Reno-Stead Airport

RENO-STEAD AIRPORT MASTER PLAN

WORKING PAPER ONE: INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS | MARCH 2026

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1 INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Reno-Stead Airport (RTS) Master Plan serves as a comprehensive guide for the long-term development and strategic plan of the airport. Significant changes have occurred since the previous airport master plan was completed in 2010. The departure of the National Championship Air Races and Air Show held by the Reno Air Racing Association (RARA) has altered the airport's event-driven operations which has opened opportunities for new uses of the airfield. Regional demand for hangars has surged, driven by population growth and increased general aviation activity, and the prevalence of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) has positioned RTS as a leading site for advanced aviation research and testing. Additionally, there is growing interest in non-aeronautical development on airport property to support economic diversification, and the Nevada Army National Guard has begun redevelopment efforts that will influence land use and infrastructure planning.

This airport master plan provides a framework to address these changes and identifies anticipated aviation demand, infrastructure needs, and land use opportunities over a 20-year planning horizon. The plan is designed to ensure RTS continues to meet operational requirements while supporting economic growth and maintaining its role as a vital component of the regional airport system.

This plan aligns with federal standards and regional planning initiatives and was developed in coordination with the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority (RTAA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and local stakeholders. It establishes priorities for facility improvements, safety enhancements, and capacity expansion while incorporating input from tenants, community members, and government agencies. By outlining phased development strategies to address critical concerns, such as airfield configuration, hangar space, and emerging technologies, this airport master plan will help RTS adapt to evolving aviation trends and continue to contribute to Northern Nevada's transportation network and economy.

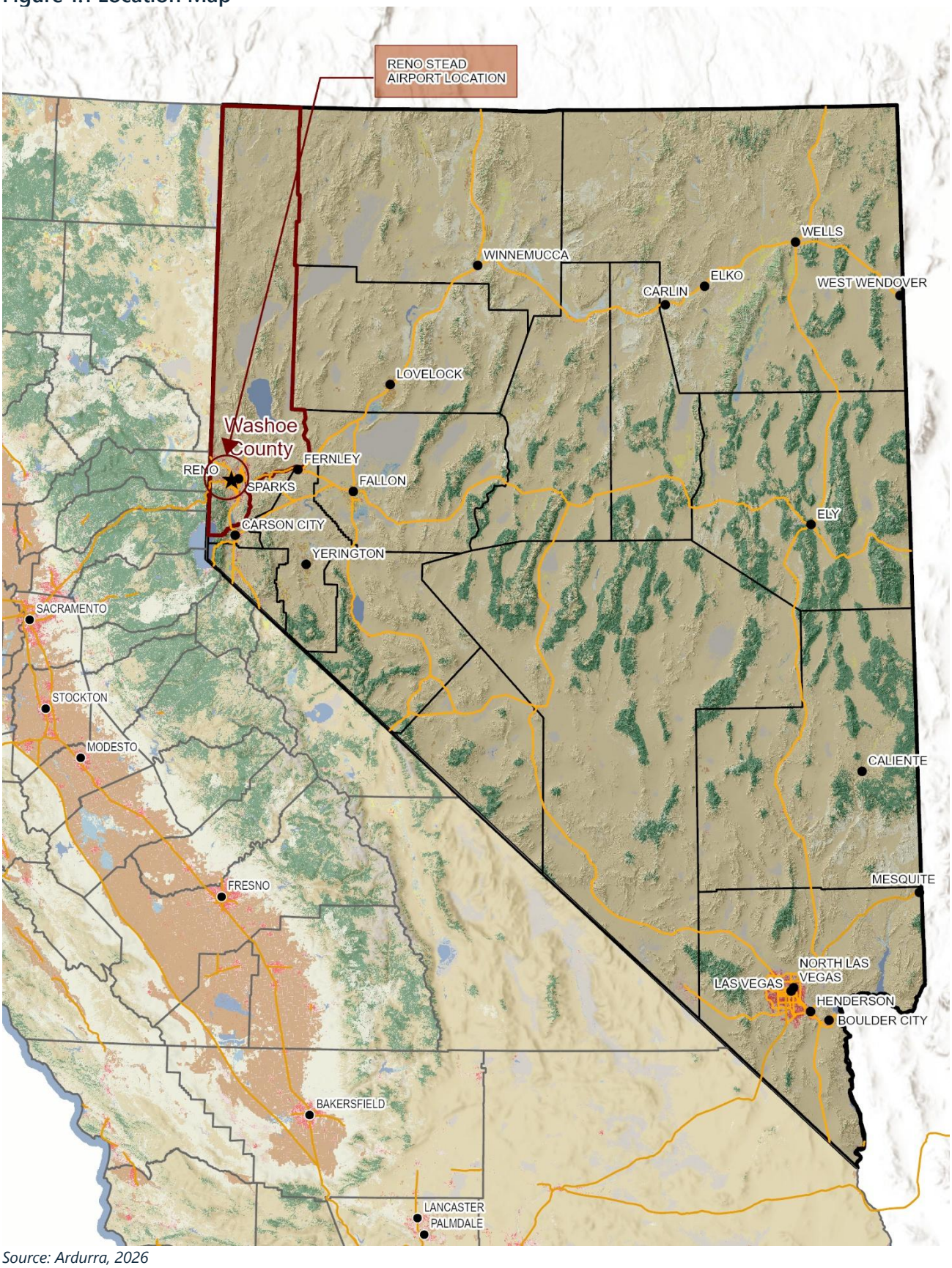
This chapter outlines and describes the current facilities at RTS, including airside facilities, landside and support facilities, parking, and infrastructure. This information was obtained through onsite inspections of airport facilities, interviews with airport staff and tenants, and analysis of existing reports and records.

Airport Setting and Location

Reno-Stead Airport is in the North Valleys area of Reno, Nevada, and is located approximately 10 miles northwest of downtown Reno. The airport is in Washoe County and occupies a sprawling 5,162-acre site in the high desert region at an elevation of about 5,050 feet above sea level. The Sierra Nevada and other mountain ranges that surround the area shape the North Valleys landscape. Nearby geographic features, including Peavine Mountain to the southwest and the Petersen Range to the northwest, contribute to the basin-like setting of the airport.

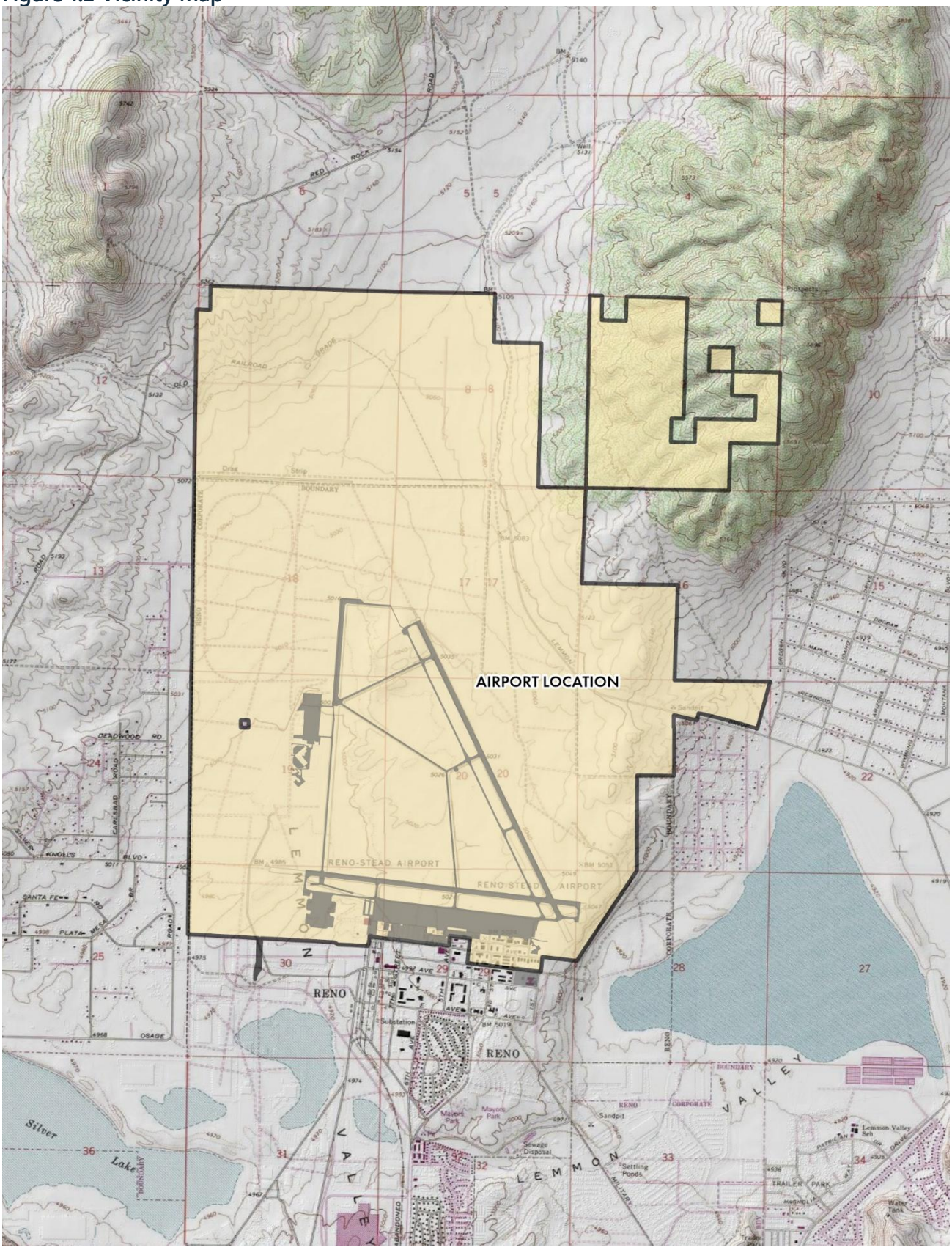
RTS is strategically positioned near major transportation corridors, with U.S. Highway 395 providing direct access to Reno and the surrounding communities. Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 show the location and vicinity of RTS, respectively.

Figure 1.1 Location Map



Source: Ardurra, 2026

Figure 1.2 Vicinity Map



Source: Ardurra, 2026

Climate and Wind Data

Reno-Stead Airport is located in a high-desert climate characterized by low humidity, wide temperature swings, and frequent strong winds, particularly in spring and fall. The area receives an average of seven (7) inches of precipitation a year, with most occurring as winter snow or spring rain. The area experiences significant seasonal changes in temperature that create challenges for aviation. Temperatures range from an average low of about 20 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in January to an average high around 90°F in July. The airport's elevation of approximately 5,000 feet results in reduced air density. This affects aircraft performance by requiring longer takeoff rolls and reducing climb rates – especially during the hot summer months.

The FAA advises the primary runway at an airport be oriented in the direction of the prevailing wind. The most desirable runway orientation is based on the largest wind coverage with the minimum allowable crosswind. By aligning the runway with the predominant wind, there is an increase in operational safety due to the aerodynamic design of an aircraft. A crosswind is a wind that is not parallel with the runway, and wind coverage is the percentage of time a crosswind is below an acceptable speed. Table 1.1 summarizes runway wind coverage data from calendar years 2015–2024.

Table 1.1 Wind Coverage

Crosswind Component	All Weather	IFR	VFR
	Runway 14/32		
10.5 Knots	86.34%	93.22%	86.22%
13 Knots	90.92%	95.70%	90.84%
16 Knots	95.49%	97.78%	95.45%
20 Knots	98.48%	99.04%	98.47%
	Runway 8/26		
10.5 Knots	93.79%	90.69%	93.85%
13 Knots	96.64%	94.10%	96.70%
16 Knots	98.68%	97.40%	98.71%
20 Knots	99.58%	99.13%	99.60%
	Combined		
10.5 Knots	96.43%	96.89%	96.43%
13 Knots	98.30%	98.30%	98.31%
16 Knots	99.34%	99.20%	99.35%
20 Knots	99.80%	99.66%	99.80%

Source: FAA Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP); Ardurra, 2026

Classification and Role

RTS is classified as a regional reliever airport in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). Nonprimary airports are classified through a five-tier system: unclassified, basic, local, regional, and national. The additional reliever designation is for airports assigned to reduce congestion at commercial service airports by providing an outlet for general aviation traffic. To qualify as a reliever, an airport must maintain at least 100 based aircraft or 25,000 annual itinerant operations. RTS meets both criteria and is currently one of 245 reliever airports in the NPIAS. The regional reliever designation has been especially beneficial as classification directly influences both the airport's

eligibility and prioritization for federal funding. This classification also underscores RTS's strategic importance in supporting Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO) and the broader state aviation network.

In addition to its federal designation, RTS is recognized in the 2022 Nevada Airport and Heliport System Plan[1] as a vital general aviation facility serving the state with a regional classification, mirroring the FAA classification. According to the Nevada Airport Economic Impact Study completed as part of the System Plan, RTS supports approximately 1,409 jobs, contributes more than $70 million in annual labor income, and produces more than $191 million in total economic output statewide. These figures highlight the airport's significance not only as an aviation facility but also as an economic engine for the region.

RTS is located within a region that includes eleven other public-use airports within a 50-nautical-mile radius, as identified in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Public-Use Airports in the Vicinity of RTS

ID	Airport	Primary Runway Length	Primary Runway Width	Instrument Approach	NPIAS Category	Based Aircraft	Distance from RTS (in NM)
RNO	Reno-Tahoe Intl Airport	11,002′	150′	ILS	Primary	160	11
O79	Sierraville-Dearwater Airport	3,093′	50′	None	-	-	22
O02	Nervino Airport	4,651	75	RNAV	Basic	6	24
TRK	Truckee-Tahoe Airport	7,001	100	RNAV	Regional	149	24
CXP	Carson City Airport	6,101′	75′	RNAV	Regional	417	28
A34	Dayton Valley Airpark	5,343′	75′	None	-	-	30
N58	Samsarg Field Airport	3,974′	40′	None	-	-	30
SPZ	Silver Springs Airport	6,001′	75′	RNAV	Local	16	33
MEV	Minden-Tahoe Airport	7,399′	100′	RNAV	Regional	168	40
TVL	Lake-Tahoe Airport	8,541′	100′	RNAV	Basic	12	50

Source: FAA Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP); Ardurra, 2026

The role of RTS within the regional aviation system has evolved over time. Historically, the airport was best known as the home of the National Championship Air Races, an iconic event that shaped the airport's identity for decades. Supporting the air races required substantial commitments of airspace,

[1] *Nevada Airport and Heliport System Plan*, 2022, www.nevadaaviationsystem.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Digital_NAHSP_ExecutiveSummary.pdf.

airside and landside resources, and operational support from RTAA. The 2010 Reno-Stead Airport Master Plan reflected these requirements by prioritizing infrastructure and planning strategies necessary to accommodate the unique operational demands of large-scale aviation events.

