental review timelines, permitting coordination, and construction scheduling. Environmental review will require coordination with state and federal agencies

and could affect the schedule depending on the level of review required. To address this risk, the project includes funding for experienced aviation engineering and environmental consultants who will initiate permitting early and coordinate closely with agencies.

Property acquisition is not required, as the project occurs on existing airport property, reducing schedule uncertainty. Construction timing may also be affected by seasonal weather conditions typical in eastern Oregon. This risk will be addressed by scheduling construction during appropriate weather windows and completing design and permitting in advance to allow timely project delivery.

#### **14. Describe your public and stakeholder engagement process efforts**

Grant County has engaged stakeholders through coordination with county leadership, airport users, emergency response partners, aviation stakeholders, and local businesses. The project was identified in the 2019 Grant County Regional Airport Master Plan through stakeholder input and evaluation of aviation needs.

Dedicated helipads are a frequent request from rotor-wing operators, including fire aviation, medical transport, and wildlife aviation. Public meetings provided opportunities for input, with stakeholders emphasizing the need to improve safety and support emergency operations.

### **15. Public body approvals and permits**

Identify all public body approvals and permits needed to complete the project; indicate the status of each approval/permit. Add approvals/permits as needed. Below are descriptions of some possible approvals/permits that projects are subject to. Other potentially required permits may involve wetlands, material sources, fish passage, airport clearance, railroad clearance, waterways and other federal, state and/or local requirements. All permits needed for construction must be secured within nine months following execution of a grant funding agreement.

- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) applies whenever a proposed activity or action:
  - is proposed on federal lands;
  - requires passage across federal lands;
  - is to be funded – either entirely or in part – by the federal government; or
  - affects the air or water quality that is regulated by federal law.

When any one of these four conditions are present, the federal agency with the greatest expertise, regulatory authority, and capacity to manage the NEPA process for the proposed project becomes the lead agency for that project.

These actions are defined at [40 CFR 1508.1](#). The environmental review under NEPA can involve three different levels of analysis:

1. [Categorical Exclusion determination \(CATEX\)](#)
2. [Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact \(EA/FONSI\)](#)
3. [Environmental Impact Statement \(EIS\)](#)

- Identify if in-water work permits are required for the project. More information can be found at the following website: <https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/ww/pages/permits.aspx>
- Identify if United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permits are required for the project. More information can be found at the following website: <https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Regulatory-Program-and-Permits/Obtain-a-Permit/>
- Coordination with Native American tribal representatives is often required prior to construction. Projects located along or crossing borders may require coordination with jurisdictions and/or state agencies in bordering states.

## Complete the following:

<b>NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE)</b>	<b>Status</b> Permit required/materials not submitted	<b>Expected completion date</b> 5/31/2027
<b>NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA)</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>In-water work permit</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Army Corps of Engineers permit</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Coordination of project approval with any Native American tribe or another state</b>	<b>Status</b> Permit required/materials not submitted	<b>Expected completion date</b> 5/31/2027

## Any additional specific permits or approvals needed

<b>Specific permit or approval needed</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Expected completion date</b>
Airport Layout Plan (ALP) Approval	Permit required/materials not submitted	5/31/2027

## 16. Planning and land use

*Demonstrate the project's compliance with land use documents identified below or describe how you will achieve compliance. Add any additional planning/land use efforts that are not listed. A limited land use decision must be complete within six months of the execution of a grant funding agreement. If the use is not permitted outright and/or requires a land use decision to be a legally allowable use on the site, the land use decision must be complete 60 days prior to the OTC's final action to select projects.*

- *A Transportation System Plan (TSP) is a plan for one or more transportation facilities planned, developed, operated, and maintained in a coordinated manner to supply continuity of movement*

among modes, and within and between geographic and jurisdictional areas.

