RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2017-619

MEETING: September 12, 2017

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mike Healy, Public Works Director

RE: Authorize the Public Works Department to Work with the Airport Museum Effort

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:
Authorize the Public Works Department to work with the Airport Teaching Museum Volunteer Effort to advance the investigation of an Airport Museum leading to increased Economic Vitality for the County at the Airport.

This volunteer-led effort to establish an Airport Teaching Museum is supported by the Airport Advisory Committee and at least in this initial exploratory phase it seems a natural fit to allow the Public Works Department to be involved given our Airport Management Responsibilities on behalf of the County and to insure that as this project evolves that it produces an economic enrichment component which will insure the fiscal sustainability of the Airport as well as the County.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
The Board traditionally allows staff to support efforts that bring economic development and enrichment to the County.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
The Airport may not realize it’s full potential as an economic engine for the County.

ATTACHMENTS:
Airport Museum Proposal (PDF)

CAO RECOMMENDATION
Requested Action Recommended

Dallin Kimble,
County Administrative Officer 9/7/2017
RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Miles Menetrey, District V Supervisor
SECONDER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey
TO: MIKE HEALY, Public Works Director  
FROM: RENÉ LaROCHE, Clerk of the Board  
SUBJECT: Authorize the Public Works Department to Work with the Airport Teaching Museum Volunteer Effort to Advance the Investigation of an Airport Museum Leading to Increased Economic Vitality for the County at the Airport  
Resolution: 17-619

The following action was taken by the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors on September 12, 2017:

7. Public Works RES-2017-619
Authorize the Public Works Department to Work with the Airport Teaching Museum Volunteer Effort to Advance the Investigation of an Airport Museum Leading to Increased Economic Vitality for the County at the Airport

Mike Healy gave the staff report, and introduced Kent Lentz/Airport Advisory Committee member who discussed the benefit of such a project. No public input.

DIRECTION: Check to make sure that such a project would not be contrary to Federal Aviation Admission regulations.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Miles Menetrey, District V Supervisor
SECONDER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey
Letter of Intent to the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors for an Airport Teaching Museum

Board Members,

This letter is to introduce myself, Roy Anderson, and Kent Lentz. About two years ago, Kent came up with the idea to convert four WWII-era hangers at the Airport into a teaching Museum. We can provide a copy of the proposal Kent submitted at that time.

After meeting Kent, and experiencing his enthusiasm for the idea, I met with him several times later on and got acquainted with a long-term project he was immersed in for many years that culminated in a completely rebuilt, remanufactured, airworthy P-40B Tomahawk from the parts of the Pearl Harbor attack survivor.

The focus of the Teaching Museum is to have a facility in our County that brings together the history of Mariposa County as it relates to the airport, and brings to light the importance of our airport, prior to the start of WWII, but highlights the role the airport played all during the war years.

This Teaching Museum can become an important component of the revitalization and expansion of the role we feel the Airport can play—to bring more visitors to Mariposa. We want to be part of making Mariposa a destination, as opposed to a waypoint leading to Yosemite National Park.

While we envision a primary focus on all things to do with aviation, we will also want to have a connection with vintage automobiles, motorcycles, and anything mechanical that would be of special interest to us, the County’s history, and have an appeal to all of the visitors we hope to attract.

Our intent is to form a 501(3)(C) nonprofit corporation to further enhance the appeal to all visitors and to help raise funds for the Museum for start-up, construction, and ongoing operation costs. We will all be volunteers, and as of this letter, we have a volunteer who is very interested in helping us, Sally Macready Wallace. Our intent is to name the museum The Macready Museum.

At this point, we are submitting this letter to introduce ourselves, and the idea, to the Board. We have approached Mike Healy with this idea, and have asked to start another dialogue with regards to a lease agreement with the County. With the departure of Tony Stobbe, we were forced to start the process over again. Mike suggested a letter addressed to the Board, to get the ball rolling. After this, we hope for a series of meetings with all parties concerned, to begin developing a lease agreement if the County approves of the idea.