Today, the airport continues to accommodate a diverse mix of aeronautical activities. This includes longstanding tenants, such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Nevada Army National Guard, and Aviation Classics. The airport has also expanded its role in supporting experimental aviation and unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) testing. In addition, RTS contributes to regional employment and generates non-aeronautical revenue through strategic land development initiatives.

Historical Context and Background

Reno-Stead Airport has a rich history of supporting both military and civilian aviation. Originally constructed in October 1942 as the Reno Army Air Base, the airfield quickly became a critical training hub during World War II. After the war, the installation was transferred to the Ferrying Division of the Air Transport Command in October 1943, remaining fully operational until its deactivation in 1945. Just a few years later, in April 1948, the Nevada Air National Guard reactivated the base for pilot training. That same year, 150 buildings on the base were sold at public auction, marking the beginning of a transition away from wartime operations.

During this renewed period of activity, tragedy struck. On December 11, 1949, Lt. Croston Stead lost his life after his P-51 Mustang crashed several miles from the base following an engine failure during a training exercise. In January 1951, the base was renamed Stead Air Force Base in his honor, commemorating his service and sacrifice. By May of that same year, Stead AFB had already become home to the Air Force Survival School, foreshadowing the base's emerging specialization.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Stead Air Force Base evolved into one of the nation's premier centers for survival, evasion, resistance, and escape (SERE) training due to its proximity to rugged Sierra Nevada and nearby forests. The base hosted U.S. forces, foreign military personnel, and even astronaut candidates preparing for the unknown. During this era, the United States Air Force Helicopter Pilot School also relocated to Stead, expanding the base's role in advanced helicopter training.

By July 1966, the federal government declared Stead Air Force Base (then totaling 6,250 acres) as surplus property and opened it for acquisition. Interested parties included the City of Reno, Sierra Pacific Power, the Reno Housing Authority, University of Nevada Reno, Washoe County, Dermody Properties, and the Lear Family – a group that helped shape the early footprint of the area, with several remaining key neighbors to the airport even today. Ultimately, the City of Reno acquired the airfield portion later that same year, and in 1966 it officially began operating as Reno-Stead Airport. However, existing state law prevented the annexation of non-contiguous land into city boundaries. It was not until 1968 that legislation was passed allowing the airport property to be fully incorporated into the City of Reno. This initial transfer, classified as a Military Surplus Property Transfer, carried a number of federal conditions that remain relevant today.

Through Nevada Revised Statue (NRS)[2], legislature established the Airport Authority of Washoe County in 1977, which was renamed in 2005 to the Reno Tahoe Airport Authority (RTAA). The Authority is a quasi-municipal corporation that owns and operates Reno-Stead Airport and Reno-Tahoe International Airport. It does not receive any revenues or subsidies from Washoe County or the City of Reno and operates solely on revenues generated by RNO and RTS.

In June 1979, the roughly 2,300 acres of land that constituted Reno-Stead Airport was transferred from the City of Reno to the Airport Authority per the requirements of NRS Chapter 474. Since this initial transfer, RTAA has made substantial land purchases, and the property now totals more than 5,100 acres. This included 600 acres from the Lear Family Trust, noting RTS as the birthplace of the Lear Fan, and more than 2,000 acres to support the National Championship Air Races and Air Show. Although federal funding was not used for these acquisitions, the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority (RTAA) has continued to accept federal funding, primarily through the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Improvement Program (AIP) for airport development, which obligates the RTAA to continue to operate the airport as a public-use airport compliant with all applicable grant assurances.

National Championship Air Races – Reno Air Racing Association

The National Championship Air Races and Air Show played a major role in the airport's history. The ten-day event, sponsored by the Reno Air Racing Association (RARA), was held annually at RTS from 1966 through 2023. A smaller event, Pylon Racing School, occurred annually in the June-July timeframe for mandatory training and certification of pilots racing in at the September event. The Reno Air Races featured multi-lap, multi-aircraft races of high-performance aircraft on closed courses that ranged from three to eight miles in length. The event drew international attention and was a significant economic benefit to regional tourism.

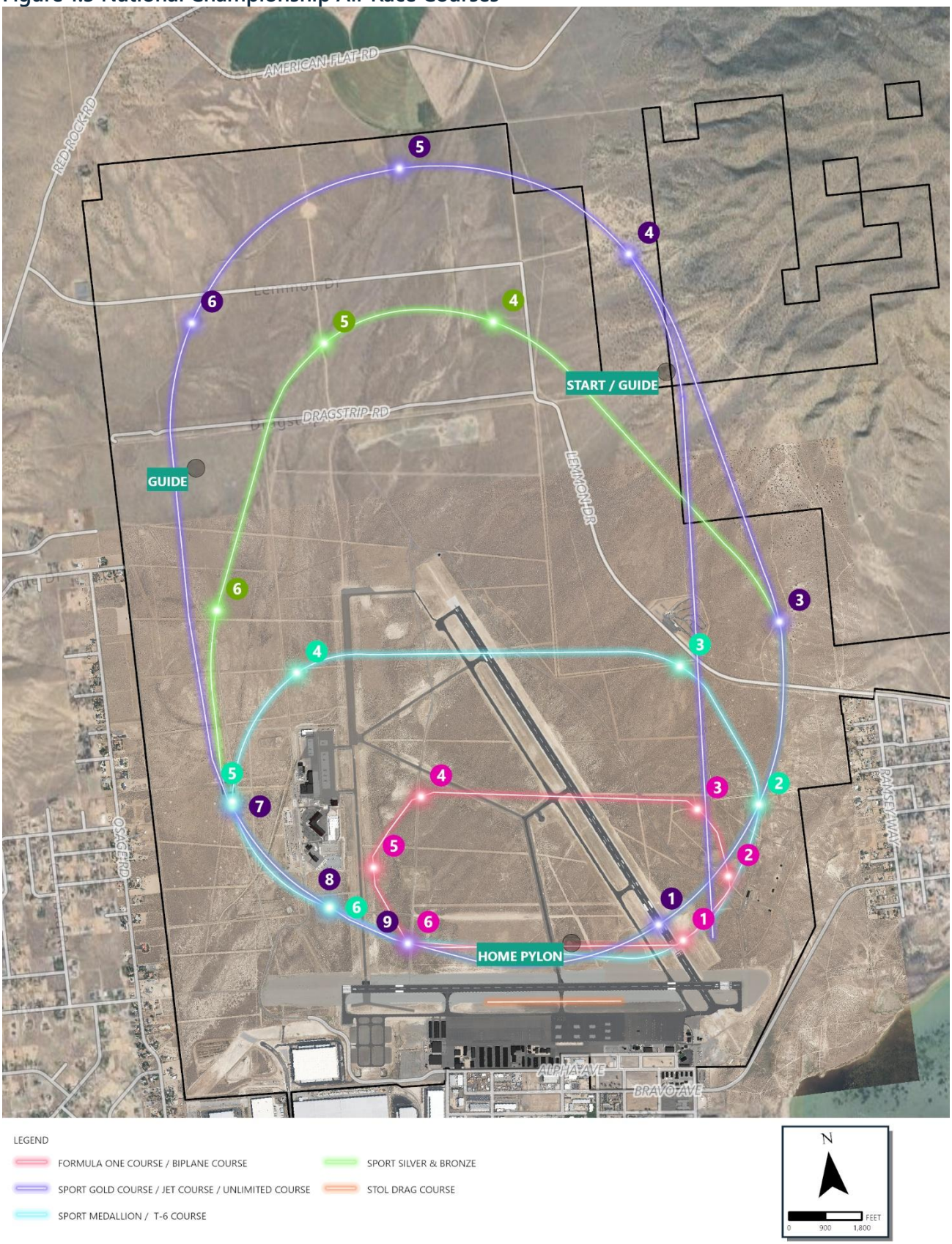
The races included seven (7) classes—biplane, T-6, formula one, sport, jet, unlimited, and STOL (Short Takeoff/Landing). Each racing course, as shown in Figure 1.3, required a designated safety area, which varied in area depending on the race class. The designated safety areas impacted occupancy and use of facilities and roadways under the courses. In addition to the races, the event included demonstrations by air show pilots and static aircraft displays on the apron. Over the decades, the National Championship Air Races and Air Show was considered one of the last of its kind, with high-speed racing and low altitudes. During its tenure, the event was cancelled only twice: once during 2001 because of the grounding of US aviation following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and second in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2023, the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority and RARA did not renew their agreements. The races now take place at the Roswell Air Center (ROW) in Roswell, New Mexico, and the first event was held there in 2025. The history of the National Championship Air Races and Air Show remains deeply intertwined in Reno's identity and aviation culture.

[2] *Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority Act,* 12 May 1977, www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Legal/LawLibrary/SpecialActs/index.html.

The departure of the National Championship Air Races has lifted development and airspace restrictions that were previously in place to accommodate and preserve the multiple race routes. RARA has also vacated its hangars, making them available for use by other airport tenants.

Figure 1.3 National Championship Air Race Courses



Source: National Champion Air Races and Air Show (https://airrace.org/air-racing/courses-pits); Ardurra, 2026

UAS Operations and FAA Designated UAS Test Site

Under the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, the FAA designated six (6) test sites for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) throughout the United States to support research and the safe integration of drones into the National Airspace System. The State of Nevada was among the original six (6) sites, and Reno-Stead Airport was identified as one (1) of the testing ranges within the state. The airport provides the physical airfield, infrastructure, and supportive environment needed for UAS testing and operations.

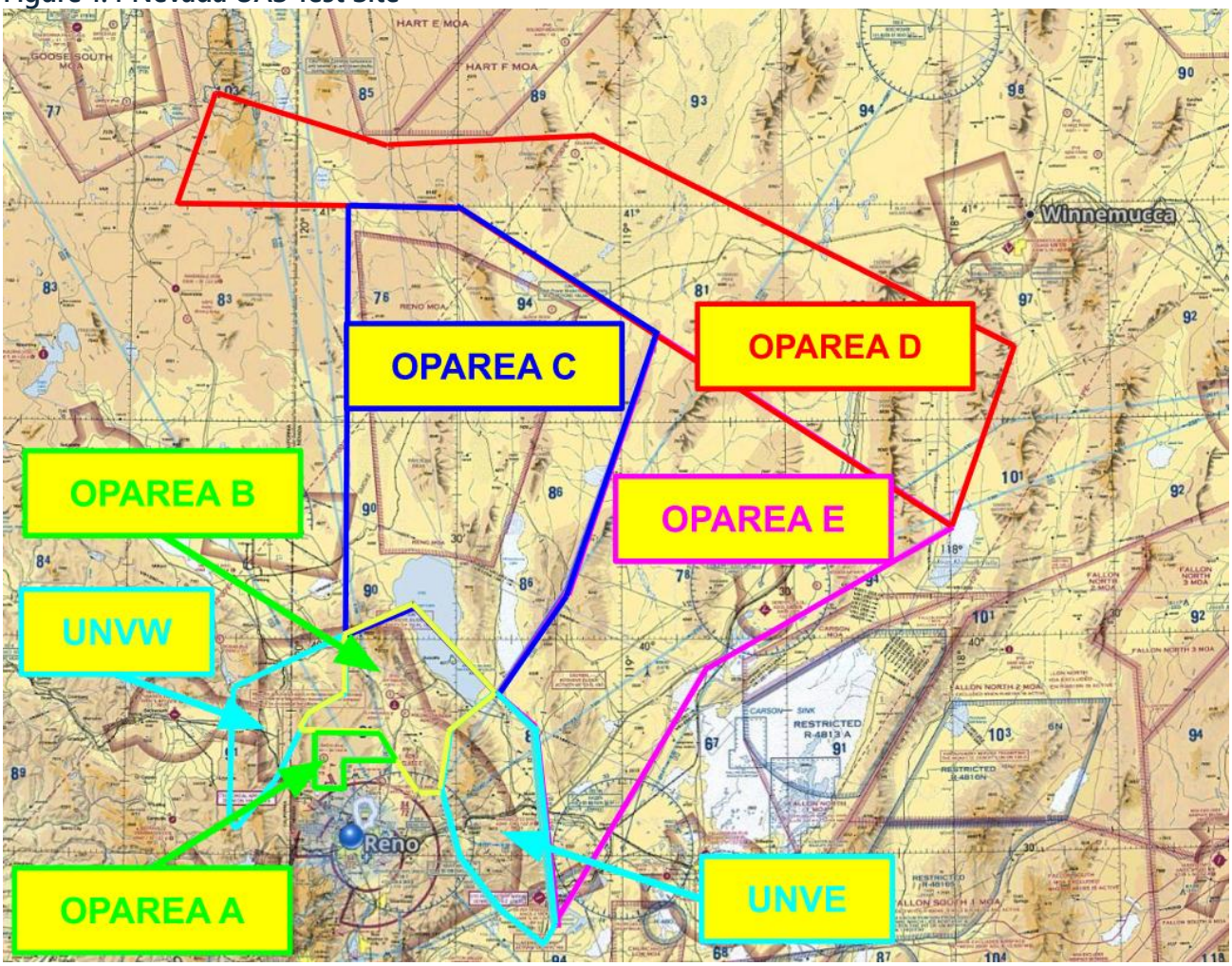
Currently, RTS supports UAS testing activities at the airfield. These operations include aircraft ranging from small hand-sized drones to fixed-wing aircraft roughly the size of a car. Testing typically occurs in the area north of the Nevada Army National Guard facility and along the associated abandoned pavement.