- *Comprehensive Plan means a generalized, coordinated land use map and policy statement of the governing body of a local government that interrelates all functional and natural systems and activities relating to the use of lands, including but not limited to sewer and water systems, transportation systems, educational facilities, recreational facilities, and natural resources and air and water quality management programs.*
- *A Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a 20-year plan prepared by a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that identifies needed transportation projects and funding sources.*
- *A zoning amendment is a formal changing of the land use, which requires approval and adoption by the pertinent local government.*
- *A Goal Exception is a decision to exclude certain land from the requirements of one or more applicable statewide goals. (See our [list of Statewide Planning Goals](#))*

<b>Identified in adopted transportation system plan (TSP)</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Identified in adopted local comprehensive plan</b>	<b>Status</b> Completed	<b>Expected completion date</b> 1/31/2019
<b>Identified in adopted regional transportation plan (RTP)</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Requires amendment to local zoning to change the use of the property</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Goal exception (if required by state planning goals)</b>	<b>Status</b> Not applicable	<b>Expected completion date</b>
<b>Identified in public or corporate planning document</b>	<b>Status</b> Completed	<b>Expected completion date</b> 1/31/2019

## Any additional planning or land use efforts not specified above

Planing/land use effort	Status	Expected completion date

### 17. Planning/land use narrative

The proposed project is consistent with existing land use designations and does not require a land use decision, zoning change, or goal exception. The project will be constructed within the existing footprint of Grant County Regional Airport, which is designated and zoned for airport and aviation-related uses.

The project was identified in the 2019 Grant County Regional Airport Master Plan, which evaluated current and future aviation needs and recommended development of dedicated helicopter landing facilities to

improve safety and operational efficiency. The proposed helipads are consistent with the airport's planned development and intended use.

No additional land use actions such as partition, subdivision, or conditional use permits are required. The project will proceed in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

## 18. Project budget

As the Connect Oregon program is intended to support Oregon's economy, we would generally encourage grant recipients to contract out the work to the private sector. While grant recipients may need to perform some specialized work in-house, please confirm your plans with the Connect Oregon program office following grant award. Private sector recipients should review the sample grant agreement clarifying what is not allowed around "related parties." No additional Connect Oregon funds will be available; grant recipients who are awarded funds will be responsible for any additional project costs and will be held to completing the scope of work in their funding agreement.

**The Connect Oregon program is a reimbursement program. Grant recipients will be required to pay its consultants/contractors/vendors prior to seeking reimbursement from the Connect Oregon program.**

**18a. Budgeted amount: land acquisition**  
\$0.00

**18b. Budgeted amount: permits, other public body approvals (application preparation/fees)**  
\$20,000.00

**18c. Budgeted amount: design/engineering**  
\$88,000.00

**18d. Budgeted amount: design/engineering contract administration**  
\$25,000.00

**18e. Budgeted amount: construction**  
\$387,000.00

**18f. Budgeted amount: construction contract administration**  
\$28,000.00

**18g. Budgeted amount: miscellaneous**  
\$10,000.00

**Subtotal**  
\$558,000.00

**Contingency**  
\$30,000.00

**Total project cost**  
\$588,000.00

## 19. Who was responsible for determining the project budget and what is their level of expertise?

The project budget was developed by Grant County staff in coordination with experienced aviation engineering consultants. The estimate is based on industry standards, recent comparable airport projects, and professional engineering cost estimating practices. The consulting engineers have expertise in airport planning, design, and construction, ensuring the budget reflects realistic costs for design, environmental review, and construction of aviation facilities.

## 20. Grant request/matching funds requirement

Enter the grant request; the total project cost will come from question 18 above. The applicant match and match percentage will calculate automatically. An applicant must provide at least 30% of the project's funding or 50% for Class I railroads.

The amount of matching funds an applicant makes available is used in scoring your application. Should an

applicant be chosen for funding, the commitment of matching funds shown in the application may not be reduced through the life of the project.

**Total project cost**  
\$588,000.00

**Grant request**  
\$411,600.00

**Applicant match (dollars)**  
\$176,400.00

**Applicant match (percent)**  
30.00%

## 21. Please identify each source of matching funds you will use for the project

Source	Amount	Date Available
Oregon Department of Aviation COAR grant	\$80,000.00	2/10/2026
FAA AIP	\$96,400.00	10/1/2026

## Economic Benefits

### 22. How does the project reduce transportation costs for Oregon businesses or improve access to jobs and sources of labor?

