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PRESS RELEASE

Governor Attends Groundbreaking Ceremony for Airport Parking Lot Expansion

Tafuna, American Samoa– On July 9, 2025, the Department of Port Administration hosted a groundbreaking ceremony to officially launch the Airport Parking Lot Expansion Project at the Pago Pago International Airport. The ceremony commenced with the spiritual guidance delivered by Stake President Fiatamāli'i Apulu. The ceremony was attended by Governor Pulaali'i Nikolao Pula, First Lady Lois Phillips-Pula, Congresswoman Aumua Amata, members of the Fono, cabinet officials, and distinguished members of the community.

Director of Port Administration Mr. Barney Sene delivered opening remarks, expressing sincere gratitude to key partners for their continued support and collaboration. He noted that this project represents the beginning of many future developments the department plans to undertake in the coming years.

In his special remarks, Governor Pulaali'i expressed that it was a great honor and privilege to be present, also on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor Pulumataala, on this special occasion. He stated that this project is a meaningful step toward broader improvements for the airport, ultimately enhancing safety, accessibility, and convenience for the traveling public. The Governor highlighted that the expansion will directly address ongoing issues faced by the airport, especially during Hawaiian Airlines flight nights, when congestion and limited parking capacity have long created challenges for travelers and the community. He also extended heartfelt congratulations to the Director and staff of the Port Administration for their dedication in bringing this important project to fruition.

Also addressing the ceremony was the general contractor, Papāli'i Alofa, who expressed gratitude to the Department of Port Administration and the American Samoa Government for the trust placed in his company to execute the project.

The Airport Parking Lot Expansion Project, with a total design and construction cost of just under \$9 million, is funded by the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The design was completed by Woolpert Inc., and the construction contract has been awarded to Paramount Builders Inc.

The project's purpose is to expand the existing parking lot to accommodate growing demand, especially on Hawaiian Airlines flight days, while also addressing long-standing safety concerns. The scope of work includes removing remaining foundations of the old fuel tank farm, upgrading the existing parking lot, improving lighting and drainage systems, and ensuring compliance with modern safety and ADA requirements.

The ceremony concluded with the symbolic breaking of ground by key leaders, marking the official start of this much-needed project that aims to better serve residents and visitors alike.

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