The Nevada UAS Test Site is now managed by the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) through the Nevada Autonomous program that was launched in 2022 as part of the Nevada Center for Applied Research (NCAR). This program coordinates UAS research, testing, and stakeholder engagement across multiple test locations statewide, including RTS.

In 2024, the FAA granted Civil Operations Waiver No. 44803-7 for the Nevada UAS Test Site for operations over approximately 1,000 square miles north of Reno, encompassing RTS. This waiver included several operational allowances, including allowing operations of large drones with a takeoff weight of up to 300 pounds, increased altitude limits of up to 18,000 feet mean sea level (msl), and testing operations beyond the pilot's visual line of sight. As of 2026, the extent of the waiver has been expanded to cover nearly 9,300 square miles, with varying airspace restrictions throughout. Figure 1.4 displays the different operations areas within the current Nevada UAS Test Site.

RTS lies within Operations Area A (OPAREA A) with a maximum operation altitude of 1,200 feet above ground level and providing direct access to Operations Area B with a higher maximum altitude of 3,000 feet above ground level. The test site areas are expanding upon FAA approval and now reach into California.

Figure 1.4 Nevada UAS Test Site



Source: University of Nevada, Reno: Nevada UAS Test Site & City of Reno Beyond Program, Familiarization Brief Rev 6.2
Notes: Depicted are UAS operating areas, each with specific allowed parameters including type of operation and maximum permitted altitude. Operation areas shown are current as of the time of this writing but are subject to change.

In addition to the UAS Test Site designation, Reno-Stead Airport is exceptionally positioned to advance aeronautical education, research, and technology development. The Airport's aviation-focused community, operational capabilities, and access to unique airspace create an ideal environment for universities, industry partners, and workforce programs. These strengths allow RTS to not only support emerging aviation technologies but also encourage youth engagement and build a strong pipeline of future aviation professionals, ensuring the Airport and region remain at the forefront of aviation innovation.

Airfield Facilities

Airside areas encompass all facilities critical for aircraft operations, including runways, taxiways, aprons, and other areas where aircraft are parked, serviced, or maneuvered. The facilities that support these operations include airport pavements, directional signage, lighting systems, navigational aids (NAVAID), and weather monitoring and reporting equipment. Together, these elements ensure safe and efficient aircraft movement and operations.

All runways have critical safety areas established by the FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5300-13B, *Airport Design*.

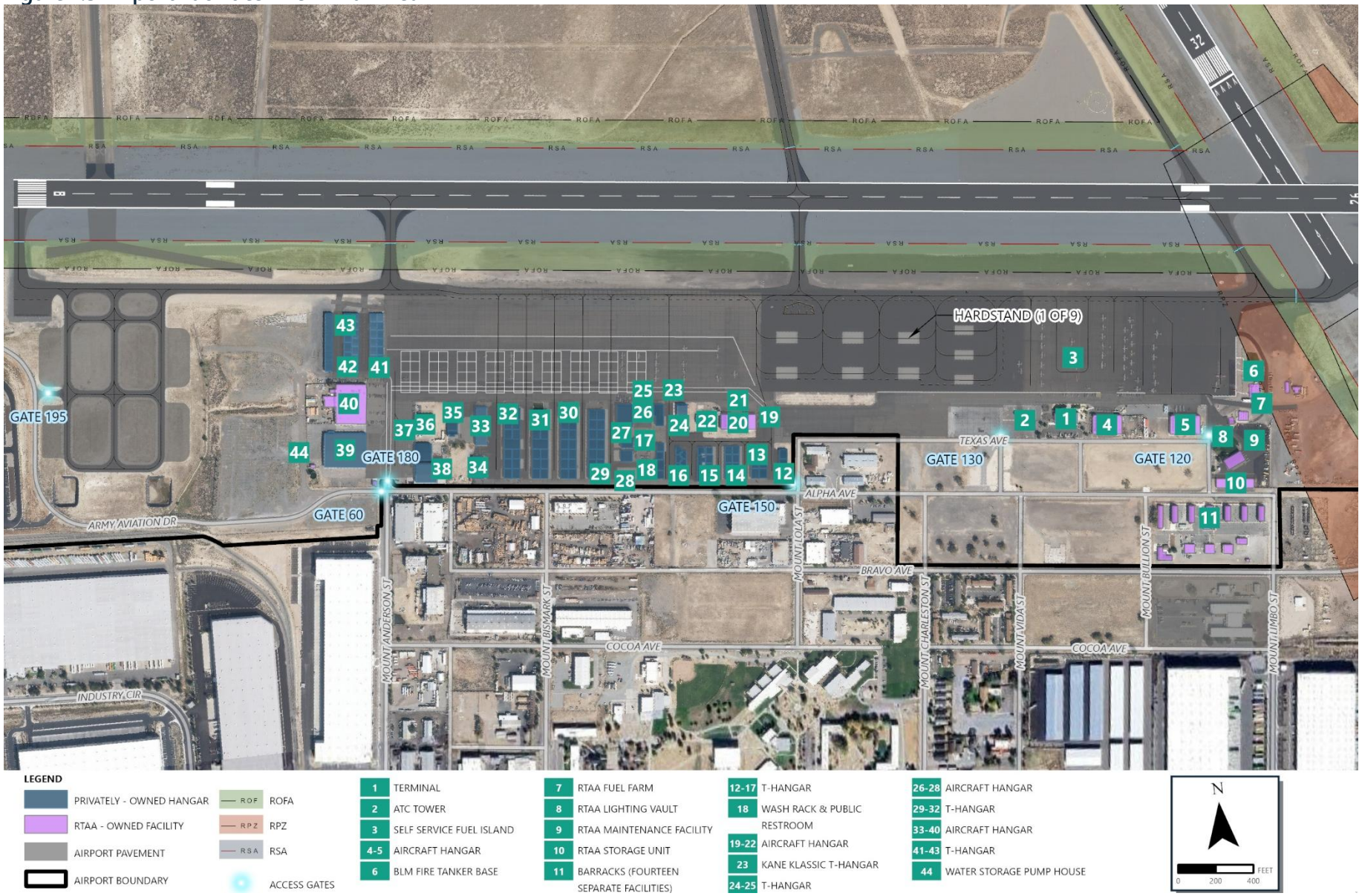
The runway safety area (RSA) is a defined surface surrounding the runway that it prepared and maintained suitable to enhance the safety of aircraft during undershoots, overruns, or excursions from the runway. The RSA must remain clear, properly graded, and free of objects except those fixed-by-function and required for navigation or safety. Each runway at RTS has an RSA width of 500 feet. The RSAs begin 600 feet prior to each landing threshold and extend 1,000 feet beyond the end of runway pavement.

The runway object free area (ROFA) extends wider beyond the RSA and ensures wingtip protection during a runway excursion. ROFAs at RTS extend an additional 150 feet beyond each side of the established RSA width.

The runway protection zone (RPZ) is trapezoidal in shape and centered along the extended runway centerline. The RPZ serves to protect people and property on the ground. The FAA recommends complete ownership of RPZs to ensure compatible land use of these areas. RTAA does not have complete ownership of the RPZs on Runway 26 or Runway 32. These surfaces will be discussed further within the Facilities Requirements Chapter.

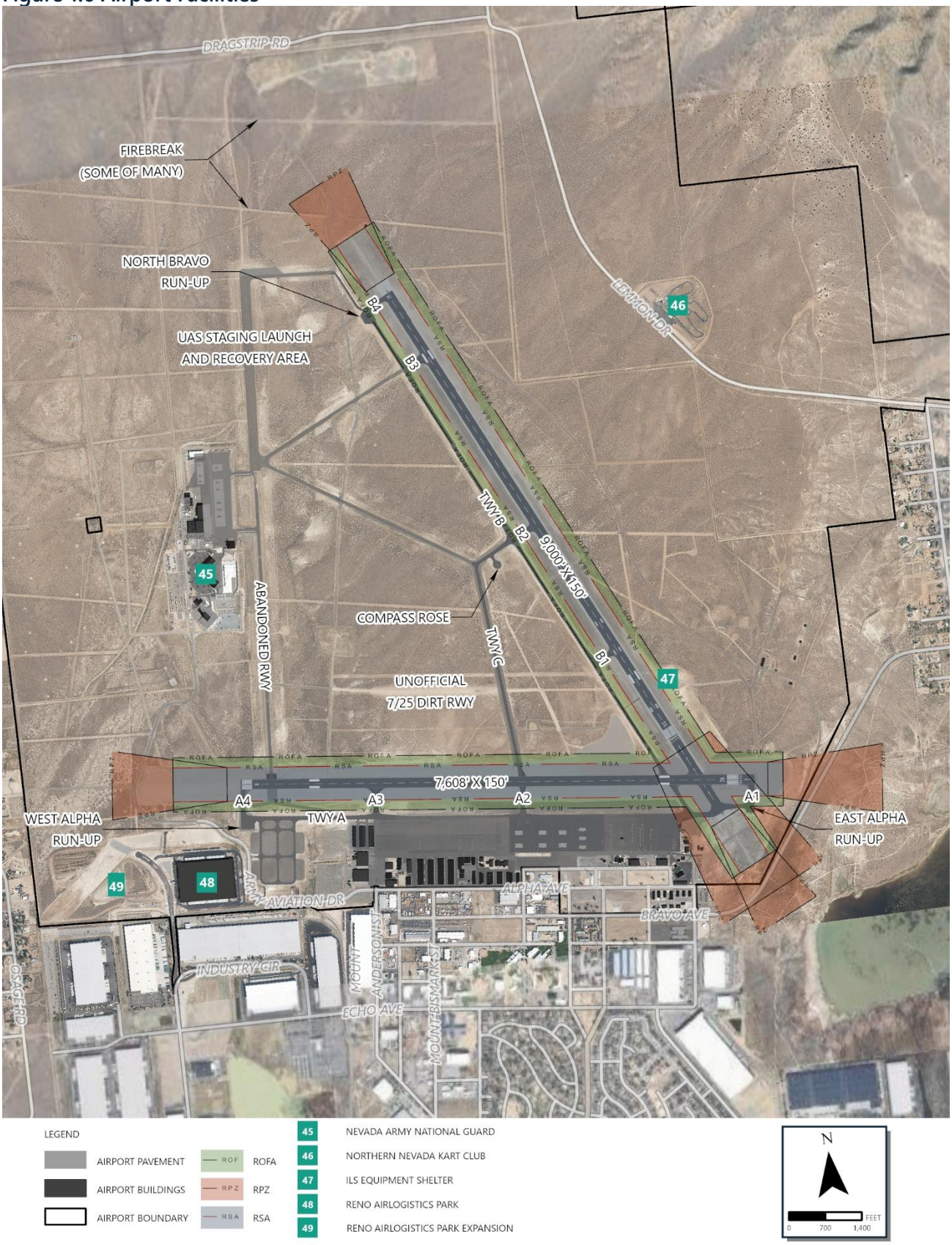
Figure 1.5 and Figure 1.6 show the location of airport facilities and critical safety areas at RTS.

Figure 1.5 Airport Facilities - Terminal Area



Source: RTAA, Ardurra, 2026

Figure 1.6 Airport Facilities



Source: RTAA, Ardurra, 2026

Runway Facilities

Reno-Stead Airport has two runways: Runway 14/32 (northwest/southeast) and Runway 8/26 (east/west). Both runways have full parallel taxiways and connecting taxiways that provide aircraft access to the various ramp areas and facilities at the airport. Declared distances are published for both runways; these are discussed in detail in the Facility Requirements Chapter.

Runway 14/32

Runway 14/32 is the primary runway and has an existing runway length of 9,000 feet and is 150 feet wide. The runway is currently designated to meet FAA Runway Design Code (RDC) C-III standards providing operational capabilities to accommodate large aircraft. The runway has a precision approach to Runway 32 with visibility minimums as low as 1 ¼ miles. Runway 14 operates under visual flight rules (VFR). The pavement surface is a grooved asphalt to aid in wet conditions.

Runway 8/26

Runway 8/26 is designated as a crosswind runway but is the predominantly used runway at RTS due to its proximity to the terminal area and landside facilities. Runway 8/26 is currently 7,608 feet in length and is 150 feet wide. It also has grooved asphalt pavement. No instrument approach procedures are published to either runway end; therefore, Runway 8/26 only supports visual operations. Runway details are summarized in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Existing Runway Conditions

	Runway			
Facility Detail	**14**	**32**	**8**	**26**
Runway Design Code (RDC)	C-III		C-III	
Length (feet)	9,000′		7,608′	
Width (feet)	150′		150′	
Surface	Asphalt (Grooved)		Asphalt (Grooved)	
Runway Condition	Good		Excellent	
Lighting	HIRL		HIRL	
Runway End Identifier Lights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Approach Lighting System	No	MALSR	No	No
Vertical Glide Slope Indicator (VGSI)	4-PAPI (Out of Service)	4-PAPI	4-PAPI	4-PAPI
Markings	Visual	Precision	Non-Precision	Non-Precision
Displaced Threshold	N/A	1,207′	N/A	235′
Approach Visibility Minimums	Visual	1 ¼ (LOC)	Visual	Visual
Part 77 Approach Slope	50 : 1	50 : 1	50 : 1	50 : 1

Source: FAA Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP); Ardurra, 2026

Unofficial Runway 7/25 Dirt

While currently not an FAA-designated runway, RTS maintains a dirt runway for small general aviation and experimental aircraft. Runway 7/25 Dirt is located in the infield and is approximately 1,300 feet north of Runway 8/26. It is approximately 1,300 feet in length and is 60 feet wide. The runway is not equipped with any lighting systems. As it is not officially recognized by the FAA, the runway does not exist yet on the Airport Layout Plan, nor it is published within the FAA's Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP).

Airfield Navigation and Lighting

There are several types of navigational aids (NAVAID) with differing functions and varying levels of sophistication available for use at airports. These can be simple devices such as visual markers, communication equipment to transmit radio signals, or more complex systems that provide navigational guidance with a high degree of accuracy.

