



Staff Report

Date: November 14, 2024

Subject: Helicopter Pad Consultant Agreement

The agreement is necessary to work in coordination with the FAA and HeliPad Contractor to ensure we meet all existing code requirements for operating a heliport on the roof of the Tower. The heliport will not become active until occupancy of the building is achieved, but the pursuit of this project independent of the larger general contractor scope of work will save the District any markup from the GC for this specialized work.

Our recommended vendor, Heliplanners, previously performed work on our Heliport is very familiar with our project and the scope of the work still required.

Staff recommendation: Approve Not-to-Exceed Contract for \$59,300 with Heliplanners.

Estimated cost of Heliport Installation - \$750,000

The information presented in this report has been gathered/produced by District staff, and reviewed by/with the following consultant(s):

- Legal Review
- Financial Review
- Other:

29 June 2024

Mr. Randy Dodd

Chief Executive Officer
Tulare Local Healthcare District
1427 East Prosperity Street
Tulare, California 93274

Mr. Mac McDonald

Senior Construction Manager
Vanir
2444 Main Street, Suite 130
Fresno, Ca 93271

**Proposal: Professional Aviation Consulting Assistance – Heliport Development
Tulare Local Healthcare District Rooftop Heliport – Project Completion
Version 02**

Dear Mr. Dodd:

Heliplanners is pleased to present this updated Proposal, at Mac McDonald's request, to assist the Tulare Local Healthcare District (TLHD) with finalizing the heliport element of TLHD's new bed tower. This version limits our involvement to only those tasks needed to finalize the project, some of which include re-doing previously completed tasks, as described below.

Terminology Note

A Heliport is defined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as *"The area of land, water, or a structure used or intended to be used for the landing and takeoff of helicopters, together with appurtenant buildings and facilities."* Other common terms include helistop, helipad, etc. The FAA and Caltrans Aeronautics Program do not draw distinction, nor vary criteria based on these terms. For this reason, we use "heliport" herein for *all* helicopter landing facilities and associated protected airspace. We often use "helideck" when referring to a heliport elevated above a roof or on a freestanding structure, such as at TLHD.

Project Understanding

Heliplanners was the heliport design and aviation regulatory compliance consultant for this project during the 2007-2014 period when the heliport was first envisioned and designed. We understand that TLHD is now seeking funding to complete the project. Mac McDonald with Vanir asked Heliplanners to prepare this Proposal, addressed to you, to assist with project completion.

To refresh, during our previous involvement with the project, we accomplished the following significant tasks:

- Prepared **Heliport Layout Plan (HLP)** for agency application packages.

However, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has revised its rooftop heliport design criteria since we prepared this document (latest version November 2012, attached). FAA now specifies more helipad area and airspace obstruction clearance to serve the same design helicopter size than when we started

the project was. We designed the heliport to serve Bell “Huey” variants (Bell 205, 212, 412). Hueys are larger and heavier than most regional helicopter air ambulances that currently serve other Central California and Bay Area hospitals. We do not know how Caltrans Aeronautics Program, which follows FAA criteria, would handle this. They may permit the heliport for all helicopters up to and including the Bell Huey variants for which it was designed. Or they may require us to follow *current* criteria. Due to FAA heliport design changes, the same size helideck would now serve typical helicopter air ambulances, but not the larger Bell Huey variants. This should be acceptable to TLHD because Hueys are no longer found in local EMS use. We will not know Caltrans Aeronautics’ stance until we are under contract and can discuss it with them.

- Received acknowledgement letter from **Tulare County Airport Land Use Commission**. No expiration date.
- Received **FAA Airspace Determination Letters (2) and Extension Letters (2)**. These have now expired, and we would need to initiate a new FAA Airspace Study process from the beginning. This has changed to an online application process with different FAA review processes than we experienced last time around. We do not anticipate issues; it is just a matter of going through the process again.
- Additionally, others on the project team secured:
 - California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance
 - City Council approval, as required by California’s Public Utilities Code.We do not know if the two above actions have expiration dates. *We have not budgeted time at this point to address these issues.*
- Caltrans Division of Aeronautics Heliport Site Approval Permit (HSAP). This does not have an expiration date. *However*, due to FAA’s design criteria changes (see above), we Caltrans Aeronautics may ask that we re-apply for their review with a revised HLP under *current* FAA criteria.

The above tasks are described in Attachment A, Scope of Work, along with other remaining tasks.

To clarify, Heliplanners is a heliport consulting firm. We do not provide heliport construction/ installation services. FEC Heliports, who supplied the heliport materials currently stored on site, would provide those services. Heliplanners has maintained a close relationship with FEC Heliports staff for over a quarter of a century, working together on many projects in California and elsewhere.

Budget

Heliplanners proposes to accomplish the Scope of Work included in Attachment A on a ***Time-and-Expenses Basis with a Not-To-Exceed Limit of \$59,300***. We believe a time-and-expenses approach is preferable to a fixed fee due to current unknowns. With this approach, we would invoice only for hours actually expended. Our Scope summarizes the task-by-task breakdown for the remaining heliport development process *as we understand it today*. Our project-related expenses would primarily involve travel between Heliplanners’ Temecula, California office and Tulare. Our budget includes the following five round trips to Tulare, defined in Attachment A:

1. Initial project team site visit/kick-off meeting
2. Mid-construction site visit / general contractor meeting (once helideck is in place)
3. Heliplanners readiness inspection
4. Caltrans Aeronautics final inspection
5. FAA Flight Standards final site evaluation visit.

We would combine above tasks, if possible, to minimize time and reimbursable travel costs. Our budget assumes meetings not needing travel would be via virtual meeting platforms. *Heliplanners would invoice any additional requested visits or assistance with renewing local approvals on an add-service basis.*

Heliplanners does not know TLHD's timing to re-engage with the heliport installation process. Our budget assumes starting our work during Calendar Year 2024 with a project schedule that includes helideck installation and Construction Administration tasks during Calendar Year 2025. Should startup or helideck installation be delayed beyond our control, or should the project otherwise take longer than typical, we would submit a subsequent proposal when requested to adjust our budget for future billing rates.

Heliplanners carries insurance with the following limits:

1. General Liability: \$2 Million aggregate, \$1 million per claim
2. Professional Liability: \$2 million aggregate, \$2 million per claim
3. Umbrella: \$2 million aggregate, \$2 million per claim
4. Auto: \$1 million
5. Workers Compensation: Compliant.

Additional insurance requirements would be at additional cost to the project.

Heliplanners does not employ registered engineers or architects. We are a nationally recognized aviation planning firm experienced with well over 450 heliports over the past 35+ years throughout the U.S. and abroad. We specialize in the aeronautical aspects of your project, including full liaison with aviation agencies (Federal Aviation Administration, Caltrans Aeronautics Program, etc.). Since we are not registered architects or engineers, we do not prepare construction drawings or specifications but would revise our Heliport Layout Plan, a planning level document, as needed. We coordinate closely with other team members to ensure ongoing compliance with heliport design criteria. Further information about Heliplanners is available online at heliplanners.com.

This proposal will remain valid for ninety days from the above date. We appreciate THLD's continued confidence in Heliplanners. We look forward to continuing our successful relationships with TLHD and Vanir and to completing the heliport permitting. I am available via my cellphone at (951) 203-8900 should you have questions.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Wright
President

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