

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
Proposed Land Swap and Property Release
Ashville Regional Airport
Fletcher, NC**

I. Introduction/Background

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) announces final agency determinations and approvals for those Federal Actions by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that are necessary to support the proposed land swap and property release at the Ashville Regional Airport (AVL) in Fletcher, NC

II. Proposed Federal Action

The Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority (GARAA or “the Sponsor”) is proposing releasing approximately 84.08 acres of land from aeronautical use and disposing of the land in exchange (“land swap”) of 16.87 acres of land owned by Henderson County (“the Project” or “the Proposed Action”) plus additional cash to offset the difference in value of the land to be disposed versus the land to be received.

This land release and land swap is between GARAA and Henderson County. The ultimate use or development of these parcels is unknown; therefore, the Proposed Action is limited to property release and acquisition of subject parcels. Following is a breakdown of the Proposed Action:

- Parcel 1: Airport property to be released to Henderson County encompassing approximately 18.28 acres. Parcel 1 would be released from aeronautical use and disposed for non-aeronautical use. The ultimate use from Henderson County is unknown.
- Parcel 2: Sponsor to acquire approximately 16.87 acres of adjacent land currently owned by Henderson County.
- Parcel 3: Airport property to be released to Henderson County encompassing approximately 65.80 acres. Parcel 3 would be released from aeronautical use and disposed for non-aeronautical use. The ultimate use from Henderson County is unknown.

III. Purpose and Need

The purpose and need of the Proposed Action is for the Sponsor to have better land utilization and to seek additional revenue streams. Parcels 1 and 3 (84.08 acres) are not planned to be developed by GARAA and due to their topography will have limited utility for aeronautical development; therefore, these parcels would no longer have

aeronautical use for the Airport and can be considered for release of aeronautical use and disposal of the property. Parcel 2 (16.87 acres) is in a location that will enable future aeronautical development and is suited to be acquired by GARAA. The acquisition of Parcel 2 is expected to support the Airport with future revenue streams resulting from future development. Any future project or development of Parcels 1, 2 or 3 would be subject to a separate course of action and to undergo their own independent environmental review, as necessary, under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and/or permitting process under state and federal regulations.

IV. Alternatives

Federal guidelines concerning the environmental review process require that all reasonable and practicable alternatives that might accomplish the objectives of the proposed project be identified and evaluated. Such an examination ensures that alternatives are not prematurely dismissed and may lead to consideration of other alternatives that fulfill the project's purpose and need, as well as enhance environmental quality or have a less detrimental effect. The alternatives evaluated for this Environmental Assessment (EA) are listed below.

1. No-Action Alternative.
2. Preferred Alternative – (Described above in Proposed Federal Action).

V. Environmental Impacts

The EA analyzed all environmental categories based on FAA Order 5050.4B, "*National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Instructions for Airport Projects*" (NEPA). Since the Proposed Action is limited to property release, disposal, and land swap, none of the environmental resources are impacted.

VI. Environmental Mitigation

VI A. Permits and Certifications

The Proposed Action is limited to the release and disposal of airport property (Parcels 1 and 3) to Henderson County in exchange of Parcel 2 (to be acquired by GARAA). Therefore, permits are not required for the Proposed Action.

The ultimate use for Parcels 1, 2 and 3 is unknown. Any future project or development of Parcels 1, 2 or 3 would be subject to a permitting process under federal, state and local regulations, as applicable.

VI B. Mitigation

The Proposed Action is limited to the release of airport property (Parcels 1 and 3) to Henderson County in exchange of Parcel 2 (to be acquired by GARAA). Therefore, mitigation is not required. The ultimate use for Parcels 1, 2 and 3 is unknown. Any future project or development within Parcels 1, 2 or 3 would be subject to a permitting process under federal, state and local regulations, as

applicable. Any required mitigation would be established by regulatory agencies during the permitting process.

VII. Public Involvement

The following agencies were consulted in the preparation of this EA:

- Federal Aviation Administration

A public notice was published in the Ashville Citizen Times and Hendersonville Times on September 25, 2024, advertising an opportunity for the public to request a public meeting and the availability of the Draft EA for public review. There were no comments received.

VIII. Decision

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2) (C) of NEPA.

Approved: _____ Date: 12/20/2024
Graham Coffelt
Acting Manager, MEM-ADO