The following NAVAIDs are owned and operated by RTAA:

Runway end identifier lights (REIL) provide visual identification of the runway ends for landing aircraft. All runway ends are all equipped with REILs. These systems consist of two synchronized flashing lights that face approaching aircraft that are located at each side of the runway end. They can be seen both day and night. They are all reported to be in good condition. Both runways are equipped with high intensity runway lighting, which can be controlled by pilots via the airport's common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF).

Precision approach path indicators (PAPI) are visual NAVAIDs installed in a single row along the left side of each runway end. Except for the PAPI located at Runway 8, which has a four-degree angle, these systems provide a visual three-degree angle to the runway aiming point using a series of red and white lights that indicate the position above or below the recommended approach slope. Each runway end at Reno-Stead Airport is equipped with a 4-light PAPI system . While still in place, the PAPIs located on Runway 14 have been ruled out of service due to terrain and the inability for FAA to flight check.

Wind cones visually indicate the wind direction to provide pilots with real-time wind information during takeoff and landing. There is a lighted wind cone and segmented circle installed near the intersection of both runways. Additional wind cones are available throughout the airfield, including near each runway end. There is also a wind cone near the center of Runway 7/25 Dirt. All wind cones are reported to be in good condition; however, these require frequent maintenance due to sun, wind, rain, and snow exposure.

The airport beacon is located south of the apron at the top of the inactive airport traffic control tower (ATCT). It provides a constant rotating beam of white and green light during nighttime or less than visual conditions.

The airport is also equipped with an RTAA owned automated weather observing system (AWOS)-3 . This system measures wind data, temperature, dew point, altimeter, density altitude, visibility, cloud coverage, and cloud height. It is located in the infield near Taxiway B1.

The FAA owns and maintains electronic navigation aid facilities at RTS. Electronic navigational aids use a combination of ground-based transmission facilities and onboard receiving instruments to help pilots navigate with a high degree of accuracy. These include the following:

An instrument landing system (ILS) is a ground-based navigation system providing pilots with electronic guidance for aircraft alignment, descent slope, and position for safe landing during reduced cloud clearance and visibility. The ILS system is available on Runway 32 and is used to complete a precision instrument approach. Components of the ILS include a glideslope, localizer, and distance measuring equipment. Runway 32 is also equipped with a medium intensity approach light system with runway alignment indicator lights (MALSR).

A glideslope (GS) provides pilots with vertical guidance with three-degree descent path. The glideslope antenna and equipment shelter are located along the right side of Runway 32, just outside of the runway object free area (ROFA), and are reported to be in good condition.

The localizer (LOC) provides lateral course guidance to align the aircraft with the runway's extended centerline. The localizer antenna is located approximately 1,000 feet from the Runway 14 threshold and is also reported to be in good condition.

Distance measuring equipment (DME) is co-located with the LOC and provides the slant range between an aircraft and the facility.

Taxiway System

Taxiways and taxiway connectors are used by aircraft to get to and from the runway without interfering with takeoffs or landings. Taxiways are designated with a letter or a letter and number combination.

The airport maintains a comprehensive taxiway system that meets or exceeds Taxiway Design Group (TDG) 3 standards at all points. The taxiway system consists of a full-length parallel taxiway with associated connectors for both runways. Information for each taxiway is provided in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 Taxiway System

Taxiway Designator	Width	Type
A	50′	Parallel for Runway 8/26
A1	50′	Connector
A2	50′	Connector
A3	50′	Connector
A4	50′	Connector
B	50′	Parallel for Runway 14/32
B1	50′	Connector
B2	50′	Connector
B3	50′	Connector
B4	50′	Connector
C	50′	Circulation

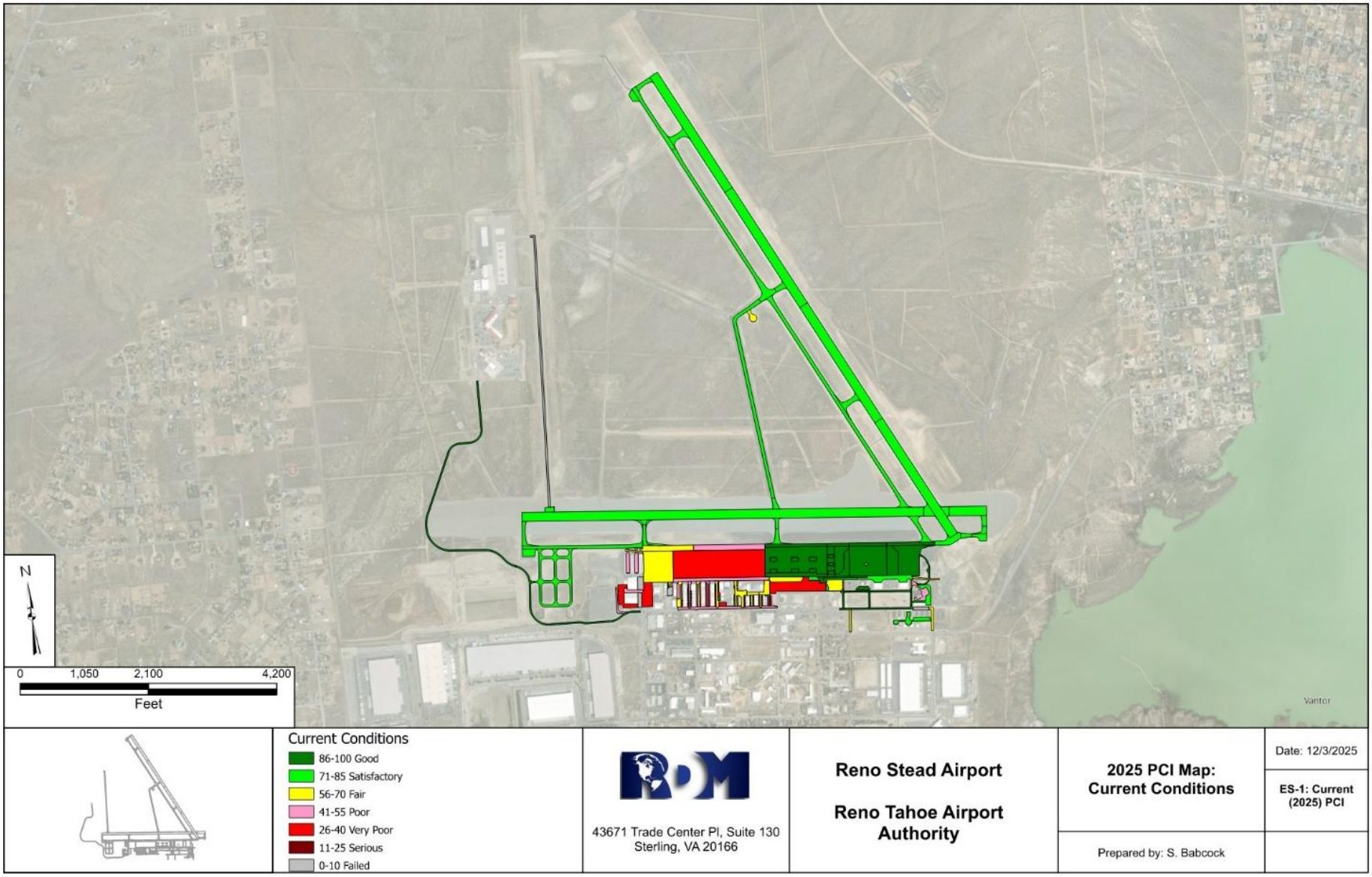
Source: Ardurra, 2026

The airport maintains three (3) designated engine run-up areas, located near the ends of each runway. Engine run-up areas are designated locations where pilots can perform engine checks before takeoff to ensure systems are functioning correctly. The North Bravo Engine Run-Up area is located in a squared off area, south of Taxiway Connector B4, in proximity to Runway 14. The East Alpha Engine Run-Up area is located in a squared off area, south of Taxiway Connector A1, in proximity to Runway 32 and Runway 26. The West Alpha Engine Run-Up area is located in a squared off area, south of Taxiway Connector A4, in proximity to Runway 8.

Pavement Conditions

In 2025, RTAA conducted a pavement condition analysis of the airport's airside and landside pavements. Airside pavements in the report included runways, taxiways, and aprons; landside pavements included roadways and vehicle parking. The inspection involved a visual assessment and a rating scale of 0 to 100. Conditions were rated according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pavement Condition Index (PCI) methods described in FAA Advisory Circular 150/5380-6C, Guidance and Procedures for Maintenance of Airport Pavements. A PCI rating of 100 represents new pavement in excellent condition. Deductions are then taken for pavement distress, with a failing PCI rating of zero. The overall area-weighted PCI rating of the airfield at the time of the 2025 pavement condition analysis PCI survey was 73, which is considered to be satisfactory. Figure 1.7 depicts the PCI ratings from the 2025 evaluation.

Figure 1.7 PCI Map: Current Conditions



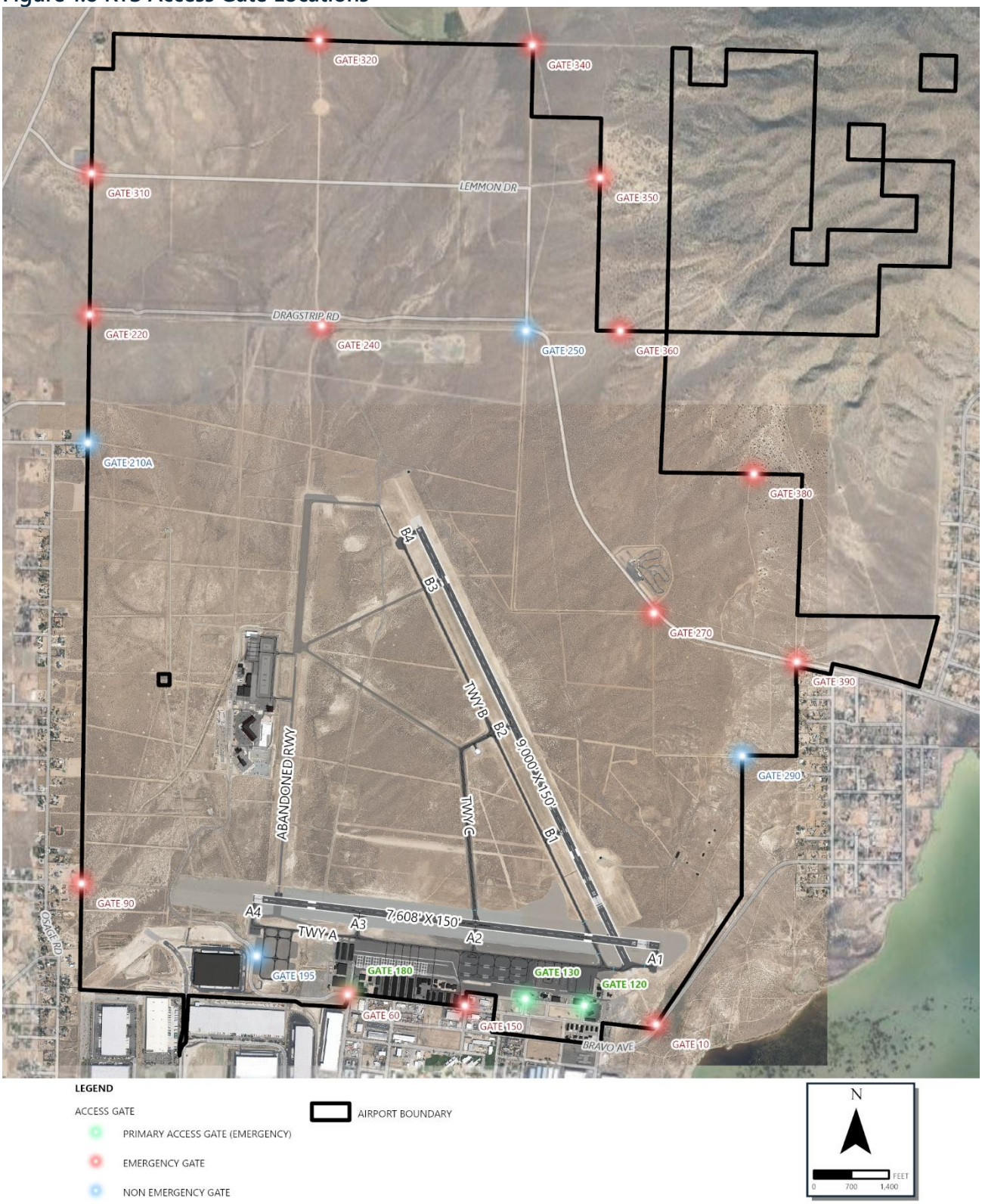
Source: Airport Pavement Management Program Update, RDM International, 2025

Airfield Security and Fencing

Airport fencing fully encloses the air operations area (AOA) to prevent unauthorized access of airport property. The airfield is enclosed by a security fence of varying types and conditions. There is a main perimeter fence surrounding a majority of airport property. This fencing, combined with an unpaved perimeter road, provides a physical barrier around most of the airport, although approximately 425 acres along the northeastern ridgeline remain unfenced.

This primary perimeter fence generally measures six feet in height and has seventeen (17) access gates. In addition to this outer boundary, a secondary inner fence surrounds areas closer to the airfield for added protection. This internal fence is of varying heights and materials but was installed primarily as a means for AOA protection and access control during the air races. This inner fence has three additional access gates. All twenty gates are reported to be in good operating condition. Select gates are typically left open during daylight hours to accommodate tenants and operational traffic. Figure 1.8 identifies both emergency and non-emergency gates at the airport.

