

## **LAKE TAHOE AIRPORT POWER LINE LONG-TERM LICENSE AGREEMENT**

**Recommended Action:** Adopt Resolution 20-09-04 (Attachment 1) authorizing staff to execute a long-term license agreement (Agreement) allowing the City of South Lake Tahoe (City) to access and maintain an existing underground power line that crosses California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) property (El Dorado County Assessment Numbers (ANs) 031-020-033 and 031-020-045).

**Executive Summary:** The recommended action will allow the City to access and maintain an existing underground power line that runs through Conservancy parcels (El Dorado County ANs 031-020-033 and 031-020-045). The power line stems off an existing overhead power line to serve equipment at the City's Lake Tahoe Airport (Airport), including location beacons, distance-measuring equipment, and antennae required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The Conservancy regularly provides license agreements for partners to access Conservancy land to help them implement their public works and public safety functions. The Airport is a key piece of the Lake Tahoe Basin's (Basin) fire and emergency response infrastructure, and the recommended action helps achieve the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Goal 1 by increasing the Basin's ability to suppress wildfire. The current license expires on December 31, 2020. Staff anticipates executing the Agreement before this time.

**Location:** The power line is located on ANs 031-020-033 and 031-020-045, in the former California Department of Transportation right-of-way to the southwest of the intersection of Barbara Avenue and Lodi Avenue in the City (Attachment 2).

**Fiscal Summary:** No funding is required.

---

### **Overview**

#### **History**

El Dorado County opened the Airport in August 1959, and sold the Airport to the City in 1983. The Airport remains one of the only airports in the Sierra Nevada that can support not only private aircraft, but military and firefighting aircraft and scheduled air carriers. In 2001, the City requested a long-term license agreement from the Conservancy to install and maintain a new power line. On April 20, 2001, the Conservancy Board authorized staff to enter into such an agreement. The agreement took effect on June 15, 2001, and expires on December 31, 2020. The power line remains vital to Airport operations and is required by the FAA.

## **Detailed Description of Recommended Action**

### **1. Major Elements and/or Steps of the Recommended Action**

Execution of this Agreement will allow the City to access and maintain this piece of infrastructure. Staff recommends a 20-year Agreement term, which is consistent with the term of the prior license. The City requested this duration based on its anticipated needs. The City does not anticipate making changes to the power line alignment during this period. The 20-year term would provide certainty for the City over this period.

### **2. Overall Context and Benefits**

The Airport supports several emergency response, wildfire suppression, and community resilience services in the Basin. These include functioning as the City's Emergency Operations Center, the summer site for the USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit aerial firefighting, and a designated public refuge site during emergencies. Furthermore, the Airport serves as a staging and training site for the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, the City Police and Fire Departments, and the Lake Tahoe Community College's Fire Science Academy.

### **3. Schedule for the Recommended Action**

Staff anticipates executing the Agreement by the end of 2020.

## **Financing**

No funding is required for this action. Processing the Agreement requires incidental staff cost.

## **Authority**

### **Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation**

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation. Specifically, Government Code section 66907.8 authorizes the Conservancy to lease, rent, or otherwise transfer any real property interest to fulfill the purposes of its enabling legislation and to promote the State's planning priorities. Under Government Code section 66907.9, the Conservancy is authorized to initiate, negotiate, and participate in agreements for managing land under its ownership or control with local public agencies.

### **Consistency with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan**

The recommended action is consistent with Strategic Plan Goal 1, Strategy E: Implement and develop innovative financial partnerships and interagency agreements that increase the Conservancy's and the Basin's ability and capacity to manage and restore its lands, maintain its recreational facilities, treat forest fuels, suppress wildfire, and beneficially use prescribed fire. The Airport is a key piece of wildfire suppression and emergency response infrastructure.

### **Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines**

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Special Use Guidelines because the power line is consistent with existing uses of Conservancy land.

### **Consistency with External Authorities**

The power line supplies electricity to facilities required by the FAA.

### **Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency to have no significant effect on the environment. Pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 21001(f) and 21082, the Conservancy has also adopted regulations to implement, interpret, and make specific the provisions of CEQA. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 12100 et seq.) Staff evaluated the City's proposed activities under the license agreement and found them to be exempt under CEQA. The activities qualify for a categorical exemption under CEQA Guidelines, sections 15301 (Existing Facilities), as well as the Conservancy's CEQA regulations, sections 12102.1, because they involve the ability to access and maintain an existing underground power line, involving no expansion of use. Staff prepared a notice of exemption (NOE) (Attachment 3). If the Board approves the license agreement, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

### **List of Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Resolution 20-09-04  
Attachment 2 – Location Map  
Attachment 3 – Notice of Exemption

### **Conservancy Staff Contact**

Nick Meyer, Associate Environmental Planner

[nick.meyer@tahoe.ca.gov](mailto:nick.meyer@tahoe.ca.gov)