READ AND CONSIDERED
DATE 8/29 BY

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: *Sonoma County Airport: Addressing Challenges and Preparing for the Future*

Report Date: June 12, 2025

Response by: Johannes Hoevertsz/Jon Stout Title: Director/Airport Manager

Agency/Department Name: Sonoma Public Infrastructure

FINDINGS:

I (we) agree with the findings numbered: None.

I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3, F4, F5

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons.)

F1. Charles M. Schultz - Sonoma County Airport's failure to update and execute its Master Plan in compliance with FAA recommendations is a root cause of airport maintenance and development problems.

The Department disagrees.

The Airport Master Plan (AMP) was last updated in 2011 and adopted in 2012. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidance does not require periodic updates to the AMP unless there have been substantial changes in conditions. Instead, the FAA requires updates to the Airport Layout Plan (ALP), which was comprehensively updated in 2022. This 2022 ALP includes updated forecasts, terminal planning, airfield geometry analysis, Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) and Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) needs, and parking expansion strategies. Many projects identified in the 2012 AMP—such as the Runway 14/32 Runway Safety Area (RSA) and the terminal expansion—have been completed, and others like the ARFF and ATCT facilities are under design. The ALP is consistent with FAA standards and offers the required long-term strategic planning framework.

F2. STS's current management resources are more appropriate for a general aviation or small commercial airport than for the medium sized passenger airport that Sonoma County Airport has become.

The Department disagrees.

STS is still categorized by FAA as a small commercial service airport. That said, Airport management acknowledges in general the need for additional staffing as operations

grow. In recent years, STS has added operations and information technology staff and is actively working with the County to secure further positions. A classification as "medium-sized" is not consistent with FAA definitions or comparable peer benchmarking. Nevertheless, staffing needs are continuously evaluated and aligned with service growth.

F3. Sonoma County Airport's management is reactive rather than proactive due to inadequate resources and staffing.

The Department disagrees.

The Airport has demonstrated proactive planning, including early identification of runway rehabilitation needs (now a $50 million project in coordination with FAA), implementing a $158 million capital improvement plan (CIP), and completing terminal modernization in advance of peak capacity. The ALP and CIP planning documents reflect proactive steps taken in line with limited funding and staff levels.

F4. Sonoma County Airport projects compete with road repair, traffic management, purchasing and other projects for senior Public Infrastructure Department leadership attention.

The Department disagrees.

Over 95% of capital funding for the Sonoma County Airport (STS) is derived from airport-specific revenue sources, including Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs), Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants, and Airport Infrastructure Grants. Only a small portion of airport maintenance and repair projects require shared resources from the Public Infrastructure Department, minimizing competition with non-airport projects.

The Airport Manager reports directly to the Director of Public Infrastructure and meets regularly to coordinate priorities. The department provides essential services as needed and maintenance resources when appropriate to ensure seamless operations and support for the airport.

F5. Parking is the largest airport revenue source, but the absence of adequate parking on site is a material barrier to continued growth.

The Department partially disagrees.

Parking is a top priority. STS is actively pursuing a multi-phase plan: rate increases (effective July 2025) as a means to manage demand, design of a consolidated rental car facility (which will free up short-term and long-term parking), and development of two future long-term lots (Flightline parcel and Roads Yard parcel). While parking is constrained during peak demand, average occupancy data shows capacity remains viable in the near term. All identified solutions are in 2–3-year implementation

windows. A parking structure was evaluated and determined not to be financially feasible due to the costs estimated to be in excess of $50 million.

While parking capacity is an important component of airport access, it is important to note that airport offers a variety of alternative transportation options for passengers, including rideshare services, public transit via Sonoma and Mendocino Transit, SMART Train Shuttle, hotel shuttles, taxis and limousine services. These multimodal access options help mitigate potential constraints poised by limited parking and support the Airport's continued growth by offering flexible means of transportation for a broad range of travelers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommendations numbered: None_____ have been implemented.
  (Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered: R1_____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
  (Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered: None_____ require(s) further analysis.
  (Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. ***This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.)***
- Recommendations numbered: R4_____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
  (Attach an explanation.)

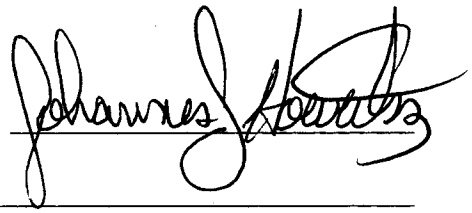
R1. By November 1, 2025, Sonoma County Public Infrastructure will determine how to resolve all FAA non-airport land use issues and submit this plan for Board of Supervisors' review.

The Airport and Public Infrastructure are finalizing a dual-track plan for FAA compliance: 1) negotiate market rent with NCDF, and 2) develop relocation strategy for the Roads Yard. These actions are underway and expected to be presented to the Board by the recommended deadline.

R4. By June 1, 2026, Sonoma County Airport shall complete and publish a full update of

the Airport Master Plan using the most current version of FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5070-6B to guide requirements for completing the updated plan.

This recommendation will not be implemented, as the 2022 Airport Layout Plan and update complies with FAA requirements. Additionally, because the FAA does not mandate Airport Master Plans updates without significant changes, and because the 2022 ALP provides comprehensive planning, Sonoma Public Infrastructure believes the current ALP serves as a de facto AMP. Finally, we would note that a full update to the Master Plan would require significant input from the Public and the Board and could not be completed by June of 2026.

Date: 8/26/2025 Signed: 

Number of pages attached: 0

(See attached PC Civil Grand Jury Response Requirements)