

AIRPORT: Administration 'investing billions'

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demolish and relocate a section of Nebo Church Road and then use the soil to fill a future apron expansion area were approved by council this fall. The third portion of the overall picture is to pave the expansion area to increase parking for aircraft.

"Hopefully we can put this new news in with the current plan we have to create a more cohesive approach for airport improvement," Brock said.

The apron expansion should hold around 15 large-span aircraft or 64 smaller planes, Brock said, noting anything with a wingspan of more than 90 feet is considered large. Paved parking also decreases reliance on staff and machinery at the airport, she said, making it more self-sufficient for customers.

"If we put them in the grass and it rains, we have to use additional resources to get them back out of the grass," Brock said. "This is just one more step in having a complete customer service airport so there's less reliance on machinery and more reliance on the actual aircraft."

To clarify some of the confusion surrounding the safety violations requiring the demolition and relocation of Nebo Church Road, the county hosted a drop-in meeting at the airport on Nov. 7.

"We had about 62 people

come and attend, (and) most everyone there saw — physically standing on the ground — saw the runway impediment, and I feel most certain they have a better understanding of what was happening there as far as the safety and the (runway protection zone)," Brock reported to council at its November meeting last week. "I feel like we had a great turnout and good

community participation from that."

There is no required match from Oconee County for the new FAA grant, Brock said, and a pre-construction meeting is planned for next week to look at details of the parking area.

'This is just one more step in having a complete customer service airport.'

Amanda Brock
Oconee County administrator

Friday's \$1.2 million grant announcement for Oconee was part of \$485 million in federal investments to airports across the coun-

try, according to a news release.

"The robust economy is enabling more passengers to travel by air, so this administration is investing billions of dollars in America's airports, which will address safer airport operations, fewer airport delays and greater ease of travel for air travelers," U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao said.

The matches for previous FAA grants on the first two phases of the airport expansion project were approved in September, with a construction bid going to J. Davis Construction.

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County airport gets \$1.2M federal grant

BY CAITLIN HERRINGTON
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — In the midst of two airport improvement projects that caused a few headaches for locals, Oconee County got word Friday that the airport has been selected for an additional \$1.2 million in federal grant money.

The new Federal Aviation Administration grant will be used for the paving of addition-

al aircraft parking at Oconee County Regional Airport, county administrator Amanda Brock said.

"What we anticipated to be a process to take a couple of years and span over a couple of grant cycles, we are thrilled to learn can be completed in one fell swoop and one grant period," Brock said.

Two projects to

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