



2021 Nevada Aviation Association Year in Review

December 29, 2021

By Kenneth G. Moen, A.A.E., President

I hope that you and your family enjoyed a pleasant Christmas holiday and I want to wish you and yours a Happy New Year. 2022 is an opportunistic year for the Nevada Aviation Association (NvAA). In 2021 the NvAA made several strategic moves to position the NvAA for opportunities over the next 12 months. I want to take a few moments to highlight some of those changes and to outline next steps for getting off on the right foot for the new year.

The high point for the year was the NvAA gathering in Tonopah, Nevada at the end of September for a conference that had been rescheduled twice in 2020. The conference was attended by thirty-eight in-person attendees and six virtual attendees. A post-conference survey distributed by KCA (NvAA management service provider) indicates that attendees rated the agenda, accommodations, meals, and conference networking opportunities excellent.

The NvAA Board approved the association's Strategic Plan in October outlining the *Mission* and *Vision* of the NvAA and approved a name change from *Nevada Airports Association* to the *Nevada Aviation Association*. This name change was critical to set the foundation for broadening the NvAA membership base that now includes government airport stakeholders, aeronautical service providers, and industry operators that have a vested interest in the expansion and success of the aviation industry in the State of Nevada. As a part of the effort to expand the NvAA membership base, the NvAA produced an electronic membership information brochure with the assistance of the marketing staff at Armstrong Consultants. The membership brochure, released for distribution in November, is designed to be used as a recruitment tool by NvAA members to distribute to newly eligible industry professionals. The brochure defines the purpose of the NvAA and a call to action by those eligible to join the NvAA to help further the goals and objectives of the NvAA and promote aviation in Nevada. The membership brochure is available on the redesigned NvAA website <https://nevadaaviation.org/Membership>.

The new and improved NvAA website is more functional and has additional tools for members use to include an up-to-date membership directory and access to the Digicast online airport modular training platform. Access to Digicast materials is limited to NvAA members and allows airports - large and small – access to high quality training materials. Digicast can be used to provide professional-level training elevating the knowledge base of airport support staff thus raising the professionalism of Nevada airport staff. The cost of the NvAA membership is a significant cost savings compared to the cost of the subscribing to the standard Digicast program separately.

In 2020, the FAA issued a grant to the Nevada DOT to conduct a Nevada Airport and Heliport System Plan (NASHP). The NvAA, has a seat at the table as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee and the NvAA has the vision of being the primary stakeholder in the development and implementation of Nevada's statewide NASHP. The NASHP includes an inventory of airport facilities and infrastructure, an aeronautical forecast, and an Airport Regional Value (ARV) metric. The ARV is designed to provide a methodology for assessing specific characteristics that affect an airport's attractiveness and ability to support demand in a region. ARV establishes a series of attributes common to airports and assigns a value for each variable based on typical aeronautical facilities and services at similarly situated airports. This specific guidance helps each airport to effectively perform its role at the federal, state, regional, and/or local levels enhancing the statewide aviation system. The NvAA will use the NASHP to raise the level of understanding of the State Legislature and the State Transportation Board to support proper funding for airport development and facilitate aeronautical transportation across the state.

In support of the NASHP, the NvAA has undertaken the initiative to install ADS-B receivers at Nevada airports that meet the criteria of access to stable electrical power and broadband internet. The NvAA has fourteen installed ADS-B receivers at Nevada airports. The goal is to install ADS-B receivers at the remaining Nevada airports. The NvAA will utilize the ADS-B data collected by the receivers to draw a detailed picture of aeronautical activity at Nevada airports. Airports that have installed ADS-B receivers (at no cost) will have access to live traffic information via an internet dashboard allowing airports to generate airport activity reports up to 7 days in the past. AWOS weather data reports are also available to airport managers.

Executive Director, Jeff Fontaine, resigned his position with the NvAA in October. I want to thank Jeff for his assistance over the past 3 years. Prior to his departure, Jeff brought KCA into the fold. KCA is an association management firm that provides administrative services to the Arizona Airports Association and the Southwest Chapter of the American Association of the Airport Executives (SWAAAE). KCA has taken over many of the routine administrative duties of the association and charges NvAA an hourly fee for services rendered. Services include website management, invoicing, preparation of NvAA tax returns and membership support services. KCA has also provided valuable assistance in managing conference registration and IT support. KCA has handled these duties seamlessly and KCA has made the day-to-day management of the NvAA more efficient.

