



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: JANUARY 27, 2026**

FROM: AIRPORT **WARD: 3**

SUBJECT: APPROVE THE NAME CHANGE OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT TO THE RIVERSIDE AIRPORT.

ISSUE:

Approve the renaming of the Riverside Municipal Airport to Riverside Airport as part of the rebranding and reinvention of the airport.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council approve the renaming of Riverside Municipal Airport to Riverside Airport.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On June 13, 2024 the Airport Commission unanimously approved the renaming of the Riverside Municipal Airport to Riverside Airport as part of the rebranding and reinvention of the airport.

BACKGROUND:

The Airport has been in continual operation since 1949. It is equipped with a contract air traffic control tower, which currently operates seven days per week from 7:00am to 8:00pm. The control tower is currently the busiest contract tower in the state of California. The Airport is equipped with an on-field VOR (Very High Frequency Omnidirectional Range), rotating beacon, and two runways (9/27 and 16/34), and a helipad. Runway 9/27 is considered the main runway and is 5,401 feet long and 100 feet wide. Runway 16/34 (also known as the crosswind runway) is 2,850 long and 50 feet wide. There are 23 acres of paved aircraft parking aprons and 17 acres of aircraft tie-downs. The field lies at 818.9 feet above sea level.

The Airport currently has 192 based aircraft, most of which are single-engine aircraft. The Airport has 210 aircraft hangars. Including aircraft hangar agreements, ground leases, office leases, and concessionaires, the Airport manages 256 leases. In 2025, the Airport had 135,289 (estimated) aircraft operations (takeoffs and landings). Currently, the Airport has a significant amount of flight training, which represents the bulk of aircraft operations.

The Airport manages a \$2,000,000 operating budget. As an Enterprise fund, the Airport is responsible for generating sufficient revenues to cover all of its expenditures.

DISCUSSION:

The Airport continues to explore alternatives to elevate the airport clientele and generate additional revenues. The “Municipal” designation in the Airport’s name, owing to the City’s ownership and operation, while once well-respected, now has a “small airport” connotation. This does not effectively attract new business or indicate the airport is in growth mode and seeking additional based tenants, including business aviation operators and aeronautical businesses. Southern California airports that share a “Municipal” name tend to be small and somewhat limited in their potential to attract new business.

To generate renewed enthusiasm for the Airport and attract the interest of business aviation operators, as well as promote the Westside development, it is appropriate to rename the Airport to the Riverside Airport.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with this action. Rebranding materials, signage and a new marquee at the Arlington entrance associated with the renaming of the Airport will be absorbed by the Airport Fund operational budget.

Prepared by:	Daniel Prather, Airport Manager
Approved by:	Daniel Prather, Airport Manager
Certified as to	
availability of funds:	Julie Nemes, Interim Finance Director
Approved by:	Gilbert Hernandez, Interim Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachment:

1. Resolution