Grant County Regional Airport supports aviation access for businesses, public agencies, and service providers across eastern Oregon. Currently, the lack of dedicated helipads requires rotor-wing aircraft to operate in fixed-wing areas or on gravel and grass surfaces, creating safety risks and operational inefficiencies.

This project will construct dedicated helipads, improving safety and reducing delays. Efficient helicopter access supports medical transport, wildfire response, and aviation services by reducing response times and improving reliability for businesses and workers in remote areas.

### 23. What are the specific economic benefits to this state that will result from this project?

GCRA supports aviation services that enable businesses and public service providers to operate effectively in eastern Oregon. The lack of dedicated helicopter facilities limits operational efficiency and creates safety constraints for rotor-wing operators.

This project will construct dedicated helipads, supporting continued operations of medical transport providers, wildfire aviation contractors, and other aviation service providers operating in Oregon. These services rely on safe and efficient helicopter access to maintain operations in rural areas.

By improving helicopter facilities, the project helps retain aviation-related services in Oregon that support emergency response, natural resource protection, and rural communities. These operations require skilled pilots, mechanics, and aviation personnel and depend on functional airport infrastructure to remain based in Oregon rather than relocating operations to other states or regions with better facilities.

The project strengthens the state's ability to retain aviation services that support Oregon's rural economy and critical industries, including agriculture and forestry, by ensuring necessary infrastructure is in place for safe and efficient helicopter operations.

### 24. Describe how the project provides a critical link connecting elements of Oregon's transportation system, and how it will measurably improve utilization and efficiency of the

**transportation system.**

Grant County Regional Airport is a key aviation link in eastern Oregon. This project improves an existing transportation connection by constructing dedicated helipads, separating helicopter and fixed-wing operations. The project improves safety, reduces operational conflicts, and increases efficiency for aviation transportation supporting medical flights, wildfire response, and public service operations across the region.

**25. How does the project improve Oregon's transportation system efficiency and/or utilization?**

- Increases system capacity
- Relieves a bottleneck or congestion point
- Removes an existing barrier
- Reduces traffic or use conflicts

**Explain:**

Grant County Regional Airport currently accommodates helicopter operations in shared or informal areas, limiting the number of rotor-wing aircraft that can operate simultaneously. Construction of five dedicated helipads creates additional, purpose-built operational space, allowing multiple helicopter operations to occur safely and concurrently. This increases the airport's capacity to support aviation transportation, particularly during high-demand periods such as wildfire response and medical emergencies. The need is identified in the 2019 Airport Master Plan.

**Explain:**

Helicopter operations are currently constrained to limited shared areas with fixed-wing aircraft, creating operational bottlenecks during periods of increased activity. These constraints can delay landings, staging, and deployment, particularly during emergency response events. The addition of five dedicated helipads distributes rotor-wing activity across the airfield, relieving congestion and improving operational flow. This need is documented in the 2019 Airport Master Plan.

**Explain:**

**Explain:**

The absence of designated helicopter landing facilities creates a physical infrastructure barrier to safe and efficient rotor-wing operations. Helicopters must use non-standard surfaces or shared areas, limiting operational capability and increasing risk. Constructing dedicated helipads removes this barrier by providing compliant, purpose-built infrastructure that supports consistent and reliable helicopter operations. This deficiency is identified in the 2019 Airport Master Plan.

**Explain:**

Currently, helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft operate in overlapping areas, creating conflicts in movement patterns, visibility, and ground operations. Additionally, use of gravel and grass surfaces introduces further safety concerns. Dedicated helipads establish clear separation between aircraft types and eliminate reliance on informal landing areas, significantly reducing operational conflicts. This improvement aligns with recommendations in the 2019 Airport Master Plan.

**Explain:**

**Explain:**

**Explain:**

## Additional Questions

**26. a) How is success measured for this project (include methodology for calculation)?**

Success will be measured by the completion and operational use of five dedicated helipads and the increase in safe, designated helicopter operations at the airport. Baseline conditions show no dedicated helipads and use of shared or informal areas. Post-project, success will be measured by the number of helicopter operations using the helipads and reduced use of gravel, grass, and shared fixed-wing areas.