Figure 1.8 RTS Access Gate Locations

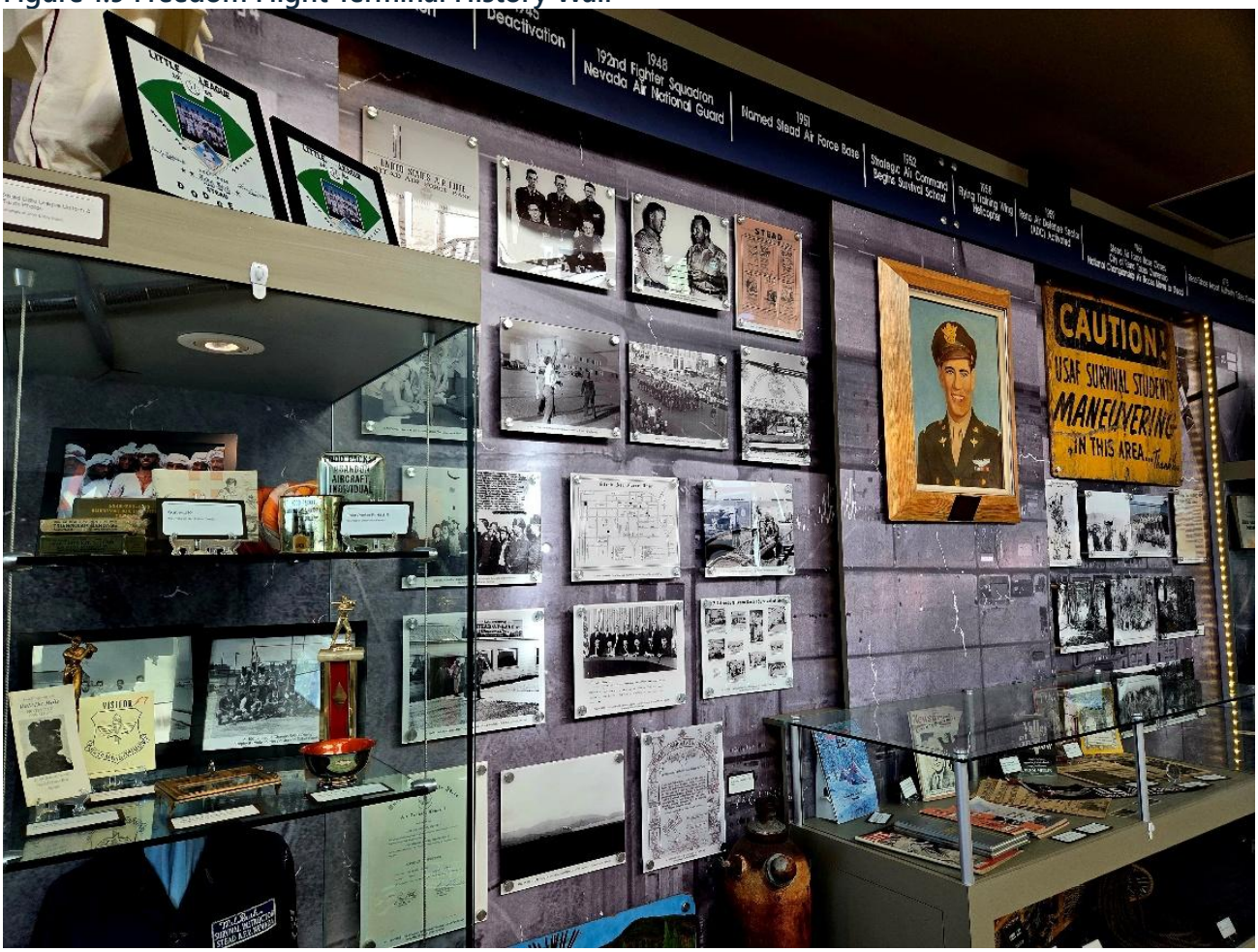


Source: RTAA, Ardurra, 2026

Freedom Flight Terminal

The Freedom Flight Terminal, located on the southeast side of the airport, was constructed in 2013 and serves general aviation users. The two-story, 12,000 square foot facility includes a pilot's lounge, RTAA administrative offices, and a community conference room that also serves as an emergency operations center as needed. The terminal is a tribute to the airfield's rich military heritage. Blank walls were intentionally installed to invite the community to contribute memories, artifacts, and stories that have transformed the space into a living museum to celebrate the airport's history. The wall, now filled with memorabilia, can be seen in Figure 1.9.

Figure 1.9 Freedom Flight Terminal History Wall



Source: RTAA, 2026

Aircraft Storage and Parking

Hangar facilities provide a wide range of benefits, including aircraft protection from weather damage, secure aircraft storage, shelter for aircraft maintenance, and the potential for combined office and hangar space.

Hangar facilities at the Reno-Stead Airport include both box hangars and T-hangars. Box hangars, often used by fixed base operators (FBO) and maintenance providers, provide a large open space with

the ability to store several aircraft. T-hangars and smaller box hangars typically only provide space for one aircraft and are used by private owners. All existing hangars are situated near the aircraft parking apron and have direct access to Taxiway A. There are currently 148 hangar facilities as detailed in Table 1.5. This is comprised of ten (10) standard T-hangars, one hundred seven (107) small box hangars in rows mimicking a standard T-hangar, twenty-nine (29) medium box hangars, and two (2) large box hangars. All hangars are privately-owned with the exception of two (2) medium and one (1) large box hangar which are owned by the RTAA.

Table 1.5 Hangar Inventory

	Hangar Type			
Ownership	**T-Hangar**	**Small Box**	**Medium Box**	**Large Box**
Private	10	107	27	1
RTAA	-	-	2	1

Source: RTAA, 2026

The airport also provides three designated areas for aircraft parking and tie-downs. The western section features approximately 45,000 square yards (405,000 square feet) of unmarked tie-downs primarily utilized by based aircraft. The central portion, built with asphalt and featuring concrete hardstands, spans approximately 73,000 square yards (657,000 square feet) and is primarily used for parking larger aircraft. The eastern section offers an additional 56,000 square yards (504,000 square feet) of space for tie-downs. There are 113 official tie-downs – 52 located on the eastern side and 61 on the western side.

Fuel Facilities

The fuel storage area is situated on the southeast side of the airfield, south of BLM Fire Tanker Base and east of Maryland Drive. It consists of four above-ground tanks with a total capacity of 48,000 gallons; approximately 24,000 gallons for Jet A fuel and 24,000 gallons for 100LL; however, these tanks can be exchanged depending on seasonal needs. Additionally, a self-service fuel island is located directly near the terminal at the east end of the apron. The island tank has a capacity of 12,000 gallons of 100LL and is accessible 24 hours a day. The fuel tanks are all owned by RTAA but leased to and maintained by Aviation Classics. Aviation Classics also operates five fuel trucks for direct-to-aircraft fuel deliveries: three (3) 5,000 gallon trucks, one (1) 750 gallon truck, and one (1) 1,200 gallon

Airport Maintenance and Snow Removal

All maintenance and snow removal operations on the airfield are completed by airport staff. Equipment for both maintenance and snow removal is stored primarily in a non-climate-controlled area of an approximately 5,800 square foot maintenance facility on the eastern side of the terminal area, as well as outside adjacent to the building. The airport has various maintenance and snow removal equipment, including mowers, tractors, snowplows, and a snow blower. There are no deicing or sand capabilities currently available at the airport. In addition to the main warehouse, there is an old T-Hangar relocated east of the BLM base that is used for airfield storage. Currently, the maintenance complex occupies approximately 2.5 acres.

Airport Tenants

Reno-Stead Airport hosts a diverse group of tenants that play critical roles in aviation, public safety, and innovation.

- **Aviation Classics:** RTS is served by one full service fixed base operator (FBO), Aviation Classics. An FBO is a business that operates at an airport and provides a wide range of services to the flying public. These services are typically for general aviation customers and include aircraft fueling, parking, servicing, charter flights, aircraft rentals, maintenance, and hangar rentals. Aviation Classics also offers avionics sales, warbird restoration, and factory authorized Beechcraft services. Aviation Classics leases their buildings from the RTAA.

- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM):** The Bureau of Land Management operates a significant wildfire suppression base at RTS that primarily supports aerial firefighting activities with contracted pilots using privately owned aircraft. The base handles substantial seasonal activity, averaging more than one million gallons of retardant annually, with peak years exceeding two million gallons. The facility was built in 1997 primarily to accommodate large air tankers (LATS), such as the Avro RJ85 and C-130 aircraft. Staffing surges during fire season, with up to 50 personnel on-site. Additionally, the base is equipped to support helicopters as needed for operations. The BLM's location is ideal for airfield access, near the intersection of both runways; however, it is constrained by facilities south, west, and north and safety/protection areas east. Should the BLM need to expand its facilities, relocation of other airport uses may be necessary.

- **Kraus Hamdani Aerospace (KHA):** Kraus Hamdani Aerospace is a cutting-edge unmanned aerial systems (UAS) company specializing in ultra-long endurance electric platforms, with a strong operational presence at Reno-Stead Airport. KHA develops fully electric, zero-emissions Group II UAS designed for persistent aerial operations, powered by onboard AI and solar energy harvesting. These aircraft are engineered to mimic bird-like flights for silent, efficient gliding, enabling extended missions for defense, communications, and emergency response. The company holds the record for the longest Group II UAS flight and has received FAA waivers allowing operations up to 2,000 feet at Reno-Stead Airport. KHA has conducted nearly 2,000 flights at RTS, with recent monthly activity exceeding 50 hours of flight time. These operations typically include short morning flights and longer afternoon missions. The company is currently developing new battery technology to double flight intensity. KHA is preparing to expand into Group III UAS, which would require larger hangar space and enhanced air traffic coordination. The company has identified RTS as an ideal location due to its seasonal climate diversity, favorable tax environment, and existing infrastructure.

- **Nevada Army National Guard:** The Nevada Army National Guard operates a fleet of rotorcraft and one (1) fixed-wing Beechcraft King Air on the western side of RTS, representing the continuity of military aviation at the airport. The Guard conducts extensive helicopter training both on-airport and throughout the surrounding region with their fleet of seven (7) Chinooks and nine (9) Blackhawks. Through a modernization program, the base is expecting to receive six (6) new model Blackhawks in the near term. While normally staffed with one

hundred fifty (150) full-time employees, staffing increases up to one thousand (1,000) personnel on drill weekends. The Guard facilities are adequately sized for these surges; however, a redevelopment is planned for the base within the next ten (10) years. The aeronautical portion of the redevelopment will include a new hangar for the expected Blackhawks as well as an apron expansion.

- **Tactical Air Support (TAC Air):** TAC Air provides adversary fighter services to support military training contracts with the Air Force and Navy. The company leases one (1) large box hangar from the RTAA and subleases two (2) medium box hangars from private hangar owners. TAC Air typically stations eight (8) to ten (10) F-5 aircraft onsite. The company conducts typical VFR daylight operations, with training altitudes around 1,500 feet and airspeed ranging from 140 knots to 300 knots. TAC Air's presence at RTS is stable, with long-term plans focused on infrastructure upgrades and maintaining a secure, efficient environment for military training support.

- **Washoe County Sheriff's Office:** The Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) maintains an aviation unit at RTS primarily used for law enforcement, search and rescue, and emergency response purposes. The unit operates four helicopters – two Huey and two Kiowa models. Flights occur two to three times per week, typically for patrol or training, with scheduled night patrols on Fridays and Saturdays. Training includes hoist operations, SWAT support, and law enforcement exercises that are often conducted in the west block or surrounding hills. Their presence at RTS is critical for public safety, medical response, and firefighting support. WCSO has recently purchased one (1) of the large box hangars (formerly leased by RARA) for long-term use.

- **Flight Schools:** Multiple flight schools based at RNO regularly conduct flight training at RTS primarily for touch-and-go operations and cross-country requirements. These flight schools include Great Basin Aviation, NV Flight, and Biggest Little Flight School. Beyond regular training, each routinely use RTS for check rides and fueling aircraft training. Together, these schools contribute significantly to training activity at RTS, particularly during the summer months.

- **Unmanned Aircraft System Operators:** Leveraging the existing FAA-designated UAS test site previously described, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) – Nevada Center for Applied Research (NCAR) facilitates hands-on testing, data collection, and integration with broader initiatives like the FAA's Beyond Program and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) at RTS. The airport provides an ideal environment for testing due to the ability to provide diverse conditions via high field elevation, proximity to mountainous terrain, and ease of controlled and uncontrolled airspaces. UNR's presence and collaboration with RTAA positions RTS as a critical hub for innovation and economic development in Nevada's growing aerospace sector.

- **Dermody Properties – Reno AirLogistics Park:** As discussed in detail later in this chapter, Master Development Agreement, the greater western portion of the airport is under agreement with Dermody Properties for non-aeronautical development rights. At the time of

this writing, the first Dermody development is complete – a 470,000 square foot building on the southwestern corner of the airport property. Dermody is expected to continue building out the area, which is now called the Reno AirLogistics Park.

Landside Facilities

The landside facilities at Reno-Stead Airport encompass the infrastructure and amenities that support ground access, vehicle circulation, parking, and tenant operations.