Following the NvAA conference in October, a strategy was put forth where NvAA conference attendees and members were to submit a suggestion for the use of federal funds that were allocated to the state via the American Rescue Plan. The state treasurer's office was tasked by the governor to be a clearing house for accepting public suggestions for use of the funds and included setting up a website to receive online suggestions from local governments and other stakeholders.

The concept was explained this way: The Nevada Legislature established the Nevada Fund for Aviation several years ago to help counties leverage Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grant funds. Due to the impacts of the public health fiasco, local governments are struggling to allocate funds to leverage FAA AIP grants. Local matching funds are required up to 6.25% with the FAA providing 93.75%. For every dollar, the local government must allocate 6.25 cents and FAA provides 93.75 cents. A \$5M deposit in the Nevada Fund for Aviation would allow local governments to

fund airport maintenance and infrastructure improvements to the tune of \$50M. These projects include pavement maintenance, purchase and installation of automated weather reporting equipment, purchase of snow removal equipment, and even airport lighting for nighttime operations. Nevada airports connect statewide economies and provide access for healthcare. Doctors and nurses travel to Nevada community airports to bring healthcare services to rural communities and allow for emergency medical evacuation to metro trauma centers. Aviation is a 21st transportation solution. There are forty-four local GA airports in Nevada and only three commercial airports in the state (Las Vegas, Reno-Tahoe, and Elko). Local airports improve transportation options by reducing travel times, improving travel flexibility and scheduling, increase productivity, improve employee safety and security, enhances the delivery of time sensitive equipment, facilitates multiple-stop itineraries in a single day, and often connecting towns and locations that would be inaccessible by commercial air service. Local airports are a vital link to the Nevada transportation network.

Several NvAA members and conference attendees did in fact log into the State Treasurer's website and either entered the above information or something similar. I followed up with a telephone call with Zach Conine, State Treasurer. About 5 minutes into our conversation, Mr. Conine interrupted me and said that "I did not have to sell him on the idea and that he would be submitting a request for consideration for using some of the American Rescue Plan funds by reinvigorating the Nevada Fund for Aviation." Nothing is a done deal, but I feel confident there is a high probability that a deposit will be made to the Nevada Fund for Aviation.

Next Steps

Continued membership growth. It should be the goal of all NvAA members to bring new members into the fold of the NvAA. We will be announcing new initiatives for 2021 to excite our members about recruiting new members. Maybe we can give away a Tesla to the member who recruits the most new members?

Spring conference. A conference committee has been formed to iron out conference details to include the program, location, networking events, sponsorship, and exhibition opportunities. Soft date is March 28, 29 and 30th. Stay tuned, more to come.

Search for a new Executive Director and the development of a lobbying strategy for the 2023 legislative session.

Implementation of the recommendations of the NAHSP.

There is a lot of work to do. Let us roll up our sleeves and use our agency to take action, action, action to implement the strategic plan initiatives. Below is a quick review of strategic plan initiatives:

Promote public understanding of the value of aviation and airports

- **Elevate the role of aviation within the Nevada Department of Transportation**
 - o **Task** - Participate in the Advisory Committee for the development of NDOT's Nevada

Airport and Heliport System Plan Update and lead a public private partnership to develop and maintain a statewide aviation tracking and reporting system.

Progress Report: NvAA President is a member of the advisory committee. ADS-B tracking is available at 14 Nevada airports. Thirty-three more to go.

➤ **Develop and publish a statewide aviation economic impact report**

o **Task** - Determine budget, scope of work, and enter into an agreement with University of Nevada, Reno, or other qualified contractor to prepare the report.

Progress Report: Economic impact study is a part of the NASHP.

➤ **Prepare and distribute a Nevada aviation fact sheet**

Progress Report: Nevada aviation fact sheet has been incorporated into the NvAA Membership Brochure and will be included in NASHP.

➤ **Develop and participate in a public outreach program**

o **Task** - Prepare a PowerPoint presentation and other materials for NvAA Members and staff to make presentations to local governments, community groups, and schools in their communities.

Progress Report: Identify a project champion and begin development of this project in the first quarter of 2022.