**b) What is the existing measurement today?**

No dedicated public-use helipads exist. Helicopter operations occur in shared fixed-wing areas or on gravel and grass surfaces, creating safety risks and operational conflicts.

**c) What is the anticipated measurement when the project is fully operational?**

Five dedicated helipads are available for public use, increasing safe helicopter operations and eliminating reliance on gravel, grass, and shared fixed-wing areas.

**27. Does the project improve an existing transportation connection or add a new connection to an industrial oremployment center?**

No

**If yes, check all that apply.**

The project creates a new connection

**28. This project improves or creates access to:**

Name of the Industrial Center

Name of the employment center

Name of the certified "Project Ready" site

**29. Does the project improve safety?**

Yes

**Explain. Please note the number and type of incidents (fatal accident, injury accident, property-damage accident, crime, or other) within a specified timeframe.**

Helicopter operations currently occur in shared fixed-wing areas or on gravel and grass surfaces, creating safety risks due to conflicting aircraft movements and non-standard landing surfaces. This project will construct dedicated helipads to separate operations and improve safety, consistent with needs identified in the 2019 Airport Master Plan.

**30. Does the project serve one or more of Oregon's Statewide Business Clusters? Check all that apply.**

Agriculture

Forestry and Wood Products

Aviation

**Provide detail on the Business Clusters served.**

GCRA is a critical base for aviation supporting Oregon's Forestry and Agriculture clusters, including wildfire suppression, rangeland management, and natural resource protection. Without dedicated helipads, operations are constrained and less safe. This project enables reliable helicopter operations, ensuring these industries can continue operating effectively in eastern Oregon's remote, high-risk environment.

**31. Does this project benefit the Oregon economy by generating a net increase in or retention of long-term jobs (beyond short-term construction jobs) and/or increasing private investment in**

Oregon?  
No

## Untitled

a) Number of long-term (non-construction) jobs created or retained as a direct result of the project:      b. Average annual wage of long-term (non-construction) jobs created or retained:

### c. List up to 5 businesses that will verify job creation/retention or new private investment:

Business Name	Name of contact person	Contact Person Phone

d. What is the increase by these businesses in Oregon as a result of this project?

### Commitment Letter Acknowledgement

e) Explain

32. Is the project located within 10 miles of a site allowed under ORS 215.213 (2)(d) or 215.283 (2)(b) on land that is zoned exclusive farm use? This is not common.  
No

## 33. Additional Considerations

Briefly describe any expected project benefits or impacts in the outcome areas below. The examples and questions listed below are intended to help identify benefits and impacts, but are not meant to be exhaustive. Consider each topic below and describe the expected project benefit and/or other impacts identified, along with considerations and conclusions made regarding how to improve possible benefits and reduce possible impacts. Include benefits or impacts the proposed project may have on related aspects of the [Strategic Action Plan](#) (SAP). As climate and equity are central themes of the SAP, responses to these items are required, even if the impacts are minimal.

### a) How does this project impact equity considerations?

This project improves equitable access to life-saving services in a remote, underserved region where residents face long distances to advanced medical care. Dedicated helipads ensure reliable emergency medical transport and wildfire response for all populations, including low-income and rural residents. By improving access to critical aviation services, the project reduces disparities in emergency response and transportation access across Grant County.

### b) How does the project impact climate mitigation, adaptation and sustainability considerations?\*

This project strengthens climate resilience by ensuring GCRA can reliably support helicopter operations during increasingly frequent and severe wildfire events. Dedicated helipads improve response efficiency, reducing delays in deployment. The project is located within the existing airport footprint, minimizing environmental impact while supporting long-term sustainability of this critical transportation asset serving rural Oregon.

### 34. Maintenance and Operations

**What is the source/are the sources of funds for the continued maintenance and operation of the project for the useful life of the project?**

Maintenance and operation of the helipads will be funded through Grant County’s airport operating budget. The County currently maintains airport infrastructure and will incorporate the helipads into its existing maintenance program. Ongoing costs will be supported through airport revenues and local funding as part of routine operations and capital planning.