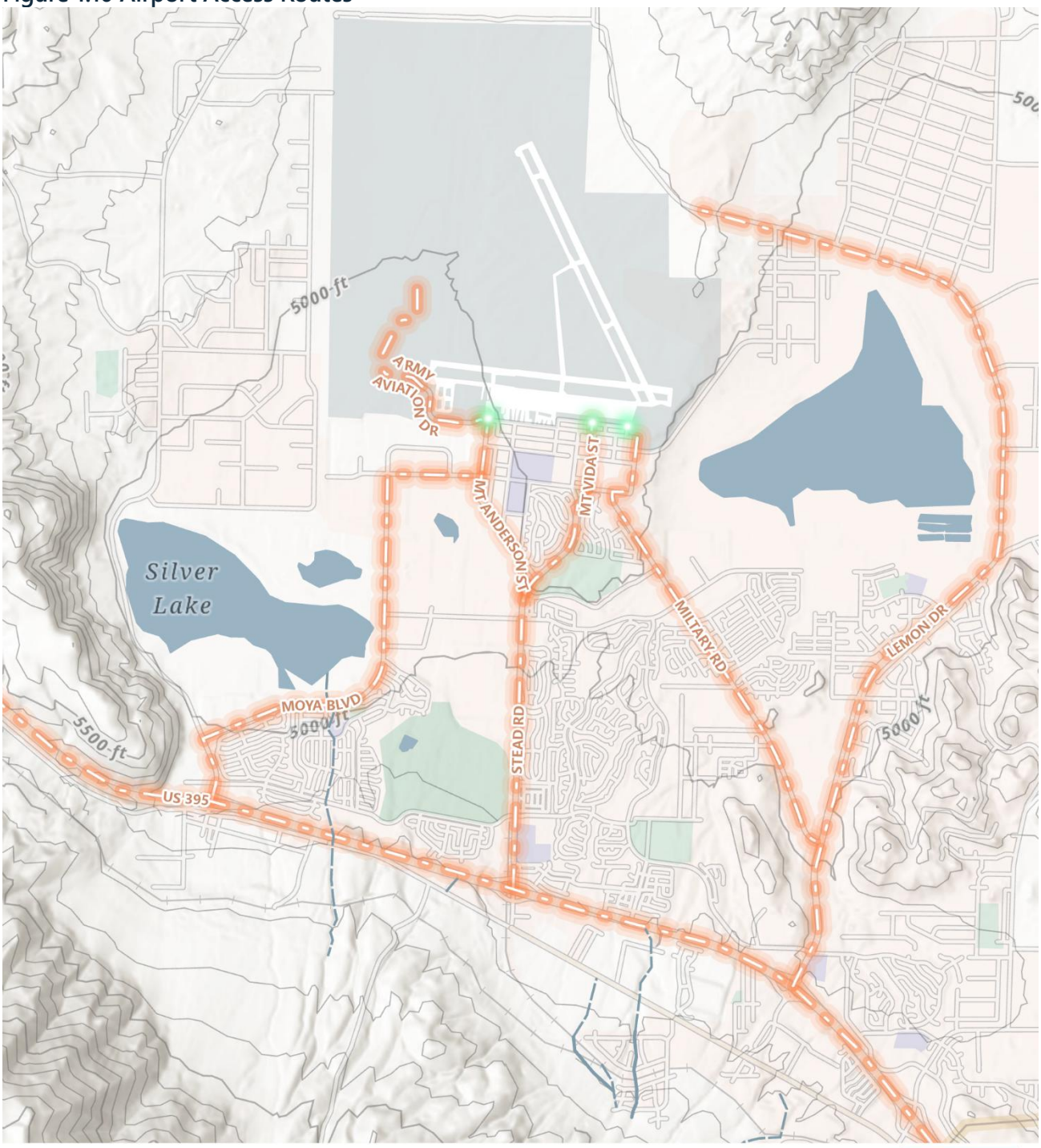
Airport Access and Auto Parking

U.S. Highway 395, located approximately three miles south of RTS, runs north–south from Reno through California and up to Spokane, Washington. It serves as the primary connection to the secondary roads leading to RTS. The primary access route from U.S. 395 to RTS is Stead Boulevard. From Stead Boulevard, Mt. Vida Drive connects to Alpha Avenue, which leads to the terminal on Texas Avenue, accessible via two entry points: Florida Street from the east and Iowa Street from the west.

The Nevada Army National Guard, situated on the west side of the airport, is reached via Army Aviation Drive. Although rarely utilized, private access to the east side of the airport is available via Highway 395 and Lemmon Drive. Primary airport access routes are displayed in Figure 1.10.

The terminal has a single paved parking lot for vehicles, located directly behind the building on its south side. This lot serves as the primary passenger parking area and provides 29 spaces. On the airside, in front of the terminal and Aviation Classics, there is a general aviation parking area with 39 spaces.

Figure 1.10 Airport Access Routes



Source: Ardurra, 2026

Other Landside Facilities

Other non-aeronautical facilities located on airport property include Camp Stead and the Northern Nevada Kart Club.

Camp Stead, which was previously leased to the Nevada Army National Guard, is located near the southeast portion of the terminal area. It consists of multiple facilities, including barracks, dining halls, and support buildings. The camp is minimally maintained by RTAA. A Facility Condition Assessment was completed for Camp Stead in 2019 and can be found in Appendix B to this Airport Master Plan. The majority of the buildings were found to be in poor condition. Portions of Camp Stead are semi-regularly used by regional law enforcement and emergency response organizations for training.

The Northern Nevada Kart Club, which is located across the airfield to the north, operates a kart racing track that attracts motorsport enthusiasts and hosts competitive events throughout the year.

Environmental Overview

Environmental considerations at RTS are integral to long-term planning and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The airport operates in a region designated as a PM_{10} maintenance area under the Clean Air Act (CAA), and, while current emissions are within CAA standards, construction activities must incorporate dust control and emission reduction measures. Greenhouse gas emissions and climate considerations are a high priority in the region. Washoe County's 2025 Climate Action Plan sets a goal of net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, [3] and the City of Reno's 2019–2025 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan targets a 40% reduction by 2030 from 2008 levels.[4]

Water resources are also a significant consideration because RTS drains toward Swan Lake and Silver Lake playas. Development must comply with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain regulations and local building codes and incorporate drainage solutions to prevent downstream impacts. The Integrated Source Water and Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Watershed Protection Plan for Public Water Systems and the Truckee River in the Truckee Meadows provides regional guidance for protecting groundwater quality through source water protection, recharge area management, and nonpoint source pollution controls.

The Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA) Natural Resource Consideration Areas (NRCA) Policy Map[5] identifies the entire RTS planning area as overlapping mapped habitat for the Carson wandering skipper and Webber's ivesia. These mapped designations reflect regional-scale habitat modeling and species occurrence data used for long-range planning purposes.

Although the NRCA mapping indicates potential habitat across the airport area, existing conditions at RTS consist primarily of developed airfield surfaces, disturbed soils, and maintained infrastructure

[3] Washoe County. *Climate Action Plan 2025: Goal: Net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050* Accessed. October 15, 2025, at https://www.washoecounty.gov/climate/index.php

[4] City of Reno. Environmental Services. 2019-2025 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Accessed March 2, 2026, at https://www.reno.gov/community/sustainability

[5] Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA). *Natural Resource Consideration Areas (NRCA) Policy Map.* Accessed October 15, 2025, at https://tmrpa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1dd04323d4d948379215ad317b881fe4

that generally do not support the intact alkaline meadow or sagebrush communities required by these species. As a result, the presence of mapped habitat does not indicate confirmed on-site occurrence.

Recognition of the source water protection areas and NRCA designations at the master-planning level supports regional plan consistency while allowing detailed environmental review to occur during subsequent project-specific NEPA evaluations.

Hazardous materials are managed under federal and state programs, and, while no Superfund or National Priorities List (NPL) sites are present in Washoe County, the Stead Solvent Remediation Site imposes institutional controls on groundwater use and construction activities in the southwest quadrant.

For detailed methodologies, data sources, and regulatory requirements, refer to Appendix A.

Stead Solvent Site

The Stead Solvent Site has been a focal point for extensive environmental cleanup. These efforts have been spearheaded by RTAA in partnership with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) in accordance with a consent decree. Contamination in this area stems from the historical use of solvents and chemicals during and after construction of the military base in the 1940s.

Since 2005, RTAA has invested significant funds to address the contamination, including groundwater pumping to manage and eliminate harmful substances from both the soil and groundwater. These efforts focus on halting the spread of pollutants while working toward restoration of the site. Additionally, RTAA is employing a natural remediation approach.

RTAA's commitment to this remediation process reflects the airport's environmental responsibility, ensuring the restoration of the site and setting an example for future sustainable development at the airport.

Climate Factors

The airport is located in Northern Nevada's high-desert environment, which presents unique climate-related challenges that influence airport operations and long-term planning. Climate resiliency at RTS focuses on understanding current and emerging risks and integrating adaptive strategies into infrastructure and operational practices. The following details climate, weather, and geological elements that are required for consideration within this airport master plan study.

RTS experiences significant weather variability. It is common to have wide temperature fluctuations of more than 50 degrees in a single day during the summer. These extreme fluctuations stress pavement and building materials. This requires pavement design and maintenance strategies that account for thermal expansion and contraction. High summer temperatures accelerate pavement deterioration, and winter freeze-thaw cycles affect drainage systems and structural integrity. Prolonged drought conditions increase dust generation and wildfire risk while smoke from regional wildfires often reduces visibility and air quality which impacts flight operations and personnel safety.

The airport is also subject to extreme wind, particularly during transitional seasons. High winds can affect aircraft performance, increase crosswind landing challenges, and create hazards for ground operations. There have been instances of aircraft breaking tie-downs and flipping during extreme wind events (i.e., winds gusting more than 90 miles per hour).

Although RTS is situated in a semi-arid basin, localized flooding can occur during intense storm events or due to rapid snowmelt. The airport drains toward Swan Lake and Silver Lake playas, which are sensitive to changes in runoff volume. It is important to ensure that future development complies with FEMA floodplain regulations, applicable local building codes, and the Truckee Meadows Regional Drainage Manual by incorporating detention and retention basins to mitigate flood risk and maintain downstream hydrologic stability.

RTS lies within a region influenced by basin and range fault systems. While major seismic events are infrequent, Washoe County imposes seismic design standards for new construction near active fault lines. While there are existing fault lines on airport property, as of 2026, none are active or currently impacting the airport or its structures.

Wildfire is always a threat at RTS. Numerous fire breaks are built into the undeveloped airport land, which require ongoing maintenance by airport staff. To date, no catastrophic incidents have occurred. However, all the ingredients exist for a major incident, including the potential combination of extreme winds, hot temperatures, and dry vegetation for fuel. The Marshall Fire in Colorado is an example of such an incident that could possibly occur in the Reno-Sparks region. That fire took place in December of 2021 and was caused by the combination of a small grass fire and a windstorm with gusts of up to 115 miles per hour.

NASA has determined that overall, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent, longer lasting, and more severe.[6] Fire, flooding, drought, extreme wind, cold, and heat will impact airport operations. This airport master plan includes consideration of these climate factors throughout the study. The Facility Requirements chapter outlines recommendations and best practices to mitigate climate-related threats, and the alternatives development incorporates design options that increase the airport's resiliency to weather events.

Area-Wide Plans

Reno-Stead Airport is a critical transportation and economic asset within the region. As such, the airport has an influence on regional transportation planning, land use planning, and other municipal-related planning. Similarly, municipal plans influence RTS. The following provides an overview of the regional planning studies that may impact RTS and/or consider RTS within the respective study.

[6] Harrabin, R. (2025, June 17). *Nasa data reveals dramatic rise in intensity of weather events.* The Guardian; The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/17/nasa-data-reveals-dramatic-rise-in-intensity-of-weather-events

Truckee Meadows Regional Plan[7]

The purpose of the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan is to guide coordinated growth and development across Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County by aligning land use, infrastructure, and natural resource planning. It ensures that local jurisdictions work together toward a unified vision for sustainable and resilient regional development. The regional plan, most recently updated in 2024, considers public dialogue and depicts the type, location and pattern of growth and development regional agencies believe will deliver the best quality of life for current and future residents.

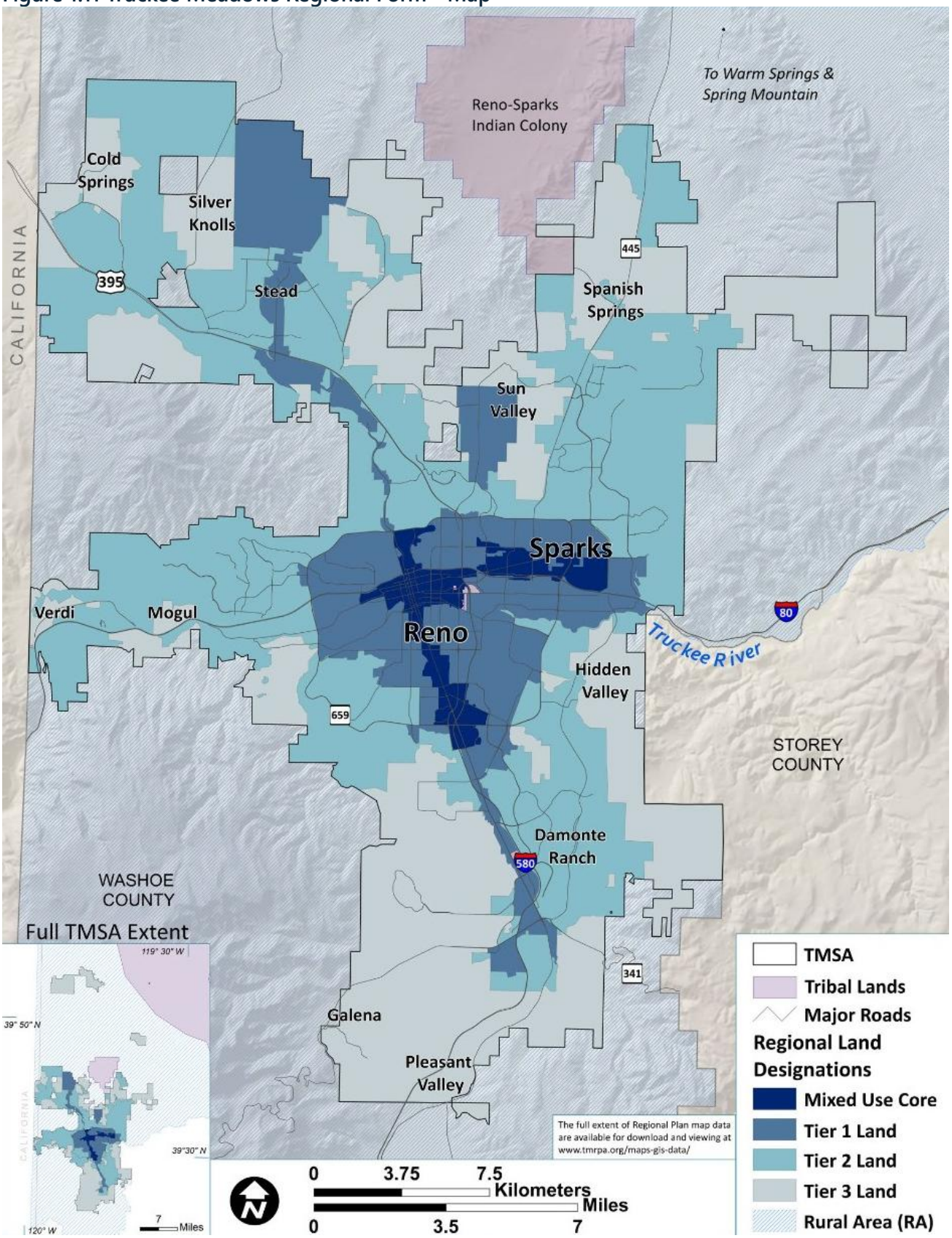
The Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission (RPC), administers the Regional Plan. In accordance with Nevada Revised Statues 278.026, the RPC reviews and approves master plans, facility plans, and similar plans of local governments to ensure alignment with the Regional Plan. RTAA is an affected entity under Nevada Revised Statutes due to their responsibility of planning and providing public transportation services. As an affected entity, RTAA must coordinate with the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency to ensure this airport master plan conforms with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, including applicable NRCA, growth, and infrastructure policies.