Thank you all for your time to review our proposal,

Sincerely,

Roy Anderson

Kent Lentz
Proposal for the Mariposa Airport Historical Association, Restoration and Teaching Museum

We propose that the unused Mariposa Airport WPA hangars be used to build, repair and restore vintage and classic vehicles such as aircraft, automobiles, motorcycles and airport support vehicles. In return for the use of the facilities, the restorers teach others in the community the basics of their crafts.

There are several aircraft, auto and motorcycle clubs, for example, whose members might benefit from short-term use of such facilities for particular projects, for which they would use their own tools and shop equipment loaned by others to repair or restore classic vehicles.

In turn, the restorers would teach their fabrication and reconstruction techniques to others, providing on-the-job training, mutually benefiting the projects and the trainees. During the process, tourists and community members would be welcomed to watch the activities in progress.

Local media and news agencies in surrounding communities would publicize all such projects, leading to open houses and other events that would support the Mariposa community and spotlight the efforts of the participants.

It is our hope that such rotating projects would teach a diversity of skills to those who want to learn and would eventually lead to fabrication certification to individuals who develop such new skill sets.
1993 – This is the storage building donated by the City of Torrance to be set up into the workshop for remanufacturing the Pearl Harbor P-40B for Project Tomahawk.

The condition of the storage building when we moved Project Tomahawk into it. Included is the full-scale wooden mockup of the fuselage, along with the engine and a trailer full of rebuildable wreckage.
The Project Tomahawk workshop under construction.

One of the annual project open houses for the general public to observe our progress. The tooling, assembly fixture and fuselage parts were all manufactured in this shop.
Rich Pranin was one of our young supporters and trainees. Shown here with Kent Lentz, holding a casting to be installed in the newly manufactured engine cowling for the aircraft.

Alex Prosser, one of our master fabricators, next to the aircraft in its final stages of construction at Torrance Airport.

Patterns for aircraft test parts and patterns, and promotional t-shirts displayed on the wall above.
The 1937 WPA Mariposa Airport hangar 1, as it is today. The goal of this project is to restore these hangars and use them to build, restore and repair classic vehicles.

Inside the Mariposa Airport hangar 1, facing the wall between hangars 1 and 2. The hangar needs a concrete floor and structural improvements that preserve the original building materials in order to maintain its historical authenticity.
The following photos were of my workshop in Southern California.

Mixture of historical cars and aircraft parts in a working museum shop at Zamperini Field, Torrance Municipal Airport.

Working on a classical Southern California hotrod.
Early 1930s Ford Roadster behind a replica of an early 1930s Navy fighter plane, a Boeing F4B-4.

The early 1930s Ford Roadster with a 1965 state of the art quarter-mile dragster and the replica of the early 1930s Boeing F4B-4. In the background is a WW II Allison engine.
Three Allison engines in the background, behind a roadster chassis.

The early '30s Ford Roadster beside the Boeing F4B-4, along with a dragster and a '32 roadster.
Alex Prosser fabricating the hood and side panels for the roadster. The F4B-4 (built by Alex) is in the background. Alex is a master metalsmith.

The shop filled with a complement of motorcycles, racecars, hotrods and airplane parts.
A 500 Triumph desert sled in front of the newly finished street roadster. Airplane parts in the background, fabricated from scratch.

A '41 Mercury in the foreground, a roadster undergoing repair, and a P-40B airplane fuselage skin on the back wall.
A Cessna O-2A Vietnam veteran, in the shop with assorted other vehicles. This O-2A aircraft has 34 bullet hole patches in it.

Building a hotrod’s rolling chassis behind the Cessna O-2A.
The hotrod with its body mounted and with the ability to roll on its own wheels. An Allison engine is in the background, along with P-51 wing skins on the wall.

The Allison engine pictured here is the only operable Flying Tiger (AVG) engine extant (a wrecked Flying Tiger engine is currently in Thailand).