**What is the status of these funds?**

Budgeted (committed for future)

**Describe the steps remaining to commit maintenance and operations funding for the useful life of the project?**

Maintenance and operations will be incorporated into Grant County’s annual airport budget and capital planning process. The County will allocate funding for routine maintenance and long-term upkeep of the helipads through established budgeting practices to ensure the infrastructure is maintained for its useful life.

**Have you had previous Connect Oregon grant awards?**

Yes

**Which cycle(s)?**

- Connect Oregon I
- Connect Oregon II
- Connect Oregon IV
- Connect Oregon V
- Connect Oregon 8
- Connect Oregon 9

**What was the total award?**

\$8,465,413.00

### 35. Documentation

**Property Ownership, land lease/control**  
991548 DEED - State of Oregon  
Dept of Aeronautics - Grant County.pdf

**Letters of support**  
GCRA Helipads Letters of Support.pdf

**Secretary of State Business ID**  
W-9 7-23-25.pdf

**Site Plans, if available**

**Planning/Permitting Documents**  
GCD-AMP 2018-Final.pdf

**Commitment Letters**

**Miscellaneous**

### 36. Authorizations and Signatures

Please read and check all boxes

By checking this box, I certify that above-mentioned Applicant Organization supports the proposed project, has the legal authority to pledge matching funds, and has the legal authority to apply for Connect Oregon funds. I further certify that matching funds are available or will be available for the proposed project no later than 60 days prior to the Oregon Transportation Commission's final action on grant awards, anticipated to be in September or November 2024. I understand that all State of Oregon rules for contracting, auditing, underwriting (where applicable), and payment will apply to this project.

By checking this box, I certify that all of the content of this application is true to the best of my knowledge and that I have read the Sample Draft Agreement and will sign the Agreement if selected. I understand that non-compliance with the agreement and program may result in a cancelled project and return of grant funds.

By checking this box, I certify that per Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 731-035-0050(2)(b), as a condition of Connect Oregon program eligibility, applicants must be current on all state and local taxes, fees and assessments where applicable. Inasmuch, as an authorized representative, I declare, that MY ORGANIZATION, is to the best of the undersigned(s) knowledge, current on all Oregon state and local taxes, fees and assessments. As a continuing requirement to remain eligible, I understand that MY ORGANIZATION will remain current on all Oregon state and local taxes, fees and assessments and failure to comply with this rule may result in corrective action up to and including a determination of ineligibility for Connect Oregon funding. I further understand that Connect Oregon funds may be withdrawn should it be determined that this certification was signed falsely or in error, or that MY ORGANIZATION has become delinquent in its state and local tax, fee or assessment obligation.

**Signature of authorized representative**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Haley Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

***The Connect Oregon program is a reimbursement program. Grant recipients will be required to pay its consultants/contractors/vendors prior to seeking reimbursement from the Connect Oregon program.***

Statute:

(c)(A) "Transportation project" means a project or undertaking for rail, marine or aviation capital infrastructure, including bridges, or a project that facilitates the transportation of materials, animals or people.

(B) A transportation project does not include costs associated with operating expenses.

(3) In selecting transportation projects, the commission shall consider:

(a) Whether a proposed transportation project reduces transportation costs for Oregon businesses or improves access to jobs and sources of labor;

(b) Whether a proposed transportation project results in an economic benefit to this state;

(c) Whether a proposed transportation project is a critical link connecting elements of Oregon's transportation system that will measurably improve utilization and efficiency of the system;

(d) How much of the cost of a proposed transportation project can be borne by the applicant for the grant from any source other than the Connect Oregon Fund;

(e) Whether a proposed transportation project is ready for construction;

(f) Whether a proposed transportation project has a useful life expectancy that offers maximum benefit to the state; and

(g) Whether a proposed transportation project is located near operations conducted for mining aggregate or processing aggregate as described in ORS 215.213 (Uses permitted in exclusive farm use zones in counties that adopted marginal lands system prior to 1993) (2)(d) or 215.283 (Uses permitted in exclusive farm use zones in nonmarginal lands counties) (2)(b).