The Regional Planning Commission will consider the following factors when evaluating this airport master plan to ensure consistency and compatibility with the goals and policies established in the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan: population growth, regional form, public facilities/services, natural resources, and regional coordination. Additionally, the Regional Planning Commission would review projects of regional significance when applicable.

Figure 1.11 depicts the regional land use tiers from the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. The map promotes density towards the core of the region. Reno-Stead Airport lies within the northernmost portion of Tier 1 Land as determined in the Regional Form section. Tier 1 Land is expected to have a variety of development, receives secondary priority for development and investment, and emphasizes investment in public facilities/services.

[7] *2024 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan,* 11 Dec. 2025, tmrpa.org/2024-truckee-meadows-regional-plan/.

Figure 1.11 Truckee Meadows Regional Form - Map



Source: Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, 2024

2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTC Washoe County)[8]

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan is designed to be a long-range roadmap for the region's transportation system. The plan is updated every four (4) years to reflect changing priorities with the most recent update published in February 2025. It identifies the projects, programs, and services that may be implemented through 2050. It captures the community's vision for how the transportation system should look and function. It also identifies and addresses priorities, such as safety, mobility, connectivity, congestion reduction, environmental sustainability, and economic development. While it doesn't mention RTS, the plan's network enhancements and mobility goals are critical for enabling growth, access, and economic development around Reno-Stead Airport.

One Nevada Transportation Plan[9]

The One Nevada Transportation Plan, last published by the Nevada Department of Transportation in 2020, is the state's long-range framework for guiding transportation investments. It is focused on safety, mobility, infrastructure preservation, and economic development. While primarily centered on roads and transit, the plan supports aviation system planning by coordinating with airport stakeholders and aligning aviation goals, such as access, connectivity, and infrastructure needs, within the broader statewide transportation strategy.

Nevada Airport and Heliport System[10]

The Nevada Airport and Heliport System Plan (NAHSP), accompanied by the Airport Economic Impact Study (AEIS), is the state's latest comprehensive aviation planning study. This initiative was completed by NDOT's Aviation Program in 2022, and it replaces the previous plan from 2004.

The NAHSP and AEIS establish a new foundation for Nevada's aviation planning that guides future investment, infrastructure development, maintenance, and performance monitoring for airports across the state. The NAHSP includes custom airport development reports that identify capital projects needed for each airport, including RTS, to fulfill its role in the system, supporting funding decisions tied to economic benefit.

North Valleys Area Plan[11]

The North Valleys Area Plan is a component of Washoe County's broader comprehensive planning framework. It was adopted in 2010 and updated in 2020 to align with state and regional growth policies. It offers a long-term vision (approximately 20-year outlook) for the Lemmon Valley, Stead, Cold Springs, and surrounding communities by balancing development, infrastructure, environmental

[8] *2050 Regional Transportation Plan,* Feb. 2025, rtcwashoe.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/FINAL-RTP-12.21.23-online-1.pdf.

[9] *One Nevada Transportation Plan,* Feb. 2020, www.dot.nv.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/17554/637193659345900000.

[10] *Nevada Airport and Heliport System Plan,* 2022, https://www.dot.nv.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/21305/638138819691470000

[11] *One Nevada Transportation Plan,* Feb. 2020, www.dot.nv.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/17554/637193659345900000.

protection, and land use needs. Key elements include roadway and multimodal improvements to address congestion, careful zoning strategies, commitments to public safety and infrastructure, and processes to manage flooding, water supply, and community identity as the area evolves.

The North Valleys Area Plan affects RTS primarily by guiding how the surrounding land is developed and used, helping to ensure that future growth is compatible with airport operations. The airport is mostly located within the City of Reno's jurisdiction and is governed by city planning and the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority. However, the plan influences nearby unincorporated areas of Washoe County and affects land use, zoning, noise compatibility, and infrastructure planning adjacent to the airport.

Envision Washoe 2040[12]

In January 2024, Washoe County adopted the Envision Washoe 2040 Master Plan, a community-driven initiative that serves as the County's guiding framework for the next 10 to 20 years. It outlines the goals, policies, codes, and programs needed to support a thriving, diverse, and evolving community. The Envision Washoe 2040 Master Plan primarily focuses on land use, housing, transportation, natural resources, and community development within the unincorporated areas of Washoe County. The plan describes the planned land uses for the North Valleys area. This includes rural, suburban residential, open space, and parks in the region surrounding the Reno-Stead Airport.

City of Reno Master Plan (*ReImagine Reno*)[13]

The City of Reno's Master Plan, known as *ReImagine Reno*, is a comprehensive, long-term policy document that guides the city's growth and development over a 20-year horizon. Adopted in December 2017, it provides a unified vision for land use, transportation, housing, and community amenities. The plan was updated in November 2021 to reflect evolving community needs and priorities.

Within the *ReImagine Reno* master plan, RTS is described as part of the city's designated airport transportation areas. The plan focuses on ensuring land uses in and around RTS are compatible with aviation operations by favoring industrial, logistics, and aviation-support activities while restricting residential or high-occupancy uses in critical zones to safeguard safety and operational integrity.

Washoe County Consensus Forecast 2024-2044[14]

The Washoe County Consensus Forecast is a collaborative, region-wide projection of population and employment growth used by local governments and planning agencies to guide long-term development and infrastructure decisions. It provides a unified baseline of expected demographic and economic trends across Washoe County to support coordinated planning efforts. It functions as

[12] *Envision Washoe 2040*, Nov. 2023, www.washoecounty.gov/csd/planning_and_development/resources/Current%20Master%20Plan.php#docaccess-14d40693611585a5e4ba332bb7f673dd16ef065982480936d06bf745e2f89d1b.

[13] *ReImagine Reno*, Nov. 2021, www.reno.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=69070.

[14] *Washoe County Consensus Forecast 2024 - 2044*, 2024, https://tmrpa.app.box.com/v/2024-WC-ConsensusForecast

a foundational planning tool for Washoe County, the City of Reno, Sparks, and the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency. The Consensus Forecast was last published in 2024 and is required for consideration within this airport master plan study.

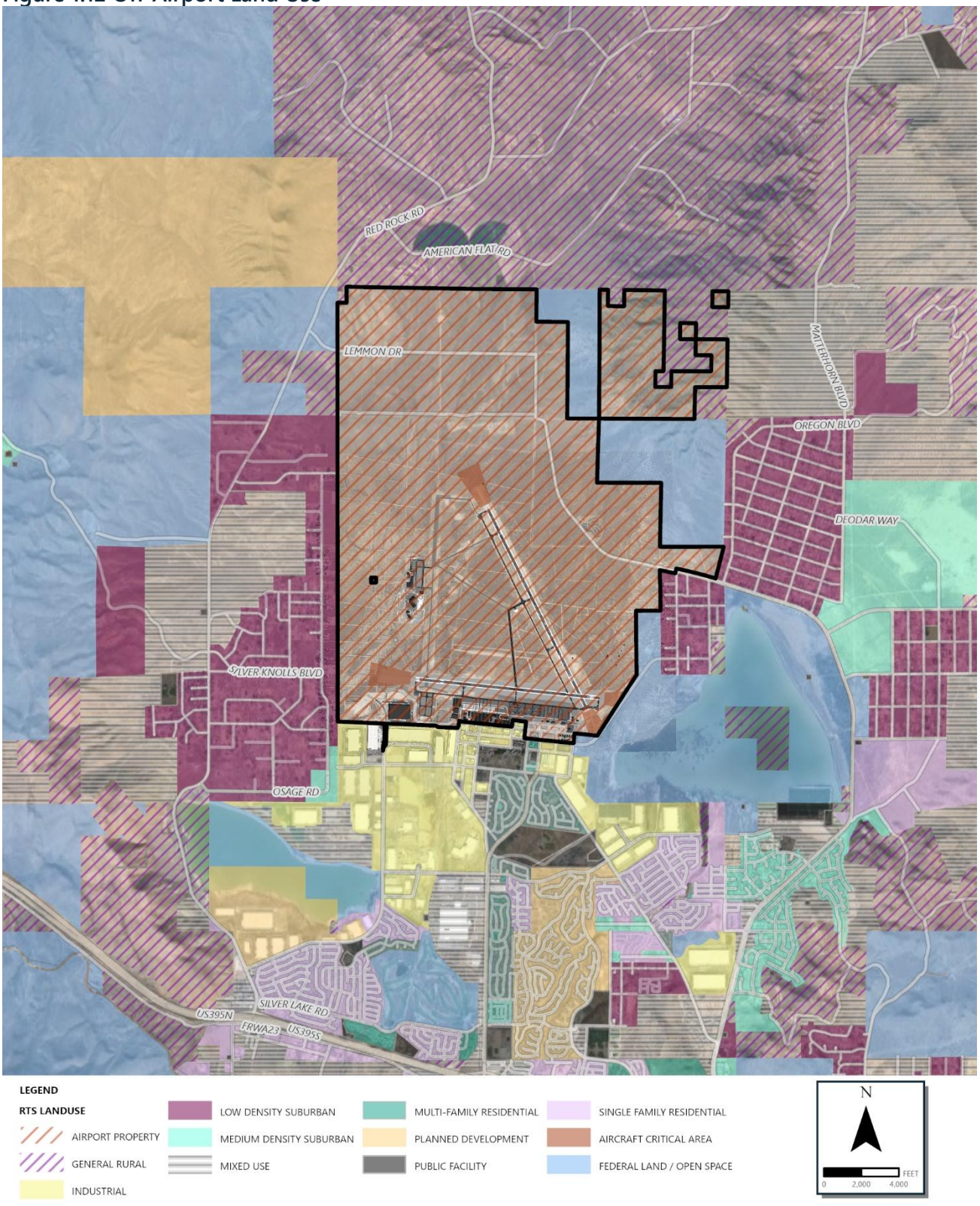
Regional Setting and Land Use

Reno-Stead Airport operates within a complex land use environment that requires careful coordination between RTAA and local jurisdictions to maintain safe and compatible development. This is because the airport must uphold federal grant assurances and, under Title 14, Part 77 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), it must preserve navigable airspace.

While the FAA provides recommendations for compatible land uses, the responsibility lies with the local agencies to implement and enforce these recommendations. Moreover, the State of Nevada passes control down to cities and counties through legislation. The agencies holding land use authority on and surrounding RTS include RTAA, City of Reno, and Washoe County. While the City of Reno has established zoning tools such as the Airport Flight Path Overlay District and Mixed-Use Airport Zone to regulate building heights and land uses near the airport, Washoe County, which controls much of the surrounding land, lacks comparable provisions. The multiple jurisdictions create complexities in how development is reviewed and approved, particularly in areas where residential subdivisions and open space zones intersect with critical airspace surfaces.

Figure 1.12 depicts land use surrounding the airport. Overall, the airport is flanked by general rural use to the north, low-density suburban residential to the west, a mix of low- and medium-density suburban residential to the east, and industrial and multi-family residential to the south.

Figure 1.12 Off-Airport Land Use



Source: Washoe Regional Mapping System; Ardurra, 2026

Military Surplus Land

As discussed at the beginning of the chapter, the airport has a military history dating back to World War II. Roughly half of the existing 5,162 acres of airport property was originally acquired on December 19, 1966, by the City of Reno through the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1947 and the Surplus Property Act of 1944. The original 2,300 acres encompassed a majority of the active airfield and was later transferred to the Washoe County Airport Authority on June 25, 1979.

