

Airport receives \$2.6M FAA grant

- TERRI HARBER, The Daily News
- 9 hrs ago



Laughlin-Bullhead City International Airport will receive more than \$2.6 million in federal grant money to obtain developable land and create a new general plan.

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BULLHEAD CITY — Laughlin/Bullhead City International Airport will be awarded more than \$2.6 million to acquire land for future development as well as to create its next general plan document.

The money comes from the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Improvement Program. Less than \$2 million from this program will be used to pay for nearly 195 acres

east of the LBIA runway. Arizona State Land Department described the site as being west of the southwest corner of Bullhead Parkway and Midway Drive.

LBIA Director Jeremy Keating said the grant money will fund up to 93% of the cost to obtain the land.

Talks have been going on between the State of Arizona and airport officials for several years about transferring the site from the state to the Mohave County Airport Authority for use by the LBIA to eventually build additional terminals, Keating said.

"It's for future needs," he explained.

The site was put up for auction on June 13 and the county airport authority was the only bidder.

This transaction is being finalized, Keating said.

The remaining FAA grant amount of more than \$600,000 will be used to create an updated LBIA general plan, which would require time, discussion and expertise of a consultant that specializes in creating such planning materials.

The latest general plan was approved in January 2009. That process began in 2007, according to Keating.

It will describe the airport's "short-term, mid-term and long-term plans," he said. "The document will try to describe (airport) needs going out about 20 years."

LBIA completed reconstruction and extension of its runway in March 2017 to a length of 8,500 feet. That project also included improvements to Taxiway A and electrical improvements to the traffic area.

Another recent airport project completed since the current general plan went into effect was creating an indoor baggage claim area.

Focus of the FAA Airport Improvement Program is funding for public-use airports, a term meaning that flight operations by the public are allowed there without prior approval from the airport's owner or operator.

LBIA, which operates under the Mohave County Airport Authority, is funded by the FAA, Arizona Department of Transportation and passenger facility charges.