BARGAIN AND SALE DEED

THE STATE OF OREGON, acting by and through its DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION -- AERONAUTICS SECTION ("Grantor") hereby conveys to Grant County, a political subdivision of the State of Oregon ("Grantee"), those improvements and personal property situated at the John Day State Airport, in Grant County, Oregon (a further description is attached as Exhibit A) and the real property on which it is located more particularly described as follows:

Property Description

In Twp. 13 S., R. 31 E., W.M.  
Secs. 27, 28 and 34:

and  
A tract of land situated in the E 1/2 of the SW 1/4 of Sec. 27, in the S 1/2 SE 1/4 of Sec. 28 and in the E 1/2 and the NW 1/4 of Sec. 34, described as follows:  
Beginning at a point on the east line of the NE 1/4 of said Section 27, said point being S.00°45'24"E., 2678.50 feet from the northeast corner of said Section 27;  
thence S.00°45'24" E., along the east line of said NE 1/4, a distance of 4.23 feet to the East 1/4 corner of said Section 27;  
thence S.00°36'41" E., along the east line of the SE 1/4 of said Section 27, a distance of 2659.19 feet to the southeast corner of said Section 27;  
thence S.00°15'35" E., along the east line of the NE 1/4 of said Section 34, a distance of 2641.99 feet to the east 1/4 corner of said Section 34;  
thence S.00°16'04" E., along the east line of the SE 1/4 of said Section 34, a distance of 323.37 feet;  
thence N. 85°58' 00"W., 1196.10 feet;  
thence N.04°02' 00" E., 1395.27 feet;  
thence N. 70°05' 00" W., 4316.17 feet to a point on the south line of the SW 1/4 SW 1/4 of said Section 27;  
thence S.89°47'15"W., along the south line of said SW 1/4 SW 1/4, a distance of 191.11 feet to the southwest corner of said Section 27;  
thence S. 89° 24'41"W. , along the south line of said S 1/2 SE 1/4 of said Section 28, a distance of 2678.11 feet to the south 1/4 corner of said Section 28;  
thence N.00°20'48"E., along the west line of the S 1/2 SE 1/4 of said Section 28, a distance of 1347.86 feet to the northwest corner of said S 1/2 SE 1/4;  
thence N.89°42'14"E., along the north line of the S 1/2 SE 1/4 of said Section 28, a distance of 2643.47 feet to the northeast corner of said S 1/2 SE 1/4 ;  
thence S.01°07'58"E., along the east line of the S 1/2 SE 1/4 of said Section 28, a distance of 406.58 feet;  
thence S. 70°05'00"E., 2695.25 feet to a point on the south line of the SE 1/4 SW 1/4 of said Section 27;  
thence N. 89°47'15"E., along the south line of said SE 1/4 SW 1/4 and the SE 1/4 of said Section 27, a distance of 1537.36 feet;  
thence N.04°02'00"E., 3216.26 feet;  
thence N.50°38'00"E., 97.95 feet;  
thence S.73°29'00"E., 660.00 feet;  
thence S. 37°09'54"E., 520.49 feet to the point of beginning.  
All being east of the Willamette Meridian, in the County of Grant and State of Oregon.

Case  
D.R.  
16 APR 99  
1 June 99

Case  
D.R.  
16 APR 99  
1 June 99

991548-2

Subject to any and all easements for utilities, irrigation pipelines or roads which have been duly recorded.

This conveyance includes all real property, runways, taxiways, apron, wind indicator, and easements appurtenant to the Property, including Clear Zone Easements, which are recorded as follows in Grant County:

1. Clear Zone Easement recorded in Book 84, Page 575, Grant County Deed Records.
2. Second Amended Clear Zone Easement recorded in Book 85, Page 253, Grant County Deed Records.
3. Power line Easement #971044
4. Right-of-Way Deed #950533
5. Avigation Easement recorded in Book 131, Page 394, Grant County Deed Records.
6. Water Pipe Easement recorded in Book 82, Page 401, Grant County Deed Records.
7. Road Easement Correction recorded in Book 81, Page 480, Grant County Deed Records.

