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Transportation Commission may take on airport duties

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Arguing that it is time to assign oversight of activities around the county's airports to a local agency, members of the El Dorado County Transportation Commission may seek the additional title of El Dorado County Airport Land Use Commission.

Kathryn Mathews, the transportation commission's executive director, said county airport manager Dave Nicolls had asked the commission to consider taking over the responsibility from the Auburn-based Foothill Airport Land Use Commission.

Mathews said the Foothill panel, which also serves Placer, Sierra and Nevada counties, supports the transfer of duties, as does the state Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics.

The proposed shift is driven in part by the need to update land use compatibility plans for the Cameron Park, Georgetown and Placerville airports. Mathews said the plans are the oldest in the state, and the Foothill Airport Land Use Commission is not prepared to undertake the updates.

She said Caltrans representatives estimated the total cost of updating the plans for the three airports would be \$80,000 to \$100,000, 90 percent of which would be funded by grants.

Commission members said they favored pursuing the proposal.

To transfer the responsibilities, Mathews said the Board of Supervisors and the Placerville City Council would have to adopt resolutions designating the Transportation Commission as the El Dorado County Airport Land Use Commission. She said the matter will come back to the commission for action in June.