➤ **Enhance the NvAA website and utilize social media**

o **Task** - Update the website with news and events and add a paid advertising feature

Progress Report: redesigned website includes a “News” page. In first quarter, develop a process for updating a weekly news feed. Additionally, develop an opportunity to add an advertising feature for aeronautical/aviation service providers.

➤ **Establish an NvAA scholarship program for Nevada high school seniors pursuing a post-secondary education in aviation**

o **Task** – Identify sustainable funding and solicit participation by corporate partners

Progress Report: NvAA is working with Pathways to Aviation, a Nevada based non-profit, to direct interested students and adults towards aviation careers and help develop a potential scholarship program.

Grow NvAA Membership

➤ **Recruit all Nevada airport operators to become Regular NvAA Members and actively participate in supporting the goals of the Association**

o **Task** - Develop a data base, including primary point of contact, for all airports and

develop and disseminate information on the benefits of participating in NvAA. Encourage public and private corporations that manufacture or provide aviation related products and services, including airline operators, charter companies and fixed based operators to become Corporate Members. Encourage helicopter and UAV operators to become Associate Members. Encourage other aviation related organizations, associations, and government agencies to become Associate Members.

Progress Report: NvAA strategy is members email membership brochure with to their email contact list. A review of results at the end of the first quarter and adjust strategy, as necessary.

➤ **Sustain and improve airport infrastructure**

o **Task** - Obtain permanent state funding for FAA matching grants.

Progress Report: NvAA members were requested to submit a suggestion for the use of federal funds that were allocated to the state via the American Rescue Plan. A \$5M deposit in the Nevada Fund for Aviation Program would allow counties to fund airport maintenance and infrastructure improvements in the amount of \$50M.

➤ **Identify other funding sources for asset management and capital improvement projects.**

o **Task** - Research the availability and use of federal and state grants including, Community Development Block Grants and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Grants for funding airport improvements and leveraging AIP grants.

Progress Report: Identify a project champion to develop a strategy in the first quarter to identify other sources of grant funding available to Nevada airports.

➤ **Provide a unified voice on airport and aviation related policies and funding**

o **Task** - Establish an Aviation Caucus in the Nevada Legislature.

Progress Report: NvAA president has spoken with Minority Leader Robin Titus regarding the establishment of an Aviation Caucus in the Nevada Legislature and have received positive feedback and her tentative support. Titus will be running for Nevada Senate in 2022. NvAA will follow up after 2022 election. NvAA will research additional Nevada legislators and solicit participation on a Nevada Aviation Legislative Caucus.

➤ **Develop NvAA policy statements on relevant aviation issues**

o **Task** - Monitor proposed federal, state, and local aviation related policies, regulations, and funding and develop NvAA positions as appropriate. Provide a forum for NvAA members on aviation technology and information.

Progress Report: Identify Board member in first quarter of 2022 to lead a group of members to develop a process for developing position papers for NvAA Board approval and dissemination news outlets.

- **Conduct monthly conference calls, hold a fall, and spring annual conference.**
 - o **Task** – Schedule monthly NvAA Board members open to all members. Schedule and produce two conferences per calendar year.

Progress Report: Monthly calls have been scheduled on the third Wednesday of the month and began in October 2021. Fall NvAA conference held in September 2021 and a spring conference is tentatively scheduled for March 28, 29 & 30, 2022 in Reno.

- **Conduct training webinars for NvAA members.**
 - o **Task** – Schedule regular monthly webinars beginning in the first quarter 2022.

Progress Report: Identify project champion to lead a quarterly webinar. Goal to host first session in first quarter 2022.

- **Develop downloadable templates for airport leases, permits, and other useable airport management compliance documents.**
 - o **Task** –Develop “Resources” page on NvAA website [Resourceshttps://nevadaaviation.org/page-18065](https://nevadaaviation.org/page-18065)

Progress Report: Two items have already been developed and uploaded to website. Identify project champion to lead a committee to continue to make progress on useable materials for management compliance documents. First two documents are *Airport Marketing & Public Relations Guide*, and *Fire Support Resource Document*. Also, a History of the NvAA is also available.

- **Promote and increase utilization of ANTN Digicast.**
 - o **Task** - Evaluate the feasibility of establishing an “Airport Operator Certificate” using ANTN as the educational framework.

Progress Report: NvAA to work with AAAP and Pathways to Aviation to develop a certificate program for airport Nevada staff. Identify a project champion to research this process. Identify project champion by first quarter 2022.