This conveyance is subject to a right of reverter in Grantor, but Grantee shall maintain ownership only as long as Grantee, its successors or assigns, maintains and uses the property for the primary purpose of providing public airport facilities, and only for such secondary and incidental purposes as are not inconsistent with the primary purpose, it being the object and intent of Grantor to expedite the orderly expansion of the airport according to the needs of the people of Grant County.

The true and actual consideration paid for this conveyance is assumption by the Grantee of all of the obligations, covenants, terms and conditions with respect to the operation and maintenance of the John Day State Airport, and other good and valuable consideration.

The Oregon Transportation Commission on July 16, 1998 approved this conveyance and authorized the Aeronautics Manager to sign the appropriate document.

**After Recording Return To:**  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
Aeronautics Section  
3040 25th St. SE  
Salem, Oregon 97310

**Send Tax Statement To:**  
County Court of Grant County  
201 S. Humbolt St. Ste., 280  
Canyon City, Oregon 97820

THIS INSTRUMENT WILL NOT ALLOW USE OF THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE INSTRUMENT IN VIOLATION OF APPLICABLE LAND USE LAWS AND REGULATIONS. BEFORE SIGNING OR ACCEPTING THIS INSTRUMENT, THE PERSON ACQUIRING FEE TITLE TO THE PROPERTY SHOULD CHECK WITH THE APPROPRIATE CITY OR COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT TO VERIFY APPROVED USES AND TO DETERMINE ANY LIMITS ON LAWSUITS AGAINST FARMING OR FOREST PRACTICES AS DEFINED IN ORS 30.930.



Grant County Regional Airport

Airport Master Plan

<https://grantcountyoregon.net/DocumentCenter/View/613/GCD-AMP-2018-Final>



March 26, 2026

Oregon Transportation Commission  
Connect Oregon Program

RE: Letter of Support – Grant County Regional Airport Helipad Project

To Oregon Transportation Commission and Connect Oregon Review Committee,

I am writing to express strong support for the proposed helipad design and construction project at Grant County Regional Airport (GCRA).

GCRA serves as a critical aviation transportation hub for Grant County and surrounding areas of eastern Oregon. Due to the region's remote geography and long distances to advanced medical care, aviation access is essential for emergency response, including life flight services, wildfire suppression, and public safety operations.

Currently, the airport lacks dedicated helicopter landing facilities, requiring rotor-wing aircraft to operate in shared areas with fixed-wing aircraft or on gravel and grass surfaces. These conditions create safety risks, limit operational efficiency, and constrain the ability of aviation providers to respond quickly during emergencies.

The proposed construction of five dedicated helipads will significantly improve safety, reduce operational conflicts, and enhance the airport's ability to support critical aviation services. This project will strengthen emergency response capabilities, improve reliability for medical transport, and support wildfire aviation operations that protect communities, natural resources, and local economies.

For organizations like ours, reliable and safe helicopter access is not optional, it is essential. This project will provide the infrastructure necessary to ensure continued service in a region where aviation is often the only rapid transportation option.

We strongly encourage funding for this important project. The investment will provide lasting benefits to public safety, transportation efficiency, and the resilience of rural Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

Jim Hamsher  
Grant County Judge Grant County, Oregon

# Airport Commission

March 26, 2026

Oregon Transportation Commission  
Connect Oregon Program

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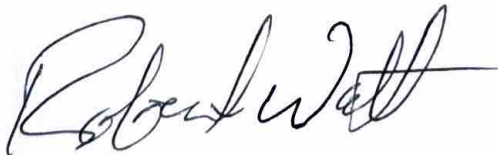
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Sincerely,



Robert Watt  
Airport Commission Chair  
Grant County Regional Airport

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**Grant County Regional Airport**

Robert Watt – Commission Chairperson, Barbara Temple, Bob Baggett, Cheryl Berry, Doug Ferguson, Scott Myers