Land acquired since the initial property transfer has been primarily in support and protection for the Air Races. While land acquisitions carry deed restrictions, the initial Surplus Property Transfer carried specific limitations imposed by the federal government. The Quitclaim Deed for the surplus property transfer imposed the following restrictions:

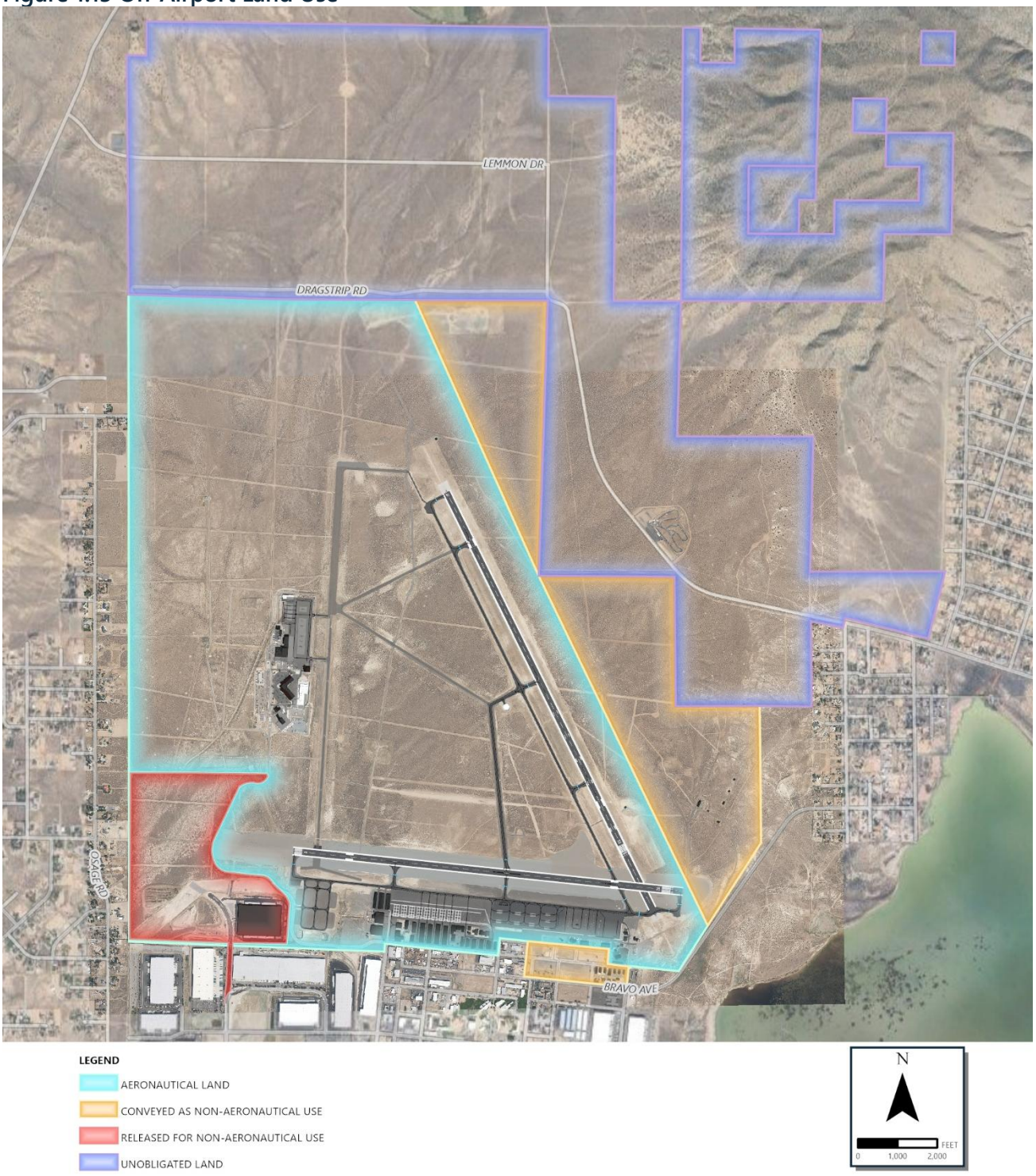
- The property must be used solely for public airport purposes, including runways, taxiways, navigational aids, safety areas, and aviation-related facilities, and kept in good, serviceable condition.
- The airport must be made available for public use without unjust discrimination.
- The grantee (now RTAA) may not grant exclusive rights to any single operator or entity.
- The grantee must ensure continuous and efficient operation of the airport.
- Any release, disposal, or lease of the property for non-aeronautical use requires FAA approval.
- Leases for non-aeronautical tenants must be at fair market value, with all revenue returning to the airport.
- If these conditions are violated, the property can revert back to the United States.

The deed established most of the property to remain as aeronautical use while approximately 486 acres were conveyed as non-aeronautical use. The process of changing land use varies depending on the acquisition method and restrictions imposed from the original deed; however, all existing aeronautical use land requires FAA approval and Federal Register Notice to change use to non-aeronautical. Changing non-aeronautical use to aeronautical use is widely acceptable and supported by the FAA. In May 2022, approximately 178.5 acres of land southwest of Runway End 8 was published in the Federal Register Notice and subsequently approved for non-aeronautical use in support of the Master Development and Right of First Offer Agreements, discussed below.

Any proceeds from land sales or releases return to the airport for either operations and maintenance or FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) eligible projects. Land purchased without the use of federal funds is transferred as unobligated, meaning no federal restrictions for the type of use exist, and it can be used for aeronautical or nonaeronautical purposes. While the land may be unobligated from specific use restrictions, any activity on the land still must comply with current Federal Grant Assurances as long as RTAA is accepting federal funds. Specifically, these grant assurances include accepting the responsibility to reasonably enforce compatible land uses at and surrounding the airport.

Figure 1.13 depicts the current uses as established by conveyances and federally approved releases.

Figure 1.13 On-Airport Land Use



Source: Historical Land Data; Federal Register Notice, Vol. 87, No. 100; Ardurra, 2026
Notes: Unobligated land and land conveyed as non-aeronautical does not limit aeronautical use. This land can be used for aeronautical use subsequent to FAA coordination. Additionally, not shown, is a three hundred (300) foot buffer of open space along the western edge of airport. Development in the buffer is limited to underground utilities, drainage/landscaping features, firebreaks, and fences/gates.

Master Development and ROFO Agreements

In response to growth and infrastructure demands identified in the 2010 Reno-Stead Airport Master Plan, the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority entered into a Master Development Agreement (MDA) with Dermody Properties in December 2016. The MDA created a framework for non-aeronautical development on RTS property to facilitate compatible commercial use via an initial 10-year term, with eight (8) additional five-year extensions. The MDA's purpose was to create additional revenue streams for the RTAA through ground leases with Dermody. The land involved in the Agreement included multiple options, totaling between 1,700 to 3,000 acres for various uses – primarily industrial, manufacturing, office space, and some remaining aeronautical.

In Fall 2025, RTAA and Dermody mutually agreed to terminate the existing MDA to restructure the agreement to better suit the current economic conditions. Since 2016, the Northern Nevada commercial real estate market has experienced significant increases in construction costs and interest rates, leading to higher vacancy rates as well. A new Option and Right of First Offer Agreement (ROFO) was approved by the RTAA board at the November 2025 board meeting.

Dermody's development rights are now consolidated into a smaller, clearly defined footprint. Instead of controlling up to 3,000 acres under the previous arrangement, Dermody will now retain approximately 839 acres, including the parcels already leased under Phase 1 and Phase 2. The remaining 2,000-plus acres revert to RTAA, enabling the Authority to market and develop those properties directly at fair market value.

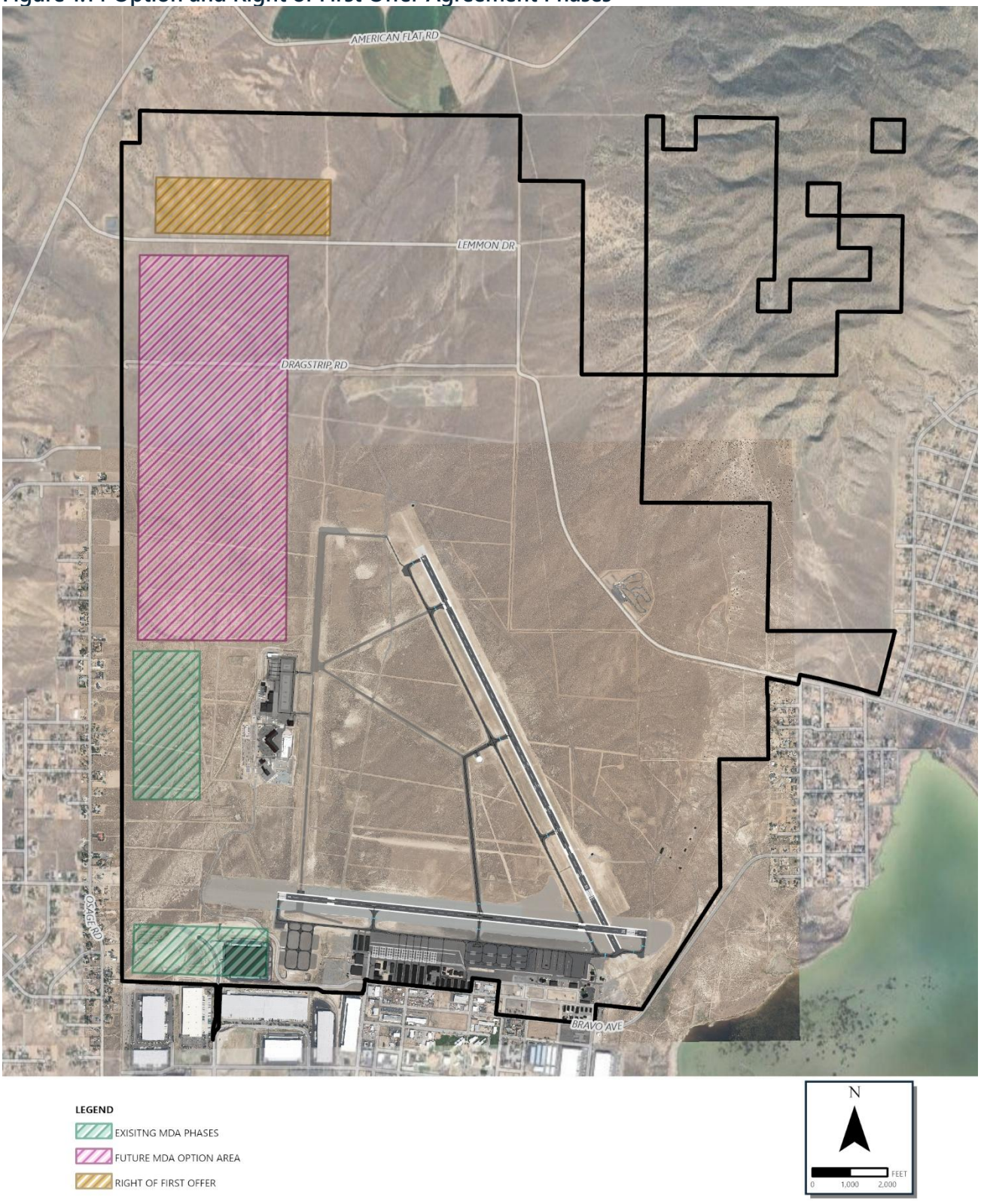
The new structure introduces a right of first offer framework for future phases totaling 266 acres. Dermody will have the ability to pursue additional development through these mechanisms, but only if specific milestones are met. These milestones include executing a ground lease for at least 100 acres by July 1, 2032, and continuing to secure additional leases every five years thereafter. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in the automatic termination of option rights. Similarly, the ROFO provisions allow Dermody to respond to RTAA's offers within a defined timeframe when new opportunities arise, ensuring competitive development while preserving RTAA's flexibility.

Lease terms for future phases remain long-term, with 50-year durations. Financially, the restructured deal diversifies RTAA's risk and positions the Authority for stronger long-term returns with the upside from RTAA's direct control of additional acreage. This approach aligns with RTAA's strategic priorities of financial stewardship and regional economic development, creating a more balanced and sustainable path for Reno-Stead Airport.

It is important to note the Agreement has land use impacts beyond the scope of this airport master plan. The agreement is considered regionally by organizations like the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency. Additionally, specific site-related development plans pertaining to the Agreement extend beyond the scope of this airport master plan.

Figure 1.14 depicts the phases of the revised ROFO Agreement.

Figure 1.14 Option and Right of First Offer Agreement Phases



Source: RTAA Board Memorandum, November 13, 2025, No. 100; Master Development Agreement, December 8, 2016; Option and Right of First Offer Agreement, December 23, 2025; Ardurra, 2026
Note: Option Areas are geographically represented and not based on surveyed data.

Airport Financial Data

Airport funding may be derived from multiple sources, with the most common being categorized into three main categories: Federal, State, or Local/Private.

Federal grant opportunities provide essential funding for infrastructure projects, environmental initiatives, and even operational support. Key programs utilized at RTS include:

- **Airport Improvement Program (AIP):** long-standing program providing an annual $150,000 entitlement to nonprimary airports, like RTS, as well as the opportunity to compete for additional discretionary funding. Projects primarily focus on airside needs.
- **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA):** previously known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): 5-year program that began in fiscal year 2022 with expanded eligibility beyond the AIP Handbook. These allocations are revised annually; however, RTS received approximately $290,000 annually.
- **COVID-19 Relief Programs:** multiple programs were enacted to aid airports during the downturn caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic, including the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES), the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These programs were allocated based on airport size, did not require a local match, and focused on maintaining basic operating expenses as opposed to improvements.

As an overarching authority, RTAA can transfer both AIP and IIJA funds between the Reno-Tahoe International Airport and Reno-Stead Airport. Table 1.6 summarizes Reno-Stead Airport's historical 15-year grant history.

Table 1.6 15-Year Federal Grant History

Year	Project	Source	Amount
2010	Improve Runway 26 Safety Area	AIP	$3,524,398
2011	Construct Terminal Building	AIP	$350,000
2013	Acquire Snow Removal Equipment	AIP	$169,631
2013	Rehabilitate Taxiway	AIP	$316,363
2014	Rehabilitate Taxiway	AIP	$1,623,054
2014	Rehabilitate Taxiway	AIP	$1,440,960
2016	Rehabilitate Apron	AIP	$238,349
2016	Rehabilitate Runway 8/26	AIP	$16,222,173
2017	Reconstruct Apron	AIP	$2,250,626
2019	Reconstruct Apron	AIP	$1,031,773
2020	CARES Act Funds	CARES	$30,000
2020	Reconstruct Apron	AIP + CARES	$3,837,153
2020	Reconstruct Taxiway	AIP	$890,625
2021	CRRSA Act Funds + ARPA	CRRSA + ARPA	$82,000
2021	Reconstruct Apron	AIP + CARES	$3,814,237
2021	Reconstruct Taxiway	AIP + CARES	$900,001
2022	Reconstruct Apron	AIP + CARES + IIJA	$2,781,604
2022	Reconstruct Taxiway	AIP	$888,941
2023	Reconstruct Apron	AIP	$4,446,550
2023	Reconstruct Taxiway	IIJA	$267,742
2025	Update Airport Master Plan	AIP	$1,839,914
2025	Reconstruct Taxiway A + Apron (Design)	IIJA	$26,410
2026	Reconstruct Taxiway Alpha and Aircraft Parking Apron Phase 6 (*Pending Bids*)	AIP	$4,150,000
		IIJA	$882,528

Source: FAA Grant History (https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/grant_histories); Ardurra, 2026