



NEWS RELEASE
City of Chico
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*****MEDIA ALERT*****

NEWLY NAMED CHICO REGIONAL AIRPORT WORKING TOWARDS THE RETURN OF COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS

CHICO, CA — (Thursday, November 17, 2022) - The Chico City Council voted at the November 15, 2022 meeting to rename the airport from Chico Municipal Airport to Chico Regional Airport.

“The purpose of renaming the airport is to represent the entire area it serves and will serve when air service returns,” said Erik Gustafson, Director of Public Works Operations and Maintenance. “We are not innovators on this. Commonly airports are renamed to gain a larger market share.”

The Airport Commission first discussed a rebranding effort in 2019 and asked to include renaming the airport to establish more of a regional approach. An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to work through rebranding and renaming ideas. At the August 25, 2020 meeting, the Airport Commission directed staff to forward recommended names to a future marketing consultant for further consideration when the timing was better for air service development.

The intent of the name change was to garner a regional perspective for inbound/outbound travelers while also including all areas within the catchment zone, including Butte, Glenn and Tehama counties. The Airport Commission discussed the options at length, but the consensus was the timing wasn't right for a name change during the middle of the pandemic with so much uncertainty within the airline industry.

The City has since hired an airport marketing firm, Aviatrix, and the agency agreed with the word “regional” adding value and acknowledged keeping “Chico” in the name will associate inbound travelers with known Chico amenities such as: Chico State, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., and Bidwell Park.

City staff will apply to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requesting the name change. The current FAA identification acronym will remain as CIC. Staff will then identify airport signage, literature and other changes, with anticipated costs being between \$5,000 and \$8,000.

To attract a new airline, the City must first establish an airport revenue guarantee fund and must raise a minimum of \$1 million. As discussed by the City Council in August 2022, there is \$500,000 available from a Department of Transportation SCASDP Grant to cede the fund, and the rest would be raised by users of the airport in the community.

Airport Manager, Tom Bahr, has started to receive interest from airlines considering possible air service in and out of Chico. “Garnering financial support for our revenue guarantee fund initiative with stakeholders not only in Chico, but within our entire catchment area, is our top priority so that we can secure an airline,” said Bahr. More information on the revenue guarantee fund, and opportunities to contribute to the fund will be available in the coming weeks.

The City is also in the beginning phases of making improvements to the terminal building and terminal parking area at the airport to assist in accommodating the return of air service.

For more information contact Tom Bahr, Airport Manager, at (530) 896-7216 or tom.bahr@chicoca.gov

Located in Butte County, California, Chico is the cultural and economic center of the northern Sacramento Valley and the largest city north of Sacramento. Known as a college town, the home of California State University, Chico and for Bidwell Park, one of the largest urban parks in the world. For more information, visit www.chico.ca.us

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